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May 31, 2004

Dear Sir or Madame,

On May 27, 2004 I was named to the Canadian Paralympic Equestrian Team, to represent Canada at the Paralympic Games in Athens, Greece this upcoming September. What a milestone!

Only 2 1/2 years ago the thought of ever riding again was the furthest thing from my mind, due to a riding accident that left me an incomplete paraplegic. Prior to my accident, I was a short listed member of the Canadian Equestrian 3-Day Event Team and represented Canada at the World Championships in Rome, Italy in 1998.

After my accident, through my recovery process, I eventually regained my aspiration to return to international level of competition. I have dreamed of representing Canada at the Olympics since I was 10 years old, and while I didn't exactly foresee that I would be riding on the Paralympic Team, I believe that everything happens for a reason and this is how it was meant to be for me.

My experiences during my recovery have been some of the most physically and mentally challenging and yet some of the most rewarding. I believe that we all have a purpose to fulfill, and that my accident had purpose. It was meant to further direct me towards the cause for my life. I have since been a Volunteer at the Spinal Cord Research Department at Parkwood Hospital in London, Ontario, have volunteered at the University of Western Ontario as a patient volunteer in neurology for the School of Physical Therapy, and currently am a Research Assistant working for Dr. Barry Deathe, helping conduct a Clinical Research Trial for Amputees. I also embrace every opportunity for public speaking on the benefit of Paralympic Sports and offer motivation and encouragement to both able and disabled people.

In preparation for the Games, I have confirmed plans to train for two months in Germany with one of the highest regarded international dressage trainers, Mr. Conrad Schumacher. My friends have found a talented horse there for me to ride and take to Athens. I will incur many expenses related to leasing, boarding, training and equipment needed for this high level performance horse, along with the necessary living costs. The sum of these expenses is high and estimated at CAD \$25,000. Unfortunately, I do not have the means to afford this personally. Financial support will be needed prior to my anticipated departure in July. My personal and horse related expenses while in Athens, will be paid for once I arrive in the Olympic Village.



So it is with a sense of urgency that I would like to ask you to make a contribution to my goal of being “the best that I can be” in representing Canada at the Athens 2004 Paralympic Games. If you would like to provide another kind of sponsorship, of course any contribution would be greatly appreciated. I would be delighted to come and meet with you to further discuss my ‘Para’ plans and challenges. Please do contact me at the above telephone, fax or e-mail!

Enclosed please find a letter detailing how you can receive a charitable donation receipt for tax purposes for any contribution that you make to me through my Rider Development Fund which is managed by Mr. Arthur Tateishi of Eventing Canada!. I will be able to access the funds immediately!

It would be my great honor should you wish to accompany me with your support on the road to the Paralympic Games. Please be part of my ‘Team to Athens’. With your help, I know that I can realize my trip to Europe, and through that, realize my dream of representing Canada in Athens, and my hopes of a medal. I know I can do it!

Thank you very much for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Karen Brain

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Karen visits with Merlin outside Parkwood Hospital  
London, Ontario, Canada – Fall 2001



Karen at Conrad Schumacher Clinic  
Newmarket, Ontario, Canada – Spring 2003

Details of the Paras at: [www.athens2004.com/athens2004/](http://www.athens2004.com/athens2004/)

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## **September 2001 – Present**

Equestrian / Instructor-Trainer, Ontario and British Columbia, Canada

- competing, and training for the Paralympics
- conducting clinics, lessons, and judging shows

Part-time Research Assistant, Clinical Research Trial for Amputees, Parkwood Hospital, London, ON, Canada

- assisting with day-to-day activities including liaison with patients, compiling data, documentation, internet research for Dr. Barry Deathe

Part-time Student, Wheable Adult School, London, Ontario(ON), Canada

- undertaking a variety of math and science courses in preparation to commence university studies in 2005

Motivational Speaker

- speaking formally and informally to and on behalf of the 'para' experience

## **Highlights**

- Competing, qualifying for and being selected to represent Canada at the Paralympic Games in Athens, Greece in September 2004
- 'Riding at the Paralympics' – Public Speaking Engagement at the Ontario Equestrian Federation Annual Conference 2003
- Ontario Equestrian Federation Achievement Award 2003 – recognition in both Canadian Equestrian Team and Paralympic Equestrian Team categories
- Greater Victoria (British Columbia) Sports Award 2002 – in recognition of outstanding courage, overcoming adversity and returning to competition
- Top Canadian at Open European Paralympics Championships, Portugal 2002

## **Up to September 2001**

Professional Equestrian

- training, competing and selling horses
- conducting clinics, lessons

## **Highlights**

- Represented Canada at the World Equestrian Games, Rome, Italy 1998, finishing in the top half
- Short listed to the Canadian Equestrian Team 1997-2000
- British Columbia Athlete of the Year Award 1998
- Horse Trials Canada Scholarship 1997
- Air Canada Scholarship 1989 - to train in England and Scotland with Mark Phillips