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Walker Family Starts Scholarship Fund For Student-Athletes With Disabilities At UNH
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DURHAM, N.H. – Carol and James Walker and their son Tyler ‘08, of Franconia, have created the Northeast Passage Athletic Excellence Scholarship Fund at the University of New Hampshire to provide permanent financial assistance to future student-athletes with disabilities.

The Northeast Passage Athletic Excellence Scholarship fund will promote an integrated culture of equality, where high-level athletes with disabilities train and study alongside NCAA athletes. The fund will enable aspiring athletes to attend UNH and will support undergraduate educational costs for students competing on athletic teams sponsored by Northeast Passage. Eligible students must be involved in one of the following: alpine or Nordic skiing, sled hockey, quad rugby, or training in the Paralympic Sport Club, and must demonstrate financial need.

“Student-athletes who happen to have a disability should have the right to pursue their educational and athletic goals without having to sacrifice one for the other,” said Tom Carr, Northeast Passage’s director of athletics. “The Walkers’s gift makes it possible for us to recruit and retain student-athletes who are looking to train and compete at a high level in their chosen sport.”

Tyler Walker has been a member of the U.S. Adaptive Alpine Ski Team since 2003, competing for Team USA in the 2006 Paralympics in Torino, Italy. In 2007, he won the gold medal in the first-ever Monoskier X competition at the Winter X Games and he was the World Cup giant slalom champion. Tyler trained and studied at UNH, graduating in 2008 with a degree in geography. He will, once again, compete for Team USA in Vancouver in 2010.

“Our family is committed to advancing the dreams of other student-athletes by supporting competitive opportunities for those with physical disabilities,” James Walker said. “Tyler has been involved with Northeast Passage for 16 years and his involvement, along with his experiences at UNH, has influenced his growth and success as an individual. We want to ensure those experiences are available to all students.”
To contribute to the Northeast Passage Athletic Excellence Scholarship Fund at the University of New Hampshire, send donations to the UNH Foundation, NEP Scholarship Fund, 9 Edgewood Rd, Durham, N.H. 03824, attn: Ray Goodman. All contributions are tax deductible and directly benefit these student-athletes.

Northeast Passage, founded in 1990, is a nationally recognized leader in the provision of innovative therapeutic recreation services. Northeast Passage delivers disability-related health promotion and adapted sports programs throughout New England. Northeast Passage is a program of the University of New Hampshire’s College of Health and Human Services and is an affiliate of Disabled Sports USA.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state’s flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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Photograph available to download: http://unh.edu/news/cj_nr/2009/oct/13walker01.jpg
Caption: Monoskier and UNH alumnus Tyler Walker of Franconia competes in the 2006 Paralympics in Torino, Italy.
Credit: Ken Watson