



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
(Page 1 of 3)

**CONTACT:** Sissy De Maria  
Vanessa Fioravante  
Kreps De Maria  
(305) 663-354  
[sdemaria@krepspr.com](mailto:sdemaria@krepspr.com)  
[vfioravante@krepspr.com](mailto:vfioravante@krepspr.com)

**BLIND WORLD-RENOWNED CLIMBER, ADVENTURER AND AUTHOR TO SPEAK AT UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI AS A PRELUDE TO MIAMI'S FIRST-EVER NO BARRIERS FESTIVAL**

*Erik Weihenmayer to give sneak peak of BrainPort®, an assistive device that allows the visually impaired to perceive the shape, size, location and motion of objects in their environment*

**CORAL GABLES, FL (April 13, 2009) – [Shake-A-Leg Miami](#) and the [University of Miami](#) join [No Barriers USA](#) in welcoming world-renowned climber, adventurer, author and speaker, [Erik Weihenmayer](#), the only blind person to climb the world's Seven Summits - the tallest peak on every continent including Mt. Everest - to the **University of Miami's Cosford Cinema on Friday, April 17 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.** This event will serve as a kick-off to the No Barriers Festival 2009 at Shake-A-Leg Miami in Coconut Grove June 4–7, 2009.**

Weihenmayer, often regarded as one of the most impactful speakers in the world, will share inspirational stories about personal experiences overcoming adversity and his remarkable encounters on the world's tallest peaks, including a recent climb where he guided six blind Tibetan teenagers on a journey to 21,500 feet on Lhakpa-Ri, a towering peak in the shadow of Mt. Everest. He will also formally announce the No Barriers Festival 2009 at Shake-A-Leg Miami, unveil just a few of the innovative technologies – including the investigational **BrainPort® vision device** and describe the clinics and events that will highlight the Festival. Developed by Wicab, Inc., BrainPort® is a tactile vision assistive device for object identification, orientation, mobility and spot reading for the visually impaired. It enables perception of visual information using the tongue and camera system as a paired substitution for the eye.

(Page 2 of 3)

Erik Weihenmayer has been featured on the *Tonight Show*, *NBC's Today Show*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Oprah*, *20/20*, *Nightline*, *Good Morning America* and *Larry King Live* and has appeared on the cover of *Time*, *Outside*, and *Climbing Magazine*. He is also the author of *Touch the Top of the World*, published in ten countries and six languages, and *The Adversity Advantage: Turning Everyday Struggles Into Everyday Greatness*, released in January 2007.

"It is an honor to speak at the University of Miami on behalf of No Barriers USA and Shake-A-Leg Miami," says Erik Weihenmayer. "While my experiences and adventures overcoming adversity are uniquely inspirational and insightful, it is the work of the scientists, therapists and researchers in Miami that is effectively shifting the paradigm of possibility for people who live with challenges. I am excited about bringing our Festival to these world class facilities and look forward to sharing ideas."

The No Barriers Festival 2009 is a unique, international, multi-day event that combines land and water-based adaptive sports with cutting-edge techniques and technologies that enable people with challenges to live as actively as possible and to break through their own personal barriers. The four-day Festival of symposiums, interactive clinics, keynote speakers, films, roundtables and innovations will strive to replace recurring perceptions about disability and personal challenges, with a renewed belief in what is and what will be possible. Previous Festivals were held in Cortina, Italy, in 2004 and 2005, as well as Squaw Valley USA, near Lake Tahoe, California, in 2007.

For more information on the No Barriers Festival 2009, visit [www.nobarriersusa.org](http://www.nobarriersusa.org). Early registration is available online or by mail through April 30, with tickets beginning at \$75 for a full Festival weekend pass including all events, dinners on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights and a pancake breakfast on Sunday. Partial scholarships are available for qualified individuals, caregivers and family members by contacting [info@nobarriersusa.org](mailto:info@nobarriersusa.org).

To learn more about Erik Weihenmayer visit his website at [www.touchthetop.com](http://www.touchthetop.com).

# # #

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **About No Barriers USA**

Conceived by a group of friends with a passion for the beautiful natural places of the world, No Barriers USA is a not-for-profit organization which assumes that each person, regardless of age, state of mind or physical condition, has a thirst for adventure and a hope for the future which is worthy of igniting. No Barriers is more than a name; it is the attitude of reaching out and finding ways to accomplish one's dreams, no matter what it takes. No Barriers is for all people, regardless of age, state of mind or physical condition. For more information visit [www.nobarriersusa.org](http://www.nobarriersusa.org).

### **About Shake-A-Leg Miami**

Shake-A-Leg Miami is a unique, community-based aquatic activities center that serves children and adults with physical, developmental and economic challenges. As one of the largest public facilities in Southern Florida, and one of the most inclusive community-based organizations in the nation, Shake-A-Leg Miami uses the natural environment of the water as an organic classroom for an education program that compliments water-based activities. The goal of Shake-A-Leg Miami is to empower and energize people by developing self-confidence and fostering a sense of independence that improves the quality of life. For more information on Shake-A-Leg Miami visit the Sea Base located at 2620 S. Bayshore Drive or online at [www.shakealegmiami.org](http://www.shakealegmiami.org).

### **2009 No Barriers Festival Sponsors (confirmed as of April 9, 2009)**

Platinum Sponsors of No Barriers Festival 2009 are American Airlines, Lumber Liquidators, Shake-A-Leg Miami, The Ritz-Carlton Coconut Grove and University of Miami. Gold Sponsor is Babson College. Silver Sponsors are Nike and Thunderbirds/FBR Open. Bronze Sponsors are Disabled Sports USA and Show Management. Supporting Members include Adam Carlin, Be a Diver, The Challenged Athletes Foundation, City of Miami, Florida Park Service, Freedom for Life Foundation, Good Hope Equestrian Training Center, LEKI USA, Liquid Surf & Sail, Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation, Miami Seaquarium's Dolphin Harbor, Mountain Gear, No Limits Tahoe, Nordic Walk Now, Quickie, Redwood Creek Wines, Team Paradise and Wounded Warriors. Festival Partner is Bioness, Inc.