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International
Paralympic
Committee



Proud Paralympian

#ProudParalympian

2016 IPC Athletes' Council elections

The candidates

Who is the IPC Athletes' Council?

The IPC Athletes' Council is the collective voice of Paralympic athletes within the IPC and the greater Paralympic Movement. As the liaison between IPC decision-makers and Paralympic athletes, the IPC Athletes' Council works to provide effective input into decision-making at all levels of the organisation. To this end, the IPC Athletes' Council works to ensure effective athlete representation on all IPC committees and commissions as well as to create other opportunities for athlete representation both within and outside the IPC. For example, the IPC Athletes' Council enjoys cross representation with the IOC Athletes' Commission.

2016 IPC Athletes' Council elections

Elections for the six summer sport representatives on the Athletes' Council will take place between 5 and 16 September, in the **#ProudParalympian** space of the Athletes' Dining Hall in the Paralympic Village. All "Aa" accredited athletes are entitled to vote. Athletes must vote for six candidates (not more not less).

The IPC Electoral Commission is composed of the following individuals:

- Linda Mastandrea (IPC Legal and Ethics Committee Chairperson) – Electoral Commission Chairperson
- Mark Copeland (IPC Legal and Ethics Committee Member)
- Martin Mansell (former Chairperson IPC Athletes' Council)

To cast your vote, you simply need to:

1. Show your accreditation card at the voting station. Your card will be checked in the Voting Registration System and it will be checked that you are eligible to vote.
2. In the voting booth, follow the instructions of the electronic voting system.

Please note that athletes who require assistance may select an assistant of their choice to complete the voting process.

The attached document will provide you with an overview of all candidates.

Be a **#ProudParalympian**, make your voice heard and vote for your representative on the IPC Athletes' Council! We are looking forward to welcoming you to the **#ProudParalympian** space!

Note: The content appears precisely as we receive it; any variations in the information you find in the nominations reflect the extend of detail that each nominee choose to submit. It is the responsibility of the nominee to provide accurate and complete information.

Monica Bascio

Country: United States of America
Sport: Para cycling
Sport Class(es): H4

Paralympic Games
London 2012 Paralympic Games: 2nd Road and 2nd Time Trial

World Championships
Five-time Cycling World Champion:
02' Time Trial
11' Time Trial & Road
13' Time Trial & Road



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I believe I have an objective, and “real world” perspective given my experience as an athlete, and in the workplace. I want to be a part of a growing, and meaningful movement that helps athletes achieve, and be recognized for sporting excellence, including women and athletes with severe disabilities.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I present myself as a professional, at all times and connect with the athlete community worldwide in order to have a better understanding of the current athlete perspective. This includes interactions with athletes and representatives from many agencies, committees, and organizations. As an athlete who has competed in more than a dozen countries and 4 Paralympic Games, I've developed a keen understanding of the Paralympic movement and the challenges and opportunities that athletes face every day. I have a positive outlook, am collaborative, approachable, and a good communicator.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

I believe the athletes council can constructively influence positive change on behalf of the athletes, with the various organizations around the world that manage, and govern Paralympic sport. I would like to help the Athlete's Council develop a plan for improved communication between the IPC and the NPCs, the International Federations, and the National governing bodies, so that Paralympic Sport can grow, and gain a greater standing in the public eye around the world.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

Para sport has been a major part of my life for almost 20 years, and I am proud that my values as a Paralympian not only helped me achieve sporting excellence, but have also helped me inspire and motivate people in all areas of my life.

Eimear Breathnach

Country: Ireland
Sport: Para table tennis
Sport Class(es): TT2

Paralympic Games

I have competed in two Paralympic Games, Beijing 2008 and London 2012

World Championships

I have competed in 5 European Championships and 2 World Championships



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

After competing internationally for over 13 years I felt that athletes deserved a stronger voice in the IPC to protect, strengthen and enhance their views and needs on an international stage. All international Paralympic athletes deserve the same high profile recognition and respect that able bodied athletes receive. I have a particular desire to represent female athletes and also athletes with higher needs. Athletes with higher needs are limited in the range of sports that they can compete in and I have a wish to protect the numbers of athletes with higher needs in international competition.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

After my retirement post London 2012 I was elected chairperson of our Irish Paralympic Athletes Commission. We provide Irish athletes with a voice in the Irish Paralympic movement. As chairperson of the commission I sat as the Athlete's representative on the Board of Directors of Paralympics Ireland. I have recently been elected Vice President of Paralympics Ireland. I was also a mentee in the successful pilot WoMentoring .

