

Nonprofit gives free ski trip to disabled vets

By Brad Branan, Sacramento Bee

Accidentally shot by a fellow U.S. Army soldier, Larry Celano suffered a spinal cord injury that left him unable to walk. After earning a Purple Heart for his service in the 1989 Panama invasion, Celano worked as an accountant for five years before continued medical problems led to an early retirement.

Despite the setbacks, Celano said he tries not to let his disability get in the way, including going on ski trips in the Sierra the last two years.

“Last year the goal was not to get hurt,” the Chandler, Ariz., resident said as he got ready for a run at Alpine Meadows ski resort. “This year the goal is to go a little bit faster.”

Celano was one of 17 veterans who received an all-expenses-paid trip last week from Achieve Tahoe, a nonprofit organization based at Alpine Meadows and a national pioneer in helping the disabled ski and participate in other “high-challenge” sports.

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