

DEAF & HARD OF HEARING ATHLETES

WHEN DREAMS BECOME REALITY



**CANADIAN DEAF SPORTS
ASSOCIATION**

INTRO

Historically, sports events and competitions have always been an opportunity for Deaf and hard of hearing athletes to get together in the spirit of solidarity and tolerance, going beyond performance and competition.

Since its creation in 1959, the Canadian Deaf Sports Association (CDSA) has strived to encourage Deaf people across Canada to engage in sports activities in order to bring attention to the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community and to offer more opportunities for competition in which communication is not a barrier to playing sports.

Today, to continue our mission, we encourage the development of high-calibre Deaf and hard of hearing athletes by helping them participate in high-level sports events.

When we interviewed athletes and asked them why they chose to participate with the CDSA and what our impact has been on their sports career, the answers were unanimous. When reading the following stories of four (4) Deaf or hard of hearing athletes, you'll see it for yourself.

There are **6 main reasons** to believe that dreams can be possible with the CDSA:

• UNFAILING SUPPORT

Devoted staff, team managers and coaches with a thorough understanding of Deafness, who only want to see you succeed.

• ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

You'll always be included, no matter which language you use to communicate (English, ASL, French or LSQ).

• GREAT PRIDE IN REPRESENTING YOUR COUNTRY

Donning the maple leaf and representing Canada is possible thanks to the CDSA.

• A CHANCE TO PLAY YOUR SPORT AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The CDSA allows you to turn challenges into opportunities.

• SAFETY

With the CDSA, you'll be part of a safe sports environment, free of bullying, abuse and discrimination.

• VALUABLE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

As an athlete, the CDSA offers you financial support to cover part of the travel expenses for participating in competitions such as the Deaflympics and the Pan American Games for the Deaf.

Deafness is not an obstacle to succeeding in your sports career, as demonstrated by these athletes!

Enjoy reading the interviews!



HOLLY JAMIESON



AGE: 27

PROVINCE: ALBERTA

SPORT: 

COMPETED IN :

2015 – Junior World Curling Championships (Tallinn, Estonia)

2017 – World Deaf Curling Championship (Sochi, Russia)

BRONZE MEDAL

2018 – Canada Deaf Games (Winnipeg, Canada)

GOLD MEDAL WITH TEAM ALBERTA

2019 – Winter Deaflympics (Valchiavenna, Italy)

« The CDSA allows you to be immersed in a culture that celebrates sports, access to communication and pride in being Deaf or hard-of-hearing. They are very welcoming and do everything they can to support you and your dreams, in every way possible. »

Holly started curling at the age of 9 thanks to a local junior program and began competing at 11. Since then, she's been committed to achieving excellence and overcoming obstacles by proudly representing her country on the international stage.

What is your best memory with the CDSA?

Winning the Canada Deaf Games in 2018, which was our gateway to representing Team Canada for women's curling at the Deaflympics in Italy in 2019.

What impact has the CDSA had on you?

I've learned a lot about the importance of communication between team members and CDSA members. I've learned that you can never be too careful when choosing your words, especially since things can get lost in translation from one language to another and signs can be misinterpreted, even by native or near-fluent signers. That being said, I've established a lot of lasting friendships and connections thanks to the CDSA, with its athletes in different sports. It's been a very unifying and rewarding experience for me.

For you, what's the main advantage of participating with the CDSA?

The CDSA has provided a lot of financial support, which helps cover sports psychology, training and travel expenses.



JAMES BRUNNER

AGE: 27

PROVINCE: ONTARIO

SPORT: 

COMPETED IN:

2019 – Sourdlympiques d’hiver
(Valchiavenna, Italie)

« Belonging to the CDSA sports community is a great opportunity! Go for it! »

James started snowboarding at 13, after playing a video game on an N64 console. However, his passion for snowboarding competitions only started recently, in 2018, and he already has one Deaflympics competition under his belt. Since then, he’s kept up with the snowboarding scene and achieves his goals by working on his skills during each of his runs.