I believe that the experience and skills that I have gained in the above make me an ideal candidate to represent all athletes on the IPC Athlete's Council.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

My vision for the Athlete's Council is a strong and vocal council that strive for the individual and collective rights of every single Paralympic Athlete.

I would like the Athlete's Council to be an integral part of the success of the future of Paralympic Games, as the future of the games depends on each and every athlete having the support, voice and platform to achieve their true potential.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I am a Proud Paralympian as I hold true the values of the Paralympic Movement. I believe in the empowerment and enablement of athletes to achieve sporting excellence and to inspire and excite the world. I have seen the Paralympic Movement grow over the past 15 years into an organisation to be proud of, that stands on a world stage of excellence equal to and greater than other world sporting organisations. I am courageous and determined and believe I have inspired others to participate in sport and achieve their goals.

David Casimos Sierra

Country: Spain
Sport: Para athletics
Sport Class(es): F11

Paralympic Games

Paralympic medal in the following 4 Paralympic Games: Sydney 2000, Athens 2004, Beijing 2008 and London 2012

World Championships

8 Times World Champion in shot put and discus



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

Because I believe my experience as athlete during all these years can be very useful for other athletes and for Paralympic Sport. Paralympic Sport has changed and we also have to change but always keeping the athlete as the main element in Paralympic Sport. All changes should be athlete centered.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I have the experience I have gained all this years as Paralympic athletes and apart from that I am also a very committed person used to advocate in my nation to spread the values of the sport for the persons with impairment. In this sense, being a very well-known and recognized Paralympic athlete in Spain, I am very invited to social events and educational institutions to talk about our sport and my experience very often as well as participate in round tables for discussion

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

I have seen Paralympic Sport changing these last years and in my opinion the Athletes' council can be of great use to change things from inside keeping always in mind to do things for the best of the athletes.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I feel proud to be part of this movement and to have the opportunity to enjoy Paralympic Sports and have had the chance to live all the great moments our sports have put in there for me, for us, the athletes.

Ferenc Csuri Nandor

Country: Hungary
Sport: Para swimming
Sport Class(es): S8, SM8, SB8

Paralympic Games

2 times Paralympic Finalist – 2008 Beijing 100m butterfly,
2012 London 200m individual medley

World Championships

European Record Holder – 200mb.fly
2x EChbronzemedalist – 100mb.fly, 100m freestyle
5th place WCh 200mi.medley



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

As a former Paralympic Athlete I wish to advocate for the rights and equal opportunities of my peers. I want to contribute to the further development of the Paralympic movement and sports with my knowledge and experience. Using my extensive experience in sports and event management I want to contribute to the formulation and development of quality standards in parasports. I want to serve my fellow athletes in order to provide them the opportunity to achieve their goals and live up to their personal potential.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

Qualifications: B.Sc. in Sports Management, Certificate in Coaching Swimming

Experience: Member of Organizing Committees of IPC, IWAS, IBSA events, project manager of EPC programmes (SportActive Day, etc.), 15 years of experience in parasports/Swimming Language skills: English/Hungarian

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

As paralympic sports and the Paralympics are growing, the right voice of the “most prestigious element” - the para-athlete - shall be represented. My view is to provide the proper advocacy and representation to all, who wish to become a member of the movement, regardless of the age, level, disability, nationality and personal status.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

During my long career of 15 years in para-sports I always aimed to the highest possible achievements humanly possible for myself. Being a Paralympian provided me the most required feeling of self fulfillment and achieving my goals/dreams. This all gave me a beacon for living my everyday life.

Sven Decaestecker

Country: Belgium
Sport: Para swimming
Sport Class(es): S10, SB9, SM10

Paralympic Games
Athens 2004, Beijing 2008, London 2012

World Championships
2002 World Championships, 2006 World Championships,
2009 World Championships, 2010 World Championships –
3rd place 200m Individual Medley (ER), 2013 World Champion-
ships, 2015 World Championships



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I have a long career in International Paralympic Sports, Swimming more specific. 17 years to be precise, and I'm only 31 years old. So you might say that half of my entire life has been all about Paralympic Sports. Now I come at a moment in my career in which I feel that I wanna give something back. I think that my experience in sports, together with my education (I'm a Master in Political Sciences), can be an asset for the IPC Athlete's Council.

Also because of my long active career in Paralympic Swimming I know a lot of people: swimmers, coaches, officials, IPC representatives, and so on. I like to think that I myself are quite well known and accessible to talk. So I am a great representative for all the athletes when I would be part of the Athletes' Council.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

17 years of active swimming career, which comes with a huge network.

Master in Political Sciences.

