

Women's Sports Foundation

2011 Travel & Training Recipients: Cycle Two



2011 Travel & Training Recipients: Cycle Two, by State

California

Maggie Hogan (Kayak – Chula Vista, CA)

Maggie Hogan has dreamed of competing in the Olympic Games since she was nine years old. Over the years, she has made a name for herself in the sport of Flatwater Sprint Kayaking and is poised to make a run at the 2012 Olympic Games in London. Hogan began training in 2005 and since then, has more than 15 USA Canoe/Kayak Sprint National Championships under her belt. Most recently she won bronze at the 2011 Pan American Games in the Women's K2 500m. The grant will allow her to fund her travel and training expenses. Due to USA Canoe/Kayak Sprint team's funding being cut by the U.S. Olympic Committee, Hogan is in need of funding to continue her pursuit of a gold medal and the London Olympic Games.

Melinda Owen (Track & Field – Chula Vista, CA)

Melinda Owen is an outstanding pole vaulter looking to make her mark on the U.S. National Track & Field Team. Owen qualified for the 2008 Olympic Trials and then relocated to the Olympic Training Center to better hone her skills. In 2011, she cleared a height of 4.4 meters at Madison Square Gardens as part of the 104th Millrose Games and had a third place finish at the U.S. Indoor Championships. Owen's training load paired with the time away for competitions makes it impossible for her hold a full time job. The funding will allow her to travel to national and international competitions in pursuit of her dream to make it to the 2012 Olympic Games. The Travel & Training grant funds will help offset training expenses, including indoor pole vault training.

Julia Nichols (Rowing – Livermore, CA)

Julia Nichols walked on to the University of California, Berkeley rowing team in 1996 and fell in love with the sport. She is now a top lightweight rower in the U.S. and has no plans of slowing down. Recently Nichols finished fourth in the lightweight women's double sculls at the 2011 World Rowing Championships, qualifying the boat for the 2012 Olympic Games as well as named USRowing's 2011 Female Athlete of the Year. With very limited funding for lightweight athletes, the Travel & Training grant will help pay for her travel expenses to national and international competitions as well as cover training costs.

Patricia Manuel (Boxing – Long Beach, CA)

Since Patricia Manuel emerged in the sport of boxing, she has had her eyes set on becoming the first female boxer to compete for the United States in the 2012 Olympic Games. With severe injuries and a list of medical expenses, Manuel's chances of qualifying for the London Olympic Games looked slim. But with perseverance and determination, she pulled off an unlikely victory at the third round of the National Police Athletic League boxing championships qualifying for the U.S. Olympic trials. However, her Olympic dreams came to an end when she had to pull out of the U.S. Olympic trials due to a shoulder injury in February. With aggressive rehabilitation, she hopes to recover and enter the three remaining national competitions as well as move up in the professional ranks. The Travel and Training grant will help to fund numerous expenses, including travel and coaching fees.

Colorado

Katie Uhlaender (Skeleton & Weightlifting – Breckenridge, CO)

Katie Uhlaender is a world class skeleton racer and weightlifting athlete who has made a remarkable recovery both physically and mentally in just a short amount of time. Uhlaender lost her father just before the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and endured a

snowmobile accident shortly after that. Her road to recovery has been long and hard, but her goals have remained firm. She has established herself as one of the world's greatest Olympic medal threats in the sport of skeleton. On March 4, 2012, only 10 days after giving the U.S. its second gold medal at the skeleton world championships since the women's competition debuted in 2000, Uhlaender competed at the USA Weightlifting Olympic Trials. While she did not qualify for the 2012 Olympic Games she will not allow this to not stop her from tying in 2016. The grant will allow Uhlaender to afford travel, training and equipment expenses for two Olympic sports. The money will also help her pay for necessary pre-season expenses like gym time. Additionally, she plans to purchase some new equipment including new runners for skeleton sleds.

Florida

Brittany Viola (Diving – Coral Gables, FL)

Brittany Viola is a talented diver and a recent graduate of the University of Miami. With her eyes set on a future Olympic gold medal, she has worked hard to position herself for the 2012 Olympic Games. Viola has overcome disordered eating and two ankle surgeries to reach her current level of success. At the 2011 FINA World Championships she finished 10th and earned the U.S. an Olympic spot. Most recently she finished third at the 2012 USA Diving Winter National Championships. The Travel & Training grant will help with her training fees as she continues her training in Miami, Florida. The funds will also help her to travel and compete in the 2012 Olympic Trials along with other national competitions. Viola's goals include making the 2012 Olympic Team and bringing home gold.

Tiffany Williams (Track & Field – Kissimmee, FL)

Tiffany Williams is a Track & Field Olympian who has showcased her talents in several national and international competitions. Since 2006, she has been a member of the USA World Championship team and has won several events including two USA Championship titles in the 400 meter hurdles. In 2009, Williams finished in the top five in 13 events and was ranked fifth in the world in the 400 meter hurdles. She returned after a year off for maternity leave and picked up right where she left off. In 2011, Williams had a fifth place finish at the Ponce Grand Prix and a 12th place finish at the USA Championships at Hayward Field. Most recently she had first place finishes at the Jimmy Carnes Invitational and New Balance Games in the 400m. Funding will allow Williams to pay for coaching and travel expenses, which will enable her to focus solely on her running and not worry about having a financial strain.