What is your best memory with the CDSA?

Hitting the slopes with the best snowboarders in Italy!

What impact has the CDSA had on you?

I really became passionate about snowboarding competitions after my first time taking part a friendly competition in Quebec, in 2018. My snowboarding skills and my network have grown over time, thanks to the help of the CDSA’s downhill snow sports (snowboarding and alpine skiing) team and my coach.

For you, what’s the main advantage of participating with the CDSA?

The CDSA team is full of incredible people! They have a great atmosphere and resources to help Deaf athletes grow. The biggest advantage was being able to communicate easily with the CDSA community using ASL, my first language.



ANDRÉANNE OUELLET-GAGNON

AGE : 28

PROVINCE : QUÉBEC

SPORT : 

COMPETED IN:

2007 – Pan American Games for the Deaf
(Valencia, Venezuela)

GOLD MEDAL

2008 – World Deaf Volleyball Championships
(Buenos Aires, Argentina)

2018 – Regional European Volleyball Tournament
(Montpellier, France)

WINNING TEAM

2018 – **Canadian Deaf Games** (Winnipeg, Canada)

BRONZE MEDAL

2019 – Pan American Games for the Deaf (Brasilia, Brazil)

Very athletic and ambitious, nothing stops Andréanne. She lives life with gusto and constantly gives herself new goals and challenges to tackle. A member of the Team Canada Deaf Women's Volleyball team since 2007, she's also very active in her provincial Deaf sports association.

What is your best memory with the CDSA?

The 2007 Pan American Games in Venezuela.

What impact has the CDSA had on you?

The CDSA is what allowed me to pursue sports at an international level. If it didn't exist, I wouldn't be able to play sports as much.

For you, what's the main advantage of participating with the CDSA?

The ability to play sports with peace of mind, a sense of safety, and without financial worries. They make sure we have everything we need.

« The CDSA allows you to aim higher and go further, and to discover the Deaf community from an international point of view. With them, you're well looked after and you're never alone. You're surrounded by people, athletes and coaches who are passionate and who share their experiences with new athletes. The CDSA has sports engraved on its heart! I'll always be grateful to them for everything they've done for me since the start of my sports journey. »



GRAHAM BODNAR

AGE : 40

PROVINCE : MANITOBA

SPORT : 

COMPETED IN:

2019 – USA Men’s Deaf Basketball Championships
(Indianapolis, USA)

National Champions

MVP of the tournament, Division 2

2018 – Canadian Deaf Games – Basketball 3 vs. 3
(Winnipeg, Canada)

GOLD MEDAL

« The CDSA is a very professional organization that strives to treat Deaf and hard of hearing athletes with the utmost respect and gives them the opportunity to represent their country in international competitions.»

This 6’7” athlete, who is passionate about basketball, proudly represents Canada in the sport. Graham only started competing in Deaf sports in 2018 but he is ready for the next Pan American Games, where Team Canada will have the opportunity to qualify for the next Summer Deaflympics, to be held in Brazil in 2022.

What is your best memory with the CDSA?

Winning the USA Deaf Basketball Championships in 2019 with Team Canada and getting the gold medal in 3 x 3 basketball during the Canada Deaf Games in 2018.

What impact has the CDSA had on you?

Being part of Deaf Basketball Team Canada has been an incredible experience over the course of the past few years. The CDSA has been very supportive of our team and continues to try to give us more opportunities to represent Deaf and hard of hearing athletes, as well as Canada, in international basketball competitions.

For you, what’s the main advantage of participating with the CDSA?

It’s truly a privilege to represent both the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community and Canada as a member of the national Deaf basketball team. The CDSA is the organization that helps make that happen for my team members and myself, as well as the athletes in all other sports.

The CDSA is proud of having a tangible impact on the lives of Canadian Deaf and hard of hearing athletes, whom we've accompanied all the way to the top steps of the podium.

Now it's your turn...

JOIN THE GAME!

info@assc-cdsa.com | assc-cdsa.com



Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Canada 