

Golden Opportunity

Katie McCarter '10 spent her summer on the ground in Rio for the Olympic Summer Games

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Figure skating might not have been on the schedule for the 2016 Summer Olympics, but Katie McCarter '10 credits her love of that particular sport for her role in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, this summer. Her career with the Olympics, which she attended for the third time, began with a role as coordinator for the U.S. figure skating team for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada. In Brazil, she worked as part of the NBC Olympics logistics crew, helping to ensure that all the pieces were in place when the summer games opened on August 5.

"It's a massive production," McCarter says, noting that some members of the team left for Brazil at the beginning of April and will remain through the end of summer. She joined them in the beginning of July.



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Yet if not for a change in major, her path might have been quite different.

McCarter started at UNH as a political science major, but after taking a few classes that didn't excite her, she switched to [recreation management and policy](#). A figure skater growing up, she also joined the synchronized skating team.

During her junior year, McCarter applied for internships with the U.S. Olympic Committee at training centers in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Lake Placid, New York, where Team USA athletes were preparing for the 2010 Winter Games. McCarter received offers from both training centers and chose Colorado, where she worked on multiple projects in preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

Even though she was still in school, McCarter got to go to Vancouver.

"I really wanted to be part of it all, so while I was an intern, I let my supervisor know that if they needed help in Vancouver, I'd be happy to go," the Mansfield, Massachusetts, native says. "I got permission from my professors and was able to take two weeks. It was really, really awesome."

In 2011, McCarter got a job with the Team USA figure skating team and, in 2014, traveled to the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. She worked in the athlete high-performance department, the area responsible for providing tools and resources necessary for Team USA athletes to achieve their best results when competing. She also helped with international logistics to secure alternative training sites for the skaters.

"I never worked so hard in my entire life as I did preparing for the Sochi Games," McCarter says. "It was a difficult location; so many things needed to go right. I didn't want athletes to worry about anything — their only job was to focus on bringing home a medal."

With NBC Olympics, McCarter was responsible for the credential submissions of the estimated 3,000 NBC employees, which allowed them to work in Brazil and also granted them access to venues during the games. For the three weeks of the games, NBC aired more than 6,000 hours of Olympic coverage, which McCarter says is “more than if you replayed every single NFL game from 2015 plus playoffs combined.”

Reflecting on her role shortly before the opening ceremony, McCarter noted, “It will be a big operation. I’ll probably be in constant motion 12 hours a day.” As to just how many of the competitions she thought she might be able to see, she added, “I purchased tickets to women’s gymnastics. Anything else will be icing on the cake.”

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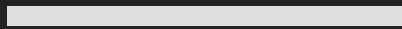
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