Belgian Olympic Academy member: Management in Sports Organizations

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

To represent the needs/desires/wishes of all of the athletes at the highest level, in order to move the Paralympic Movement forward.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

Every morning when you wake up for an early training session, showing people you can overcome any disability, and inspiring them to do the same!

Lucy Ejike

Country: Nigeria
Sport: Para powerlifting
Sport Class(es): 61 kg

Paralympic Games

Sydney 2000 – Silver, Athens 2004 – Gold (WR)
Beijing 2008 – Gold (WR), London 2012 – Silver

World Championships

Cuba Championships 2003 – Gold
Malaysia 2007 Powerlifting Championships – Gold
2008 Abidjan Powerlifting Championships – Gold (WR)



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I have a strong desire to contribute to the athletes of the Paralympic movement by ensuring that the voice of athletes is heard in all discussions and all decisions made through the IPC.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

The AC's function is to serve the athletes by representing their interests, rights and needs to the management and members of the IPC. There is need for Paralympians to be represented in the IPC by someone who is experienced. This will be realized through my work as member of the Athlete Council.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

Improving sports of Paralympic movement and helping in solving some obstacles that the athletes encounter with their federations.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I am a proud Paralympian because I like the improvement in the IPC Organisation of Paralympic Games and other Championships. They make the Games lively and enjoyable.

Kurt Fearnley

Country: Australia
Sport: Para athletics
Sport Class(es): T54

Paralympic Games

2000 – 2 silver; 2004 – 2 gold, 1 silver; 2008 – 1 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze; 2012 – 1 bronze, 1 silver

World Championships

2002; 2006 – 3 gold; 2011 – 1 gold; 2015



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

To grow a greater understanding of the broader Paralympic movement.

To act as a conduit between my fellow athletes and the IPC.

To represent the rights and interests of all Paralympic athletes.

To contribute to the development of Paralympic sport globally.

To embrace our history and to share my experiences and knowledge with the future generations of athletes.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

Board Member, Australian Volunteers International - 2006-14

Assisting change and developing relationships for the benefit of communities across the developing world.

Member, Independent Advisory Council - National Disability Insurance Scheme - 2013-16

Ensuring People with Disabilities are heard during the rollout of the largest social investment in Australia within the last century.

Member, Sport and Technical Advisory Committee - 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games - 2014-16

Ensuring Athletes with Disability had strong representation during the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

To continually increase the status of the Paralympic movement on national and international stages.

To uphold and enhance the Paralympic values of courage, determination, inspiration and equality.

To amplify the voice of Paralympic athletes around the world.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I am a very proud Paralympian in so many ways, especially knowing that Paralympians have positively shaped the image of disability on a world stage. Throughout our history, Paralympians have shown the strength of disability, and we have brought that into the lounge rooms of people all over the world. In doing so, we have provided an amazing stage where athletes with disabilities can show their passion and skill in their chosen sport.

Marcio Fernandes

Country: Cape Verde
Sport: Para athletics
Sport Class(es): F44/T44

Paralympic Games

London 2012 – Men T44 100m Semi final, Men T44 200m Semi final, Men F44 Javelin – 9st

World Championships

Lyon 2013- F44 Javelin - Silver Medal
Qatar 2015-F44 Javelin - Gold Medal



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I wish to run for the IPC athletes council to give my contribution to the Paralympic movement. I would like to share my 20 years of experience in disability sport with youngest athlete, to learn more with others members of Paralympic council and help to improve the athletics in Africa. I wish contribute for the Paralympic vision and movement to reach to all African.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

Part of my twenty years in athletics was competing with able bodies athletes, that give me a huge experience and knowledge which I wish to share with others. Been an African Athlete training and competing with some limitations I have learned how to overcome the difficulties to always reach the objective. I am very perseverant and a strong team member who like to respect others and always work to the best of my ability. Being team leader of my national athletic team and all the experience I gained can be useful for the athletes Council.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

My vision for the athletes council is to get more involved in the Paralympic movement for more support to the athletes in Africa and around the world, and work together to defend the Paralympic values.

I would like to contribute to change the perception on what a disable athlete can achieve.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

The great and United Paralympic family and Paralympic values.

