

Run, Katie! Run!

Twenty-year-old, Frankfort, New York, resident Katie Maneen has big plans for her life. Her long-term plan is to complete her studies at SUNY-Oswego and embark on a career as a guidance counselor or college admissions representative. In the short-term, Katie hopes to qualify for the 2012 U.S. Paralympics Track & Field Team wearing her Cheetah running leg, which was recently fit and fabricated by Rehab Tech.

Katie was born without the fibula bone in her right leg and missing three toes on her right foot. Her foot was amputated when she was 11 months old at Shriners' Hospital in Springfield, Massachusetts. A Shriner's baby, Katie has worked with prosthetists and orthopedic doctors there since birth. She has been wearing a prosthesis since she was 14 months old. Her insurance company referred her to Rehab Tech in the fall of 2010 when she inquired about being fit for a sports leg.

From little on, Katie has been an athlete. Her parents, Richard and Mary Margaret, used a no limits

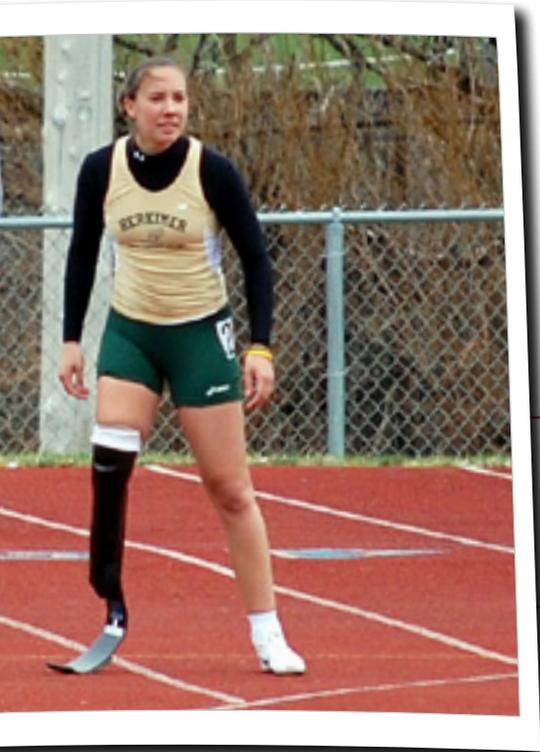


approach with her and have been more than impressed with the abilities she's developed. "When Katie was born our seven-year-old son's questions were 'Would she walk? Would she run? Would she ride a bike?'" the Maneens said. "We would have been thrilled with just those accomplishments."

But Katie has done much, much more! She participated in volleyball, softball, soccer (goalie), and golf in high school. When she was completing her high school volleyball season, the coach at Herkimer County Community College (HCCC) approached Katie about throwing javelin on the junior college's track and field team.

"The HCCC team had just won its first national championship for track," Katie said. She decided to give it a try. The team won its second NJCAA Championship in 2010 with Katie as a member.

In the 2011 track and field season, she expanded her events to include the 100-meter and 200-meter races along with javelin throw. Training for the sport takes a significant amount of time, with practices held five days a week, between two and three hours a day. Meets typically are held once a week and Sundays are the only day off. Katie was notified in May that her 100-meter time (15 seconds



flat) qualified her for the 2011 U.S. Paralympics Track & Field National Championships held in June in Miramar, Florida.

Katie has been training for the Paralympics trials and traveled to Florida to participate in early June. Katie finished second in the 200-meter dash and third in the 100-meter dash, but did not qualify for the 2012 Paralympics Team that will compete in London next year. Still, she had a great time competing.

Success as a runner is made possible, in part, with the help of Katie's new running leg, fit and fabricated by Mike Hall, CPO, at Rehab Tech. Katie wears a Cheetah-style running prosthesis -- the Ossur

Cheetah Energy Storing Foot. It features a Coyote lock mechanism and a carbon-laminated socket held in place with an Ossur Locking Liner.

"This foot has many advantages for Katie," Mike said. "It's designed strictly for recreational sports and is extremely lightweight!"

Katie describes wearing it as "the closest I will get to running on two legs!"

According to Mike, Katie makes walking look very easy, no matter what prosthesis she's wearing. "She's young, strong, and athletic," he added. "Katie is full of abilities. She can do anything she wants to do!"

Athletics are only part of Katie's story. She is an outstanding student and earned many academic awards and honors in both high school and at HCCC. She graduated from the junior college in May and

show them what their baby will do, too."

Katie's parents' received advice early on that helped to instill this fearlessness in their daughter. "We were told that we should never place limitations on her and we never did," the Maneens said. "Katie has no comfort zone and truly pushes herself and her abilities to the max!"

"We tell other parents with amputee children to never place limitations on their child based on their own personal fears and apprehensions," they added. "Rather, let the child figure out their own (physical) limits..."

Katie says she's tried all kinds of activities and is aware of those she can't do, "I can't skip or ice skate. I don't make excuses. I just try something else!"

Something else - that's a good

"They really got to know me, outside of being an amputee. It was comforting to know that they cared so much."

received the Chancellors Award for Student Excellence, 2011 Female Scholar Athlete of the Year, Academic All-Region Honors, and was named in Who's Who in American Junior Colleges. She will study human development when she returns to school this fall.

