



Imagination



PARALYMPIC
FOUNDATION

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MESSAGE FROM CAMPAIGN CHAIR

Over the last four years, I have been privileged to witness some of Canada's best up-and-coming Para athletes become Paralympians representing our great nation on the world stage. With pride I, along with so many Canadians like you, have watched Para athletes push their own physical and mental limits, all in pursuit of sport.

ImagiNation began in 2017 as a four-year fundraising initiative to strengthen the Paralympic Movement by supporting early athlete and Next Generation athlete development. That has

been accomplished: together we have raised more than \$4 Million which, with matching funds from the Government of Canada, has provided more than \$8 Million to support these endeavours.

But it has been about so much more than that.

ImagiNation, and the support it has received from Canadians, has proven that our Para sport system is strong. Accessible sport programs are growing in communities across the country and the Next Generation of Para athletes are as ready as ever to make their mark. The added funding has enabled many more Para athletes to get the tools and resources they need to succeed, and the increased awareness has created an exceptional demand for programs and services.

As this groundbreaking initiative comes to a formal end, it is with great thanks to such strong supporters, including our lead partners Pfizer Canada and Canadian Tire Jumpstart, the Government of Canada, and donors and volunteers from coast to coast to coast, that ImagiNation will continue to benefit the Canadian Paralympic Movement for years to come.

With gratitude,



MIKE SHAIKH
CAMPAIGN CHAIR

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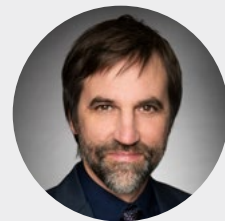
MESSAGE FROM MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

There is no prouder moment in sport than seeing an athlete achieve a personal best. During these difficult times, Canadian athletes have been forced to continue their training despite the many hurdles the pandemic has presented.

Our athletes are a wonderful reflection of what makes our country great. Their character, tenacity, team spirit and joy are qualities that transcend sport.

That is why the Government of Canada supports athletes at every step of their journey, all the way to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We know this is a team effort and are proud to match the Next Generation funds raised through the ImagiNation campaign. Thanks to the generosity of donors, we are making a difference in the lives of young athletes together.

As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I would like to thank the Paralympic Foundation of Canada for its fine work and everyone who supports our rising stars!



**HON.
STEVEN GUILBEAULT**
P.C., M.P.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Steven Guilbeault in black ink.



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IMAGINATION

ImagiNation has made it possible for more Canadian athletes with a disability to excel on the world stage. With a focus on supporting coaching, training environments, equipment, health and wellness, and sport science, Next Generation programming supports athletes on and off the field of play.

"Next Gen programs help an athlete like me get ready to be on the Canadian team. It helps me get all I need to win the gold."

**– Lyne-Marie Bilodeau,
Para nordic skiing**

"Next Gen funding is the greatest thing that can happen for swimming. It's more than just swimmers winning a medal or going to a championship, it's life skills. They're learning skills that they'll use for the rest of their lives. That's the biggest bonus."

**– Michel Bérubé, Next Gen
& Pathways Coach for Swimming
Canada's Para swimming program**

"When I first decided I wanted to chase this dream, I was one year out of university and getting ready to start my Master's degree. I didn't have the funds to pay a coach or buy the equipment necessary to train at a high level. Next Gen funding from the ImagiNation