Gizem Girismen

Country: Turkey
Sport: Para archery
Sport Class(es): Open Recurve

Paralympic Games
2008 Beijing – Gold

World Championships
2009 Czech Republic – Gold + Bronze (Women Recurve Team);
2007 Cheongju – 1st place (FITA Round)



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I am passionate about making sure that paralympic movement both at national and international levels becomes and remains an athlete-centered movement. I would like to represent athletes from each and every nation and sport through establishing proper communication channels that ensure comprehensive interactions. In order to achieve this, promoting athletes in leadership roles, developing athlete representation models and educational activities, establishing understandable classification system as well as developing sport opportunities for less fortunate regions are of vital importance.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I am well aware of the difficulties that can be faced by athletes because I have experienced similar challenges as a World and Paralympic champion athlete. With 4 years of experience gained in IPC athletes' council and EPC executive board, I have enough knowledge about the structure of paralympic movement at all levels. I am good at team work and I am a goal oriented person like every athlete. I believe that my work experience at the Ministry of Youth and Sports, my educational background and sports career can contribute to promoting paralympic movement and increasing athlete involvement.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

IPC athletes' council is about building bridges between athletes, decision makers and all relevant parties. Being able to interact means having a say in shaping the future. I find it very valuable to stand up for athletes' rights and strengthen IPC as an organization that prioritize athletes first. I want to keep up the work we have started as athletes' council and continue to establish and reinforce a system in which every single idea of athletes is valued and taken into consideration. Together, we can change prejudiced perceptions via transformative power of sport.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

To me, never giving up, dreaming a better world through the power of sport, courage and determination make me a proud paralympian.

Chelsey Gotell

Country: Canada
Sport: Para swimming
Sport Class(es): visually impaired

Paralympic Games

A three-time Paralympian in swimming (2000, 2004, 2008) and 12-time Paralympic medallist.

World Championships

The world record holder in the 50m and 200m backstroke.



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

Competing in sport and being part of the Paralympic movement have given me many great opportunities in all areas of life. I've always been passionate about athlete advocacy and mentorship, so finding ways to stay involved after retirement from competition seemed natural to me. I strongly believe in the power of sport and the Paralympic movement and what it can do to inspire and empower people worldwide. Having the opportunity to be part of a group that will help drive dialogue, develop policy and shape the future of the Paralympic movement would be an absolute honor.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

After retiring from sport, I worked with the TO2015 Organizing Committee for four years in communications and sport, managing and executing large projects and events. I led an extensive athlete relations portfolio to ensure the Organizing Committee was athlete-centered across all areas. As Vice-Chair of the Canadian Paralympic Committee Athlete Council, I helped create a strategy for the future of the athlete voice in Canada, helped launch a domestic athlete transition program and implemented projects and policy changes that will foster a positive athlete voice for decades beyond my term.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

My vision is to see the Athletes' Council continue to build a strong foundation and unified voice within the IPC, which will give all NPCs a strong athlete-centered business model to follow. By continuing to build on this, I believe member NPCs will continue to engage their athletes in decision-making by empowering them to create athlete councils within their home countries. This in turn will educate our athlete community, encourage stronger athlete advocacy during and after their athletic careers and create future sport, business and community leaders, beyond the field of play.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

One of the biggest things that makes me proud to be a Paralympian is when I have the opportunity to share my story with different groups of people. The most rewarding feeling is when I hear that my journey inspired someone to get involved in the movement or challenged the stereotypes associated with having a disability. Whether it's an adult or child with a disability finding freedom for the first time through sport, or connecting with a volunteer or a new fan, it's the best feeling in the world and one that makes me beyond proud to represent the Paralympic movement.

Philipp Handler

Country: Switzerland
Sport: Para athletics
Sport Class(es): T13

Paralympic Games:

Participation in the London 2012 Paralympic Games over 100 and 200m (10th and 13th in T13 Class)

World Championships

2nd and 3rd 2012 Euro Stadskanaal 100 and 200m
3rd 2014 Euro Swansea 100m
4th 2015 World Doha 100m



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

Besides personal curiosity of getting to better know the inside functioning of the International Paralympic Committee I want to give the athletes a voice towards the IPC and represent the Athletes' interests.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

Having a Master's degree in Economics from the University of Zürich I believe I have the capabilities to work in a Team and also discuss important matters in a goal-oriented way to find solutions.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

The Athletes Council should make sure that all the athletes are heard and have a voice within the paralympic community and thus helping to further develop and extend the paralympic movement.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

Having been able to participate at the 2012 London Paralympic Games, I got to feel the great atmosphere and the respect that was brought to Paralympians competing there. The way the world was inspired by us athletes who achieve great things and overcoming limitations makes me a proud Paralympian.