Minnesota

Mallory Weggemann (Swimming – Eagan, MN)

Although Mallory Weggemann became paralyzed in 2008 after a routine epidural for back pain, she has forged ahead since then to become one of Paralympic Swimming's most promising athletes. Weggemann has competed in several national and international competitions and has set numerous records in the pool. In 2011, she won eight gold medals and smashed nine world records at the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Swimming World Championships and was named Best Female Athlete with a Disability at the ESPY's. The Travel & Training grant will allow Weggemann to offset travel and training expenses including airfare for national and international competitions, coaching expenses and pool time. Her goal is to compete in nine events at the 2012 Paralympic Games and bring home just as many gold medals.

New York

Ashley Caldwell (Freestyle Skiing – Lake Placid, NY)

Ashley Caldwell is a young, talented, aerial skier who has proven that she can compete among the best in the world. She is the youngest person ever to win an aerial world cup and was the youngest member on the 2010 U.S. Olympic Ski Team. Caldwell fell in love with aerial skiing at the age of 12 after witnessing a hurricane jump at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games. She has since proven her worth on the U.S. Freestyle Ski Team, but with her rigorous training schedule, holding any type of job is extremely difficult. The grant will allow Caldwell to pay for her travel expenses and training camps. She also plans to purchase new skis and binding equipment with her Travel & Training grant. Caldwell hopes to win at the World Championships and medal at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

Pennsylvania

Kimberly Geist (Cycling – Emmaus, PA)

Kimberly Geist has beaten the odds to become one of the world's top cycling prospects. In 2007, she was nearly crushed to death by an 18-wheel tractor trailer, along with her Olympic dreams. Since then, Geist has re-established herself as one of the top women track endurance cyclists in the country. Most recently she finished second at the 2011 World Series of Bicycling and first in the scratch race and third in the individual pursuit at the 2011 Elite National Track Cycling Championships. As Geist makes her way to the 2016 Olympic Games, she is responsible for financing several major competitions. The Travel & Training grant will allow her to fund her trips to national and international competitions and cover the expenses to travel with her bike. She is currently working toward qualifying for the 2016 Olympic Track Cycling Team.

Pittsburgh Passion Women's Football Team (Football – Pittsburgh, PA)

The Pittsburgh Passion is a full-contact women's football team in the Women's Football Alliance, which is comprised of 60 teams. The Pittsburgh Passion Women's Football Team completed its 2011 season with an 8-1 overall record as well as earned the title of Divisional Champion. Many of the players were named to the 2010 and 2011 IWFL All-Star Team. In addition, players Olivia Griswold and Sharon Vasquez were named to the USA Football's 2010 Women's National Team that went on to win gold in Stockholm, Sweden. The funding provided through the Travel and Training grant will help to offset expenses associated with the sport of football including equipment,

training costs, and travelling costs. This will allow the team to focus more on learning and playing the game.

Utah

Muffy Davis (Cycling – Salt Lake City, UT)

Muffy Davis is a top female alpine skier and handcyclist. An accident left Davis paralyzed and dependent on a wheelchair for her mobility in 1989, which compelled her to take on adaptive sports. She quickly relearned how to ski and won a bronze at the 1998 Paralympic Winter Games and ended her competitive skiing career by winning three silver medals at the 2002 Paralympic Winter Games. In 2010, Davis picked up the sport of handcycling and since then she has accumulated numerous titles, including 2011 Paracycling Road World Cup Overall Champion. With no public funding for the sport of handcycling, Travel & Training funding will allow Davis to purchase a top of the line handcycle and components. The grant will also help to cover travel expenses to competitions and training expenses. Davis hopes to be able to represent the United States at the 2012 Paralympic Games.

Washington

Irina Kaplan (Swimming – Redmond, WA)

Irina Kaplan's story is one of perseverance and determination. Kaplan is a Paralympic swimmer who was born without arms. She was adopted in Siberia and moved to Washington where she found her passion for swimming. Kaplan became the youngest swimmer to compete in the Paralympic Trials during the 2008 Paralympics Games. Most recently at the 2011 Parapan American Games she won bronze in the women's 100m backstroke (S6). The Travel & Training grant will allow her to continue training at her current level and to travel to competitions. At the age of 14, Kaplan continues to compete alongside other able-bodied swimmers, giving her all. Her goal is to make it to the 2012 Paralympic Games and medal.

Ursula Grobler (Rowing – Seattle, WA)

Ursula Grobler is a top female rower from South Africa. In 2003, she left her home town of Pretoria, South Africa and traveled to Seattle, Washington to work as an au pair. She took up rowing much later on, but soon left her mark with breaking the World Record on the ergometer. In 2010 she joined the U.S. Rowing National Team and after just four weeks of rowing with her partner, they raced at World Cup I and won gold. Most recently she finished fourth at the World Championships in the lightweight single. The grant will allow for Grobler to cover training camp expenses and to focus solely on training and competing. Her goal is Olympic gold in women's lightweight rowing double sculls at the London Olympic Games.

Erin Alberda (Equestrian – Woodinville, WA)

Erin Alberda is an equestrian superstar who suffers from a rare form of ataxia, a movement disorder. She is a member of the U.S. Para-Equestrian Team with several accomplishments under her belt. Alberda earned her FEI Certificate of Capability allowing her to be considered for selection to the U.S. National Team that will compete at the 2012 Paralympic Games, but she lacks in the funds the help cover the expensive costs of her sport. Her most recent achievements were a team gold at the 2011 Melbourne CPEDI3* held in conjunction with the Saddle World Dressage Festival. The grant will allow Alberda to continue her Para-Equestrian pursuit by providing much needed funds to support her extensive traveling and expenses. The Travel & Training grant will help to pay for national and international travel as well as training and horse maintenance to help with her quest to represent the United States at the 2012 Paralympic Games.

PUBLISHED MAR 8, 2012

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