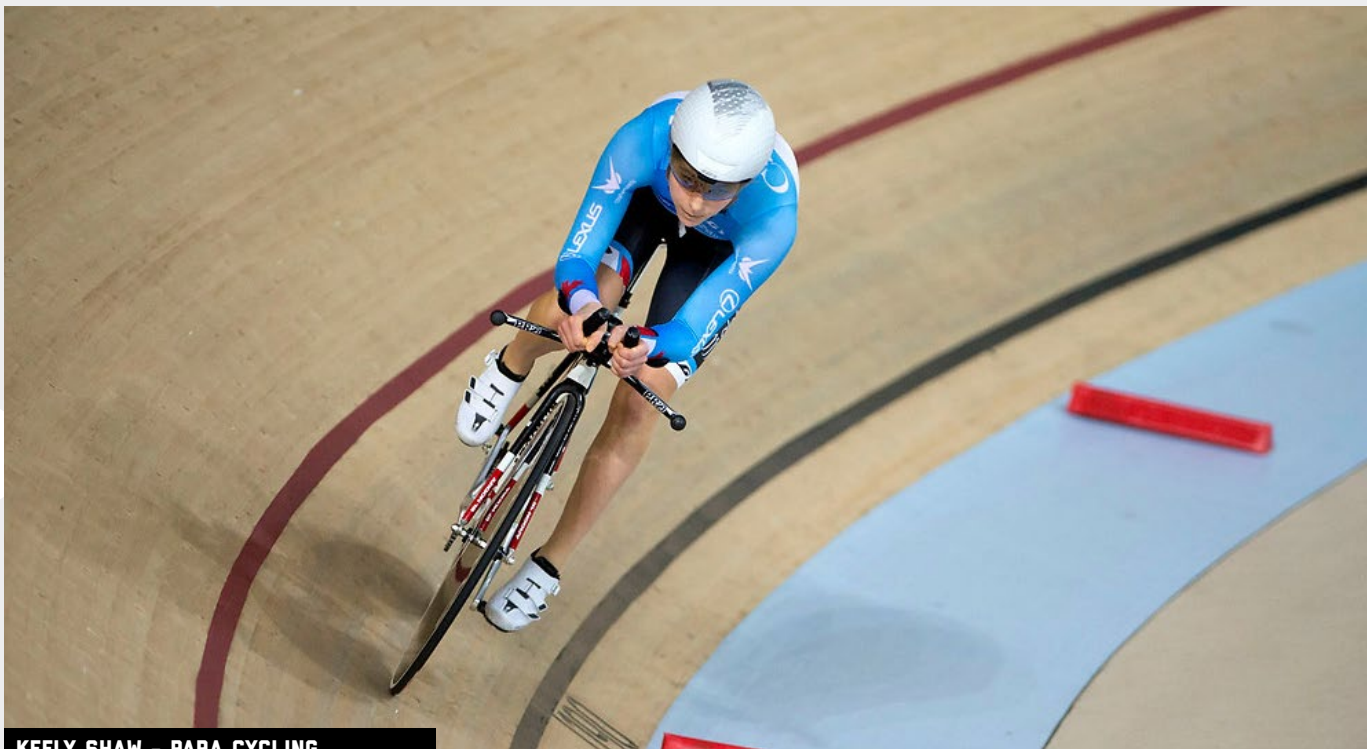
campaign eliminated that barrier and allowed me to pursue cycling while maintaining my education."

– Keely Shaw, Para cycling

"Next Gen funding is important. It was unbelievable to have extra practice time, to have equipment and to be able to travel to more competitions. I don't know if I'd be at this level without it."

**– Jon Thurston,
Wheelchair curling**

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KEELY SHAW - PARA CYCLING
NEXT GEN FUNDING RECIPIENT 2019-20



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ONTARIO ATHLETIC THERAPISTS AND THE LEGACY OF DR. ROBERT JACKSON

Inspiration is contagious. A decade after the passing of Dr. Robert Jackson, Ontario Athletic Therapists honoured a commitment to his memory, his lasting impact on sports medicine, and his contribution to their profession. In 2020, to

mark Dr. Jackson's impact on the Canadian Paralympic Movement, the Ontario Athletic Therapist Association (OATA) made a significant \$20,000 donation to the Paralympic Foundation of Canada's ImagiNation campaign. This donation was matched by the Government of Canada, creating a \$40,000 impact for the Next Generation of Para athletes.

After meeting Paralympic Games pioneer Ludwig Guttmann at the Tokyo 1964 Paralympic Games, Canadian Dr. Robert Jackson was inspired to do more to support opportunities in sport for athletes with disabilities.

