

Media Release

Contact:

Nancy Koreen, 540.604.9742; nkoreen@uspa.org

****Photos and video available on request.****

Skydiving Continues to Soar — U.S. Parachute Association Reports Record Growth and Dedication to Safety!



photo by Niklas Daniel

FREDERICKSBURG, VA—February 20, 2014—For the second year in a row, the [U.S. Parachute Association](http://www.uspa.org) is reporting record-high membership, indicating that the breathtaking sport of skydiving is continuing to grow. With roughly 3.2 million skydives made last year in the U.S., more and more people are taking that first leap and then continuing to pursue skydiving as a hobby and passion.

USPA ended 2013 with nearly 35,700 members, the highest in the association's 67-year history. Last year, more than a half million people experienced the thrill of a lifetime, taking the leap for the first time at more than 240 USPA-affiliated skydiving schools and centers across the country. USPA also welcomed 6,700 new members and issued nearly 3,700 basic skydiving licenses, proving that more first-timers are coming back to pursue the sport and become certified solo jumpers.

Even as the sport shows increased growth, accident numbers continue to remain comparatively low. In 2013, 24 people died in the U.S. while skydiving, or less than 0.008 fatalities per 1,000 jumps—among the lowest rate in the sport's history! Tandem skydiving has an even better safety record, with no tandem student fatalities out of a half million tandem jumps last year and 0.002 student fatalities per 1,000 jumps in the past decade.

Skydiving continues to improve its safety record due in large part to safer equipment and better training. USPA institutes safety standards, certifies skydiving instructors and establishes training programs for new skydivers, constantly working to make the sport safer. In addition, USPA holds its annual [Safety Day](#)—scheduled for March 8 this year—where drop zones across the country offer safety seminars and refresher training.

“USPA and the entire skydiving community are dedicated to reducing the risk and making the sport safer for both newcomers and licensed skydivers,” says USPA Executive Director Ed Scott. “The sport’s continued growth reflects this emphasis on safety and proves that more and more people are discovering the wonderful world of skydiving!”

Skydive Like a Pro

For sheer excitement and high-speed fun, no sport comes close to skydiving. Fortunately, this high-flying adrenaline sport is not as extreme or intimidating as it may seem. Just about anyone 18 years of age or older can take to the skies after some comprehensive safety instruction. In fact, all it takes is a half hour of ground school to prepare for a tandem jump, the easiest and most popular way to experience skydiving for the first time. Tandem jumping allows students to experience the thrill of freefall from 13,000 feet while securely harnessed to an experienced, licensed instructor.

Another first-jump method called Accelerated Freefall (AFF) allows students to jump solo right away—with two instructors at their side—after four to five hours of intense ground instruction. Some locations also still offer the tried-and-true static-line first-jump method with modern equipment. Just about anyone can earn a license in as few as 25 jumps!

For more information on skydiving and to find a USPA Group Member skydiving center near you, visit www.uspa.org.

About USPA

Founded in 1946, the United States Parachute Association is a non-profit association dedicated to the promotion of safe skydiving nationwide, establishing strict safety standards, training policies and programs at more than 240 USPA-affiliated skydiving schools and centers throughout the United States. Each year, USPA’s nearly 36,000 members and hundreds of thousands of first-time jump students make more than 3 million jumps in the U.S. USPA represents skydivers before all levels of government, the public and the aviation industry and sanctions national skydiving competitions and records.

For more information on making a first jump or to find a skydiving center near you, visit www.uspa.org or call 800.371.USPA.