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Steven Witt doesn't let his wheelchair slow him down as he gets into the action during the July 22 camp.

East Bay church.

It was there that he met Doug Senz.

"I met Doug at a camp they were doing on this church court with makeshift hoops," Middleton said. "After we got to know each other at a few more camps, I said, 'Hey Doug, we should do these at my place.'"

Middleton then explained his vision for NorCal Courts, an indoor sports facility that Middleton had been looking to build for more than 10 years and had finally found a site for near the Martinez waterfront.

Senz became an investor in NorCal Courts and UCP Hoops got the boost it needed to open doors to any special needs kids who want to play.

NorCal Courts dedicated Court #1 to UCP Hoops. It has adjusted rim heights for players and is handicap accessible. It's made available any time the facility is open. Furthermore, there is a start-up goal of holding UCP Hoops camps at least one Sunday a month, perhaps two a month.

They were able to hold two camps in July with players from Dan Middleton's Northgate team volunteering, just as Dan did several years ago. "They have a blast," Middleton said. "I send them texts to remind them to come out and they reply saying they are already looking forward to it."

Senz said the players' participation has made a huge difference. "I've got to really credit Dan for getting his kids out there," Senz said. "They've been wonderful. UCP hoops would be nowhere near what it is now if it weren't for Dan and the support of his girls."



Now Senz is able to sit back and smile.

"At a recent camp, we had one young man (Steven Witt) in a wheelchair," Senz said. "His parents said he had never had interest in sports and spent a lot of time on his computer. I almost had to wheel him out forcibly at the end of it because he loved it. ... He was the first guy back the following week. That's the kind of thing that makes it so neat. His parents hadn't realized what their son could do given the opportunity."

Middleton and Senz are hoping they can grow these camps and are attempting to get the word out. Senz points out that while the word is out, it still takes some nudging.

"I know first-hand how much special needs parents have on their plate," Senz said. "Many times it's easy to worry about the activities, and how modified they might be. I try to tell those who call me how amazed they'd be at how quickly the kids pick up some of these basic skills and begin enjoying the game."

If you're interested in learning more about the UCP Hoops camps at NorCal Courts, contact the facility at 925-465-4498 or visit www.ucpgg.org ☺