He became a leader in sports medicine, revolutionizing

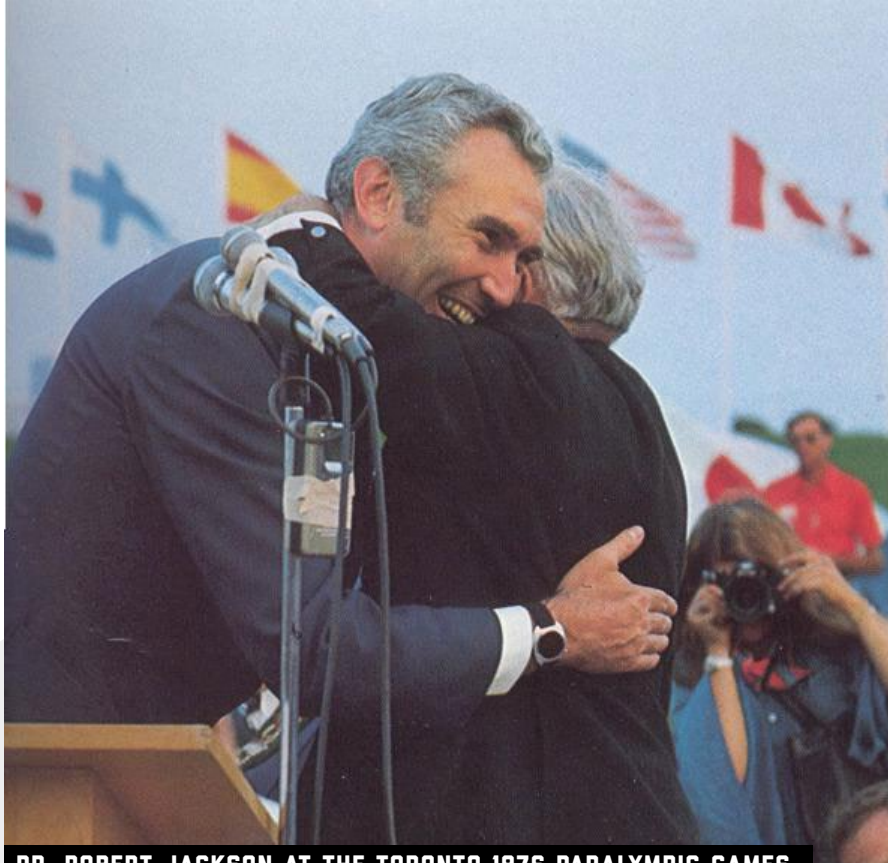
orthopedic surgery, spearheading the formation of the Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association and was a driving force behind the organization of the 1976 Paralympic Games hosted in Toronto, which were branded as Torontolympiad.

"Athletic Therapists have long played an important role in the Canadian Paralympic Movement through their integral care and treatment of Para athletes," said Dean Brokop, Director, Paralympic Foundation of Canada. "We are thrilled to have the support of the Ontario Athletic Therapists Association through their donation in support of our ImagiNation initiative and Canada's Next Generation of Para athletes."



“This significant gift will build upon Dr. Robert Jackson’s legacy in Canadian Para sport and help create opportunities in sport for Canadians with a disability for years to come.”

In 2021, almost 60 years since Dr. Jackson’s first introduction to the Paralympic Games in Tokyo, the OATA is pleased Athletic Therapists will return to Japan to support Canadian athletes at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



DR. ROBERT JACKSON AT THE TORONTO 1976 PARALYMPIC GAMES

TYLER TURNER

PARA SNOWBOARD

"This is all new to me," says Next Generation Para snowboarder Tyler Turner.

It's not the snowboarding itself that's new; Turner, 32, has been snowboarding his entire life. As a teenager, he got a job designing and building snowboard parks at mountain resorts across western Canada, something he'd continue into his twenties.