Suk Man Hong

County: South Korea
Sport: Para athletics
Sport Class(es): T54

Paralympic Games
Athens 2004 – 2 Gold, 1 Silver
Beijing 2008 – 1 Gold, 3 Bronze

World Championships
Christchurch 2011 – 1 Silver
Lyon 2013 – 1 Bronze



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

Sports gives me a lot of things and has changed my life. So far, in many big events, I achieved several medals but now I would like to work for other athletes in Paralympic Movement. With my athletic experience and academic background, I would like to devote myself to Paralympic Sports and athletes.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

Over 13 years of my athletic experience, I know very well about athletes' mind and circumstances. I can deliver the voices of athletes to the IPC and help the IPC to become a organisation close to athletes, who are the heroes of Paralympic Movement.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

I would like to suggest practical program for athletes, in particular, post retirement plan. I think that part is the most vulnerable point of the IPC and athletes.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

When I show my sporting excellence to the world, I feel proud as a Paralympian.

Michael Jeremiasz

Country: France
Sport: Wheelchair tennis
Sport Class(es): open

Paralympic Games
Athens 2004 – Bronze and Silver
Beijing 2008 – Gold
London 2012 – Bronze

World Championships
N°1 in the World in 2005 – Winner of the 4 Grand Slam in
doubles-Australian and Us Open Champ in Singles



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I wish to run for the IPC Athletes' Council because I think it's time for me after 15 years as a professional wheelchair tennis player and 4 times Paralympian to give and share for the general interest my expertise and passion accumulated during those years. I want to contribute to help the Paralympic movement to keep growing and shine worldwide.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I have been fighting actively throughout my career to promote and progress the rights of disabled athletes.

My abilities to communicate well with the media has resulted in me often being the voice of disabled people. I have developed a very wide and strong network in Media, Sports and Politics. I am assertive and have strengths in influencing people in decision making.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

I want to be part of a multicultural Council with different backgrounds. It's a rare opportunity to work as an international group to defend and progress what you deeply believe in.

I want to be the voice of all those Paralympians and of all those athletes who train very hard each day to become one.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I have been able to rebuild my life after a skiing accident in february 2000 thanks to sport. Becoming a Paralympian for the first time in 2004 was for me an unforgettable experience. I was offered the opportunity to represent my country in a sport discipline where I excel. The Paralympic movement gives me the opportunity each day to show the World what I am able to do and not what I am unable to do.

Nurulasyiqah Mohammad Taha

Country: Singapore
Sport: Boccia
Sport Class(es): BC3

Paralympic Games
7th in BC3 Individual at London 2012; First Singaporean to qualify for Boccia at Paralympic level

World Championships
3rd in BC3 Pair at 2015 Asia & Oceania Boccia Team and Pairs Championship



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

Athletes with high-support needs require better representation so that suggestions made by the Council to IPC on all aspects of the Paralympic movement are athlete-centric, regardless of disability level. I'm from a sport comprising largely of athletes needing high support, and with no Olympic equivalent; there are certain challenges that the current Council may not be aware of since it is formed entirely by athletes from sports with Olympic equivalents, e.g. managing and recognising efforts of an athlete's key support team, increasing community awareness of and support for unfamiliar sports.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I'm proficient in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia; and conversant in Mandarin, Korean and Japanese. Based in Singapore, I can easily reach out to athletes of different ethnicities in Asia and Oceania. I actively manage multiple Facebook Pages to raise awareness of para sports. My professional experience and skills as a tax auditor (interpreting tax legislations and conducting audits to deter tax non-compliance and improve voluntary compliance) will enhance my duties as a Council member on matters relating to governance and accountability.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

To recognise the unique challenges faced by para athletes (versus abled athletes) both in and out of sports, and actively address those challenges. Systematic and environmental barriers may hinder para athletes from smoothly transferring the soft skills developed through sports to other aspects of their lives, including post-competition careers. Focus less about inspiring the (non-disabled) world through para sports and place more priority on supporting the needs of para athletes pursuing sporting excellence through effort and self-determination.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I'm a Proud Paralympian when my junior athletes tell me that they want to make it to the Paralympics one day too, and ask me how to get there. It allows me to share with them that there is great value and meaning in doing sports, beyond benefitting themselves. Through sports, I rally the community and nation, contributing to something bigger than myself.

Tim Prendergast

Country: New Zealand

Sport: Para athletics

Sport Class(es): T13

Paralympic Games

Athens – Gold 800m

Sydney – Silver 800m, 1500m

Beijing – NZ Team Captain

London – NZ Team member

World Championships

Three World Championship titles & multiple medals in 400m to Marathon (T13) between 1998 - 2015



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I want to be part of the Athletes' Council to help ensure that the Paralympic Movement continues to flourish and grow with Athletes at the heart. Having been part of the Council for the last five years I have seen it evolve and I am passionate about seeing this growth continue. I want to all athletes to be assured that their thoughts about the their sport are represented by Proud Paralympians who care about progressing their sport and Paralympic sport

