

Students take on the Charlottesville Cardinals

Kristofer Jones, staff writer

All were welcomed to PVCC basketball courts on Wednesday, April 20, to play the Charlottesville Cardinals in a game of basketball. The event was hosted by Susan Hannifan, the director of student accessibility and accommodations at PVCC. This basketball game provided students with the opportunity to try out wheelchair basketball against a professional wheelchair basketball team, the Charlottesville Cardinals. According to Hannifan, the Cardinals have been hosting this event for ten years, but this was the first since last year's game was canceled because of COVID-19 restrictions.

The captain of the Cardinals, Tom Vandever, is one of the men who started the basketball team in 1979. He said, "The city hired a therapeutic director and started having basketball nights for people with disabilities, and I volunteered. We got a bunch of guys in wheelchairs, and after a few months I said let's start a team, and that's what we did."

He took the time to explain some of the rules of wheelchair basketball. He said, "Traveling is when a player controls the ball but uses more than two pushes in any direction to move with the ball without taking a dribble or losing control of the ball."

The team is now in their 41st year of spreading the word on wheelchair basketball.

PVCC student and participant Jessica Hladky said, "It's an event to bring people together and

try something different." She talked about the accommodations available at PVCC. Hladky said, "They do a fantastic job. My disabilities are not always physical, but the experiences I have had have been fantastic."

The Charlottesville Cardinals have performed for over 175,000 people. Since its start, over 700 area athletes with disabilities have participated with the Cardinals. What started out as six local guys in a gym and a love for basketball has turned into spreading awareness for people with disabilities all over the world.

Hladky said, "Even though you might see someone with a disability, there's some ability in there as well."



Students playing wheelchair basketball with the Charlottesville Cardinals. Photography by Kristofer Jones