It's not the sport side that's new, either. Sailing has been a big part of his life as both an activity and a place to live (he currently lives on a sailboat in the waters off Campbell

River, B.C.). He's always been an avid surfer, mountain biker and skydiver, too. He worked as a professional skydiver in Victoria, B.C., a job that – once again – let him earn a living while doing a sport he loved.

It's the Para side of sport that's new.

Turner is a bilateral amputee; both of his legs were amputated below the knee following a skydiving accident at work in 2017.

To go from a highly active lifestyle to days filled with physical rehabilitation, prosthetic fittings, surgeries and pain management was hard, but Turner still had the mountains on his mind.

"There was no question after I lost my legs, I knew I had to find a way to

figure out how to snowboard again. I knew I'd be able to and if I could, I bet I could do it pretty well," he says.

"And then I showed up at a World Cup and won a gold medal."

In April 2021, not even two years after he learned how to snowboard on two prosthetic legs, Turner claimed top place in the Men's Snowboard Cross 2 event at the World Para Snowboard World Cup in Colere, Italy – his first Para snowboard race ever.

Turner says the support from ImagiNation's Next Gen focused funding has already helped along the way.

"It's really amazing and humbling to have the support of Canadians," he says. "Especially this year — it's my

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first year making a move in this world and making it on the Next Gen team.”

“I don’t make much of an income,” he adds. “The fact that I’m able to travel around the world to compete for my country is incredible. Funding for Next Gen is so critical for that.”

Turner hopes to keep competing for Canada on the world stage, notably at the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games. It’s the same competitive mindset he’s always had – with winning a top priority.

“We’re not just out there for participation ribbons,” he says. “We’re competing for gold medals for our country.”



TYLER TURNER - PHOTO BY ALESSANDRO SCARPA

ROB SHAW

WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

Rob Shaw knows his sport – wheelchair tennis – is expensive. He says it can cost up to \$8,000 for a wheelchair made for the sport.

“For a stand-up tennis player, you need about \$90 for a racket and \$10 for two cases of balls and you’re good – you’re in. You’re playing tennis.”

Funding from the Paralympic Foundation of Canada’s ImagiNation initiative helps support Para sport organizations to cover equipment costs, as well as provide funding for coaching, training environments, competitions, health and wellness and sport science.

“For me, that early part of the pipeline is where that Next Gen funding comes in to play,” Shaw says. “Getting started in the sport can be so difficult so you need those supports in place. Otherwise, you have people who want to do it but can’t.”

The ImagiNation initiative also helps bring added attention to wheelchair tennis and other Para sports across Canada, Shaw says.

“The Para sport movement is all about awareness,” he says. “Whether it’s the support from large-scale corporate sponsors or from individual Canadians who are donating \$10 or \$15, that’s just more people who are aware of the sport and aware of what it can do in someone’s life. Sport can really

become a lifesaver for a lot of people; it can give them something to do that they never thought was possible.”

While Shaw, a gold medal winner at the Lima 2019 Parapan American Games, is primed for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, he knows high-level competition isn’t for everyone – but access to sport should be.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re trying to develop the next international superstar or just someone who plays at a local club every once in a while, the benefits are shockingly similar as far as the improvements in the psychosocial factors that we know are influenced by sport,” he says, pointing to, among other things, a heightened sense

of community and belonging, increased confidence, and improved fitness and health.

“They escalate up as you go to the international level, but it doesn’t matter. Just getting people on the court and enjoying those benefits is so key.”

Shaw says Next Gen funding gave him a boost he needed and let him know there were people supporting him along his journey.

“As an athlete, I love the feeling knowing that there are people out there who want me to succeed. It gives me that extra motivation, especially in those times where I’m feeling down or I’m not having a good match,” he says. “I’m always thinking that a lot of people have

sacrificed time and have sacrificed money to get me out here.”

“And,” he adds, “that can give you a big boost in those down periods and

can make those celebratory moments even better because you feel like everyone is celebrating with you.”



ROB SHAW



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MICHAELA GOSSELIN

PARA ALPINE SKIING

"When I first heard I had cancer, one of the first things people said to me was 'You should join the Para team,'" says Michaela Gosselin, a life-long alpine skier.