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I offer a unique insight as an Athlete who represented NZL in four Paralympic Games and now resides in Great Britain. As a result I have worked with athletes across small and large nations. Having current experience with the Council will enable me to move swiftly towards achieving the Council's goals as a voice for all athletes. My experience as an athlete and Team Captain has created a desire to advocate for the best possible Games environment for athletes to succeed. I am determined to be instrumental in affecting positive change in the Paralympic Movement.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

My vision for the Athletes' Council is to have a diverse and dynamic team of Athletes dedicated to listen and engage with all Paralympic athletes to ensure that their experiences within their sports are the best that they can be. This is by continuing to communicate at major competitions and on social media. I will ensure all Athletes are aware that they can turn to the Council with confidence that they will be listened to and responses made to best serve their interests and those their sport.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I am a Proud Paralympian because I consider it a privilege to be part of such a unique community of people. In the four Paralympic Games I competed in I have seen our sport evolve into something amazing. This evolution presents an exciting opportunity to tell the stories of the Paralympic movement and athletes achievements to educate, inspire and continue the growth of the Paralympic movement, something I am passionate about.

Siamand Rahman

Country: Iran
Sport: Para powerlifting
Sport Class(es):

Paralympic Games:
2012 London Paralympic Games

World Championships
2010 Malaysia Powerlifting World Championships
2014 UAE Powerlifting World Championships



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

After several years in competitions to set records to inspire the world through demonstrating different abilities of para athletes, now I tend to raise the bar out of field by handling athletes' affairs in the respected council to make it powerful as I did in my sport career. This council provides us to tackle with challenges, to make ideals, and also hearing voice of many athletes whom not heard before. As one of the discovered people in the globe, it's my burden now to sit and help them voice their demands, and aspirations to the IPC.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

During my career in the Paralympic sport, in my country or attending at international events, I learnt so much from the officials how to handle the athletes' affairs. How to conduct, manage and also giving them motivation to step forward in the Paralympic sports. Enjoying from group work at council, I try to discover their talents out of field, releasing our ideas throughout the Movement, facilitating the ways to get recommendations submitted by the athletes to the council and importantly giving them feedback at the right time.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

Firstly, and foremost handing to put this council at its main direction in the interest of the athletes. IPC has a unique vision to cover the whole family requirements; I think we should make various angles for the athletes to understand this concept. Athletes must try to close themselves to Paralympic mission, as we should work there to shorten this route to catch up their hands. I always think about to make progress; it makes no difference on the lift chair to add record or on a chair in the powerful council.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

Without a doubt my performance; while being on the stage or out, it builds my name in the IPC family and beyond. I made my sport personality through doing clean sport as I am determined to promote the sports for those have a word to say. If I can do something in the council, I can claim practice makes perfect.

Moran Samuel

Country: Israel
Sport: Para rowing
Sport Class(es): ASW

Paralympic Games
5th at London 2012

World Championships
2011 – Bronze
2014 – Silver
2015 – Gold



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I believe it is important to give back. Sport has always been part of my life, even before the wheelchair and I want to contribute and influence the development of Paralympic sport. I do it in my country, and I wish to do it broadly.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I've been an Athlete all my life, played professional basketball, than professional wheelchair basketball and I've been Rowing since 2010. I have a BA in physiotherapy and a MA in Education and child development. Ive been speaking to different audience about Paralympic sport for the last 5 years, and I also seat at the FISA athlete commission.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

I think it could have an important role in presenting athletes point of view of main issues concerning the development of the Paralympic movement, improving conditions of competitions around the world, developing programs to educate young and novice athletes about the Paralympic sport and helping to solve problems of other athletes around the world.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

By being an athlete I take my disability and make it an ability in sport an in everyday life

Marc Schuh

Country: Germany
Sport: Para athletics
Sport Class(es): T54

Paralympic Games
Beijing 2008 – 16th 400m
London 2012 – 5th 100m, 6th 400m T54

World Championships
Christchurch (NZ) 2011 – 3rd 400m
Lyon (FRA) 2013 – 3rd 100m, 2nd 400m
Qatar 2015 – 6th 400m



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

The Paralympic Games are the best stage to show, that people with disabilities can achieve the same performance level like people without disabilities. Unfortunately, sometimes the decisions made by the IPC do not always reflect the athletes' wishes and needs. Mostly, this is based on misunderstandings or the lack of information about what athletes want and need. My goal is, to continue to increase the volume of the athletes' voice, so that IPC Athletes' Council is able to truly reflect the athletes' wishes and needs.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

