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Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Empowering Blind Individuals, Promoting Opportunities, and Building Belief in the Blind

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to share my deepest thanks for the opportunity to serve as a volunteer at this year's Ski for Light event. While I attended primarily to support the athletes and enjoy the trails, the experience resonated with me on both a personal and a professional level.

In my daily work as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, my focus is helping individuals who are blind navigate barriers to independence and employment. We often speak about "adjustment to disability" and "self-advocacy" in a clinical setting but seeing these concepts in action on the ski tracks was a powerful reminder of what true inclusion looks like.

The "Ski for Light" model perfectly mirrors the core values of VR:

Independence: Watching participants master technical skills and navigate the terrain fosters the kind of confidence that carries over into every other aspect of life, including the workplace.

Peer Support: The camaraderie between guides and participants creates a unique environment where perceived limitations are replaced by shared goals.

Resilience: The physical and mental stamina required on the trails is a testament to the capabilities of the individuals I serve every day.

This experience has provided me with fresh insights that I will undoubtedly bring back to my clients. Seeing the specialized equipment and the effective communication strategies used by the guides has expanded my "toolkit" for discussing adaptive recreation and community integration as part of a holistic rehabilitation plan.

Thank you to the entire organizing committee, sponsors and the fellow volunteers for creating such a seamless and impactful event. It was a privilege to contribute my time, and I am already looking forward to how I can support Ski for Light in the future—both as a volunteer and as an advocate within the VR community.

With sincere appreciation,

Graciela Swim
VR Counselor II