She was a bit overwhelmed and even a little confused.

"I'm like 'What? I'm not even disabled yet!'" she recalls.

Diagnosed at age 18 with chondrosarcoma, a type of bone cancer that affected the cartilage around her shoulder blade, Gosselin didn't know a lot about the Paralympic Movement, beyond

bits of the Summer Games she'd seen on TV.

But now 20 years old and just two years after surgery to remove her left shoulder and some of the surrounding muscles, Gosselin has joined the Paralympic Movement as one of the newest members of the Canadian Para-Alpine Ski Team.

After spending years competitive racing and coaching with the Osler Bluff Ski Club in Ontario, Gosselin found comfort quickly in the Para alpine world.

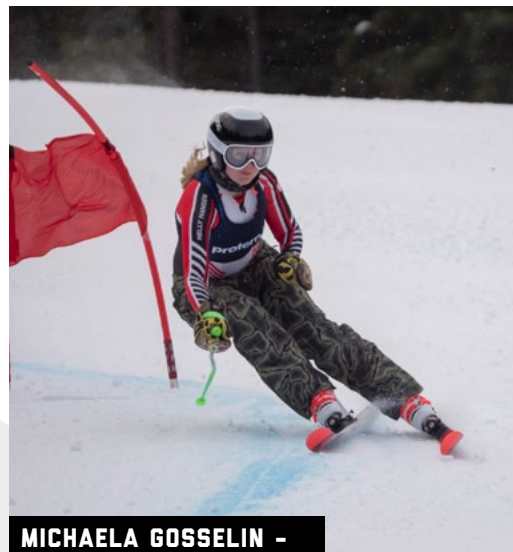
"Para is a very different atmosphere than able-bodied," she says.

"Everyone seems to know each other more. It's a happy environment."

Adjusting to skiing with one pole has added a different learning curve to

her training, but it's just one of the adjustments she's getting used to.

"I'm still trying to figure out my disability a bit and figure out what I can and can't do. I keep surprising myself," she says.



**MICHAELA GOSSELIN -
PHOTO BY ROGER CARRY**



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Connecting with her new teammates made a quick impact, too.

"I didn't really know many disabled people. To be able to meet all of the team and hear all of their stories was great. Without a good team and people to support you, it's hard."

Support comes in many forms and Gosselin's well aware of the financial support offered through initiatives like ImagiNation.

"The Next Gen program is crucial because you need to have that next generation of skiers coming up," she says. "If you don't give them all of the tools and funding to be able to pursue skiing – which is a very expensive sport – it's not going to happen."

The added costs associated with Para skiing, whether for additional



MICHAELA GOSSELIN - PHOTO BY ROGER CARRY

adapted equipment or even coaching, mount quickly.

"I wouldn't be on the team without funding," Gosselin says. "It's just too expensive."

With the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games fast approaching, Gosselin is looking forward to showcasing her newfound Para

sport experience to herself, her team and the world.

"I know now that we can include people with all sorts of disabilities in sport and make it as fair as possible to compete. I'm very excited to demonstrate to people at the Paralympics just what we can do."



PFIZER CANADA

Pfizer Canada's commitment to Canadian Para sport is unparalleled. The company was the first major corporate sponsor to support the Canadian Paralympic Committee in 1996 and were critical partners in Canada's participation at the Paralympic Games in Atlanta.

As a lead partner of the Paralympic Foundation of Canada's

ImagiNation initiative, Pfizer Canada again demonstrated their corporate leadership for an inclusive sport system.

In addition to their support of Next Generation Para athletes through ImagiNation, Pfizer Canada has supported the Paralympic Movement over the past 25 years in many ways, such as directly funding the Canadian team at numerous Paralympic Games, supporting the enhancement of sports sciences in Para sport and promoting health and wellness for athletes.

Thank you, Pfizer, for your continued support.