In the last years, I have already gathered some expertise in the field of sport politics. I am e.g. the representative of para-athletics team Germany and Vice Chairman of the German National Paralympic Committee Athletes' Commission. As the Vice Chairman of the Athletes' Commission, I have frequent contact with the DOSB (German Olympic Sports Confederation) Athletes' Commission, too. From many discussions I was able to gain new ideas on how to solve problems in the Paralympic movement and prevent mistakes made in the Olympic movement.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

My vision for the Athletes' Council is, to build up an even stronger representation of athletes within the IPC in order guarantee, that decisions made by the IPC do not suffer wrong or insufficient information on what the athletes want and need. Therefore, it is crucial that more athletes know about the Athletes' Council. It is important for me, to increase the communication between the Athletes' Council and the athletes out there, so that you know, whenever you have a problem with the IPC, we will try to help you.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I am a Proud Paralympian because I am into the main values of the movement:

Courage: The courage not to fear your own limits, but to test them and to see that these limits can be shifted if you work hard.

Determination: The determination to fight against also social barriers to make athletes with disabilities part of the social (sport) community around the globe.

Inspiration: It is an inspiration to show that people with various disabilities, even though these disabilities are obviously a restriction in their abilities, can achieve outstanding performances.

Elvira Stinissen

Country: Netherlands
Sport: Sitting volleyball
Sport Class(es): n.a.

Paralympic Games
Beijing 2008 – Bronze medal

World Championships
EC 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 Gold
European championship 2011, Silver
WC 2002 2006 Gold



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

All athletes of the Paralympic Games need to have a voice. I want to make sure that their voice is heard and with that empower them. It is my goal to create awareness about the amazing achievements people with a disability show every day. I do this with my sport, in my work and want to do this within the IPC as well. After being part of the Athletes Council the last 4 years I know the difficulty to come in contact with other athletes and represent them properly. Through social media and athletes focus groups we found a way to get in touch. I want to use this experience and continue building!

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

During my bachelor and master of Interdisciplinary Social Science and Public Administration and Organizational Science I learned the theoretical skills about organizational and public structures, policy issues and the importance of building partnerships between various parties. As captain of the Dutch Sitting Volleyball team, Vice of the Athletes Council and policy officer at the Ministry of Health, Welfare & Sports I know exactly how to carry forward important values and strategies. I do this amongst other things by creating discussions on every level such as community, local and national.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

First I think it is the job of the Athletes' Council to make sure that in every country and within every federation the Paralympic athletes are well represented. Second is to create awareness of the communication canals for athletes, so that athletes can easily find information about their rights and responsibilities. Third is that the Athletes' Council should always have the willingness, power and flexibility for improvement and innovation. To create the perfect environment for all athletes!

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

First of all I am a Proud Paralympian because in my career as an athlete I always believe in empowering myself and my teammates by getting more knowledge about the sports and my rights as an athlete. Second I have seen the Paralympic Movement up close by participating in two Paralympic Games and being a member of the IPC Athletes Council the last 4 years. I have seen the amazing results that great people achieved. Its great that because of the effort of many the Paralympic sports have developed enormously. And I have the chance to be part of it. That makes me a very Proud Paralympian!

Dame Sarah Storey

Country: Great Britain

Sport: Para cycling

Sport Class(es): C5

Paralympic Games

11 Paralympic Gold Medals [5 swimming 1992/1996, 6 Cycling 2008/2012]

8 Paralympic Silver Medals [all swimming 1992-2004]

3 Paralympic Bronze Medals [all swimming in 100m freestyle 1992, 1996, 2004]

World Championships

29 World Championship titles [6 Swimming, 10 Road cycling, 12 Track cycling]



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

I would like to be part of the Athletes' Council to start to put back in to the sporting Movement that has given me so much across the previous six Paralympic Games. The experience I have gained in 2 sports, experiencing the very best of a Home Games, the very worst organisation in 1996 and the many ups and downs of being a gold medallist as a teenager to the struggles post illness in the early 2000's. I have experienced a range of managerial styles as an athlete in a team environment and now also run my own cycling team which allows me to see both sides of the situation. I would love to use my experience to benefit the wider Paralympic sport community and have the opportunity to help further promote the Paralympic movement.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I have been a swim team Head Coach for 12 years prior to switching to cycling. I own and manage a Professional Women's Cycling team. I compete in para-sport and non para-sport which allows me to see the environment and provision for both. Through my role on the UCI Para-cycling Commission, I campaign for equal terms. I have extensive media training and work regularly in the media covering sporting events. Having travelled extensively I understand the needs of sports across the world to both maximise participation and increasing elite participation. I believe that para-sport should become as global and accessible as all sport and would like to help ensure that we can push our movement to every disabled sports fan.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

