

TWO OF THE CORE VALUES OF THE MIAMI-DADE PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT ARE INCLUSIVENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY – PROVIDING PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT ARE INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING OF OUR RESIDENTS INCLUDING THOSE WITH DISABILITES.

TODAY, WE CELEBRATE EVIDENCE OF THOSE CORE VALUES BY WELCOMING THE MIAMI HEAT WHEELS WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL TEAM.

THIS TEAM, SUPPORTED BY MIAMI-DADE PARKS DISABILITY SERVICES AND THE LEISURE ACCESS FOUNDATION SINCE 1998, PROVIDES A COMPETITIVE OUTLET FOR ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY. ALONG WITH THE MIAMI HEAT, MANY PARKS EMPLOYEES ASSIST IN FUNDING THE TEAM THROUGH THEIR ANNUAL UNITED WAY DONATIONS.

THE “HEAT WHEELS” HAVE QUALIFIED FOR THE NATIONAL TOURNAMENT FOR TWELVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS, WITH THEIR FIRST APPERANCE BACK IN 2003.

WE ARE VERY PROUD OF OUR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM WHICH FINISHED THE SEASON WITH A 34-5 OVERALL RECORD, WINNING 19 OF THEIR 20 GAMES. THE TEAM IS COACHED BY PARNES CARTWRIGHT AND MANAGED BY PARKS DISABILITY SERVICES RECREATION SPECIALIST, DIANA BONET.

TO WIN THE NATIONAL TOURNAMENT, THE 5TH SEEDED HEAT WHEELS CAME THROUGH THE LOSER'S BRACKET – PLAYING FOUR GAMES IN ONE DAY, TO MAKE IT TO THE FINALS AND BEAT THE SAN ANTONIO PARASPORTS SPURS, 70-66, IN A VERY EXCITING CHAMPIONSHIP GAME.

... VERY SIMILAR TO WHAT OUR MIAMI HEAT DID TWO SEASONS AGO!

▪ SPECIAL RECOGNITION GOES TO:

- CARLOS MARTINEZ THE 2015 MOST VALUABLE PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT,**
- MARIO MORAN AND DIRRICK HUGHES WHO WERE AWARDED 1ST TEAM ALL TOURNAMENT TEAM,**
- MANNY RODRIGUEZ AND HERAMIE THOMAS WHO WERE NAMED TO THE 2ND TEAM ALL TOURNAMENT TEAM,**
- OTHER MEMBERS OF THE TEAM ARE:**

MARVIN VALCOURT, WILBERTO RODRIGUEZ

EDUARDO THOMPSON, MITCHELL BRAITHWAITE,

JACKSON DAVID, ALEX FERIA, MIKI EREZ,

RYAN GALVEZ, REDZUAN RAZAK, RAUL ACOSTA,

JAIRO MENDEZ AND JULIO MENDEZ.

ONCE AGAIN CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP! GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