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**Jumpstart
Bon départ**

CANADIAN TIRE JUMPSTART

Thank you to Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities for their unwavering support as a lead partner of the ImagiNation initiative. Jumpstart came on board as a lead partner in January 2018 with a \$1 million gift, underscoring their longstanding commitment to the Paralympic Movement.

Jumpstart understands that for youth, the opportunity to play is

about more than getting active: sport helps foster self-esteem, and aids in the development of valuable life skills such as courage, confidence, teamwork, and resilience. Being part of a team can leave a lasting, positive impact on a young person's life. Kids of all ages and abilities should have equal access to sport and recreation as an opportunity to learn and grow.

As the COVID-19 health crisis continued to cause stoppages in recreational sport programming across the country, Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, with the help of Canadian Tire Corporation, bolstered their commitment to inclusive play and launched Jumpstart's Sport Relief Fund. The Fund was created to help

build back sport and play with \$20 million in immediate relief funding for community sport, physical activity and recreation across Canada.

On behalf of all those needing access to sport: thank you.



**CANADIAN TIRE JUMPSTART
HELPS CREATE ADAPTIVE SPORT
PROGRAMS ACROSS CANADA**



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CIRCLE OF CHAMPIONS

DONOR LIST AS OF MARCH 31, 2021

Thanks to the generous gifts from individuals, corporations and foundations, the Paralympic Foundation of Canada is working to provide more Canadians with a disability the opportunity to be active in their communities and strive for success on the world stage. Circle of Champions members have shown their commitment to a strong Canadian Para sport system with a donation starting at \$500 per year. For a full list of donors, please visit our website at www.paralympicfoundation.ca.

IMAGINATION CAMPAIGN PARTNERS



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Jim & Deb Westlake

HALL OF CHAMPIONS (\$100,000+)

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Ellen Waxman

BRONZE (\$500 - \$4,999)

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LOOKING FORWARD

For people with disabilities – an estimated one billion people worldwide and already one of the most excluded groups in society – the COVID-19 health crisis has deepened pre-existing inequalities across many aspects of life, including sport. The pandemic caused innumerable cancellations and postponements, marking the most significant disruption to the worldwide sporting calendar since World War II.

Throughout these challenging times, one thing has remained true: sport is about participation. Over the last year, while so many people found themselves limited in their movements and actions, the power

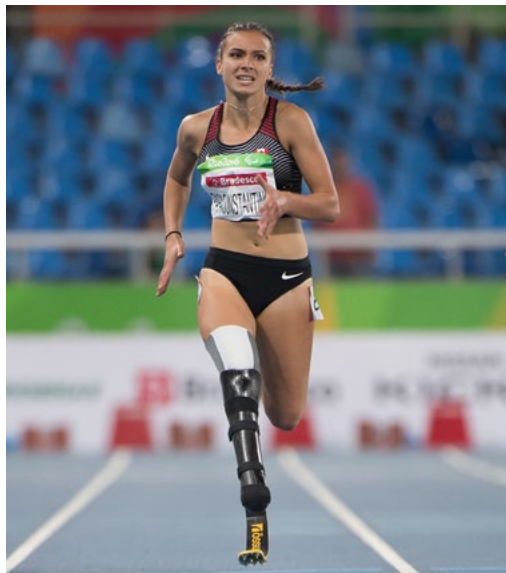
of resiliency and community became clear. It proved that when we create an inclusive society, we can emerge stronger together.

The Paralympic Foundation of Canada is proud to be championing an inclusive sport system, and we've been especially thrilled to do so for Next Generation Para athletes through ImagiNation. As we continue to recover from COVID-19 and adapt to new realities, it's apparent now more than ever that the future must include sport that is available and accessible for all. And so, although the four-year ImagiNation initiative has formally concluded, we will continue to empower Canadians with a disability to achieve their dreams through sport.

After all, winning the race begins with ensuring that every single

Canadian can imagine themselves at the start line.

Thank you for your support of ImagiNation.



MARISSA PAPACONSTANTINO