The Athletes' Council should be a body that can positively impact the experience of para athletes throughout the world. From encouraging nations to promote para-sport on a par with all sports, to ensuring every category and sport can call the Paralympic Games their pinnacle. There are still sports excluded from the Games. The Athletes' Council should also create the right influence to build on the momentum of the London 2012 Paralympic Games and start to create a greater visibility of Para-sport between Games so that athletes can have a full-time career because their supporters get the return on their sponsorship every year and not just every 4 years.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

I spent my whole childhood being in awe of athletes competing for their countries and wanted to be able to compete for my country for as long as possible. I never thought my dream would come true, but at the age of 14 I entered the Paralympic Village in Barcelona and couldn't have felt more at home. From the incredible athletic feats of the athletes I am surrounded by, to the extra-ordinary volunteers at Games-time to the friendliness of the competitors you do battle with on the field of play. I couldn't have asked for a more blessed career and being a Paralympian has opened more doors than I could have ever imagined. I am so proud I could burst and I would not be the athlete I am today without the Paralympic movement.

Ernst Van Dyk

Country: South Africa

Sport: Para cycling

Sport Class(es): H5

Paralympic Games

Won medals in Athens 2004, Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Paralympic Games in Athletics and Para Cycling

World Championships

Multiple Medals at Para Cycling World Cups and UCI World Championships.



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

During the past 24 years of participating I've seen the IPC take my sport from a low key Cinderella sport to London 2012 where all available seats were paid for by an audience that had a massive appetite to spectate our sport. I think this tells the story of an IPC that underwent a total metamorphosis from when I first participated. I lived through this change, I benefitted from it and I've had a good career as a professional athlete. It's now my turn to give something back. Most importantly I want to run because I believe it's my turn to serve the athletes and the Paralympic movement.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

Nothing special about my skills. I bring a lot of experience to the table. I've have served on many athletes councils and various boards of directors in sport. I've been an ambassador to sporting foundations promoting and advocating change through sport. I've been to 6 Paralympic games across 3 sporting codes. I work in patient education for Össur South Africa dealing with prosthetics. I am a director at Enabled Sport distributing wheelchair sports equipment across the continent of Africa. All of this I do out of my passion for promoting disabled sport.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

The athlete's council should have their fingers on the pulse of Paralympic athletes around the world. We should be able to collate these needs, dreams and desires and translate them into recommendations that can help the IPC to maximise their role in taking the movement forward.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

Paralympic sport has helped me to overcome so much adversity in life where I was given a zero chance to amount to anything. Sport gave me a reason to stand up and show the world that athletes with disabilities deserve just as much recognition as any other athlete. Sport gave me a career, recognition and respect by my peers. Paralympic sport gave meaning to my life when there was none.

Yanzhang Wang

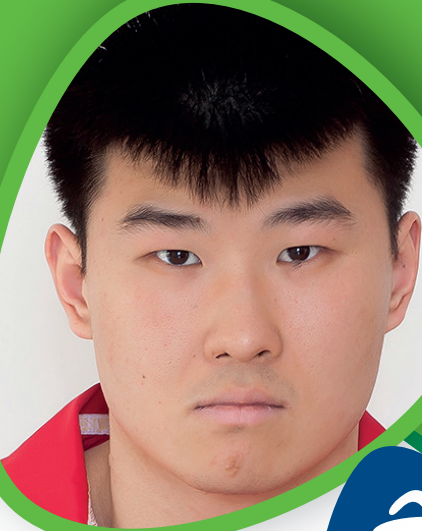
Country: China
Sport: Para athletics
Sport Class(es): F34

Paralympic Games

London 2012 Paralympic F34 Discus Gold Medal, world record & F34 Javalin Silver Medal, world record

World Championships

Javalin & Discus -
2015 Doha Gold
2014 Incheon Asian Para Gold



Why do you wish to run for the Athletes' Council?

China is a big country with the most Paralympic athlete in number, I wish to listen to their voice as their ears, speak for them as their mouth, let the world know them other than their sports performance ; I want to make friends with Paralympians from other countries, hearing from them, learning from them.

What specific and/or special skills, background and expertise do you have to offer the Athletes' Council?

I started to study English since 2014, from zero to fluent speaking, spent only one year. Before I went to Doha for the World Championship 2015, I met with the former NBA player YAO Ming and had his encouragement.

What is your vision for the role of the Athletes' Council?

The council is a bridge between the decision makers and the athletes. To guarantee the right of the athletes and create a better competing and living environment is the responsibility of the council.

What makes you a proud Paralympian?

My parents support me with all they can, my coach teaches me with all he knows, my team is my family. I play the game and feel like a hero, I enjoy the sport and the applause, I thank the sport that gives me strong body and mind.



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