

Becoming independent through United Way support

When Susan, a 19-year-old girl with Down Syndrome, started attending the Adapted Recreation program at the Stevens Point Area YMCA in 2009, she quickly became involved with a multitude of activities: bowling, basketball, dances, overnights at Camp Glacier Hollow, and her favorite, swimming.

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Susan loved the program so much that after spending many weeks in Marshfield for cancer treatment in 2013, she insisted on stopping at the Y to see her friends on the way home.

Funding from United Way of Portage County for Adapted Recreation provides programs for children and adults with disabilities. Programs focus on improving the health and independence of each individual.

This focus has allowed Susan to become a successful adult. After beating cancer, she completed the Y's Transitioning into Independent Lifestyles program where she learned how to ride the city bus, plan and set up outings, and go to the library or movies with friends.

Every other Monday, she volunteers at the Y for three hours and then hits the wellness center or the pool for a work-



Athletes play on a bocce team through the Stevens Point Area YMCA's Adapted Recreation program, which receives support through funding from United Way of Portage County.

out. She also attends Zumba classes.

Susan is still very active in Special Olympics, making it to State several times for swimming.

She achieved her ultimate dream this past fall: living independently in her own apartment. "I now have my own Y membership, can meet new friends and volunteer, and I am independent," said Susan.

Your support of United Way of Portage County helps people like Susan, as well as thousands of other people who

benefit from programming funded by United Way.

More information about how you can help United Way through donating or volunteering is available online at www.unitedwaypoco.org, by calling 715-341-6740, or by emailing uway@unitedwaypoco.org. More information about how to receive help is available by calling 2-1-1, United Way's free and confidential information and referral service.