Katie sees her biggest accomplishment as her ability to inspire other amputees through her athletics and her spirit. She believes it is important to show people that nothing should hold them back from what they want to achieve. Katie has been visiting with new amputees and their parents at Shriner's for quite some time and shares her 'can-do' message.

"I am one of those people doing exceptionally well," Katie said. "I tell the parents I meet all the things I can do wearing my prosthesis and

way to describe this all-around inspiring young woman. Mike and Terry Hall, CFO and Rehab Tech's office manager, have truly enjoyed working with Katie. "She makes it so easy!" Mike said. "Katie's personality and attitude are such an asset for her.

"Terry and I saw her compete in a meet recently," Mike added. "It was great for us to see and gave us a lot of insight into how she uses the leg."

Katie and her parents have great praise for the Rehab Tech team. "They made Katie feel like she was the only patient," the Maneens said. "They always treated our questions and concerns like they really mattered."

"They really got to know me, outside of being an amputee," Katie added. "It was comforting to know that they cared so much."

Holiday Road!

A Little Planning Will Smooth the Bumps

Travel is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, see new places, and experience cultures different from your own. And while many disabled travelers set sail or board a plane seemingly effortlessly, others may have some obstacles to overcome.

Certainly a challenge for amputees is navigating airport security. A survey in 2010 conducted by the Amputee Coalition resulted in widespread media coverage of the indignities people wearing prostheses, including breast prostheses, undergo.

According to the survey, Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) often are confused about how to handle security screenings for prosthetic arms and legs. Not only are there different procedures at different airports, but also different procedures at the same airport in some instances.

Some of the behavior reported in the survey included screenings done by TSOs not of the same gender, denying amputees the ability to have their caregivers in the screening rooms, and taking an excessive number of X-ray scans - sometimes more than 15 - during a screening. In addition, half of survey respondents reported that they were required to raise their clothing during a procedure called "explosive trace sampling" with no explanation given by TSA personnel. Another survey respondent said she was forced to stand on a stack of six unsecured storage bins while being exposed to multiple x-ray scans.

In response to the survey, TSA officials met with the Amputee Coalition in Washington, D.C., in July 2010. The discussion led to an action plan designed to address, correct, and mitigate the TSA agents' lack of consistency and training. An

immediate result was eliminating the practice of using crates when scanning amputees and the development of a card that people with disabilities can show to TSA agents, that notifies the agent of a disability in a discreet way.

Even with continued discussion between the TSA and the Amputee Coalition and improvements in the system, disabled travelers need to be prepared for procedures that are not always uniform and should familiarize themselves with their rights. More information for disabled travelers can be found on TSA's website www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/specialneeds/index.shtm.



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PREP FOR A GOOD TRIP

Here are a few more things to keep in mind when preparing for a trip:

- When flying, if you need assistance in boarding, contact the airline to see if they have a person who helps those with special needs. Be sure to explain fully what you need, such as oxygen or special equipment. Everything you bring aboard needs to be approved.

- Label everything. If you have a power chair or scooter, label every part of it and include written instructions for assembly in the event it is dismantled.

- If you have a connecting flight, make sure the chair or equipment is properly ticketed so it is waiting for you when you disembark to make your transfer.

- With a manual wheelchair, ask the flight attendant if there is room in the closet to store it without dismantling it.

- Consider commercial loss and damage insurance for your wheelchair's full value. If your chair is checked in baggage and it is damaged, the carrier is not responsible for full replacement. A few extra dollars for insurance is well worth it if the chair is damaged beyond repair.

- Airport security will question medications that require dilution (carrying a water bottle). Ask your physician to prepare a labeled medication letter, stating that you must have the medication with you at all times or else risk injury. Even with this, security may detain you for further questioning.

- In the event of a medical emergency, a travel file containing medical documentation should be carried. Be sure to include a diagnosis of the condition, a

list of current medications, medical and food allergies, and contact information for reaching family and your health care provider.

- Track your meds. Changing time zones may require keeping a notebook to track when the last medication was taken and when the next one is due.

- If utilizing a PCA, a written contract should be developed before the start of the trip, clearly identifying expected daily duties.

- Check your equipment. Visit your prosthetist to ensure your prosthesis is fitting properly and to check for any potential problems.

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HELPING OUR PATIENTS REACH THEIR GOALS

Get Out and Enjoy the Great Outdoors

Oh those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer are here. What a wonderful time of year to enjoy the Great Outdoors. New York State offers many recreational opportunities for the disabled. With so many options, it might be difficult to try them all before the next season arrives.

Consider these options when looking for a way to spend time outside.

CAMPING AND HIKING: International Paper John Dillon Park, a 15,800-acre conservation easement is specially designed to accommodate people with disabilities. Located in the central Adirondack Mountains near the town of Long Lake, it offers more than three miles of trails built to the standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The park also provides access to camping and fishing. For more information, visit www.johndillonpark.org or call (518) 524-6226.

OUTRIGGER CANOEING: Outrigger canoeing - canoes with pontoons on one side

for added stability - offers competitive and recreational opportunities. Cape Ability Outrigger Ohana (CAOO), based in West Henrietta, offers classes on various waterways primarily in the Rochester area. The cost is usually \$10 per 1.5-hour class or \$25 for three 1.5-hour classes. This includes all equipment (paddle, lifejacket, adaptive equipment). A steersperson is provided. Wounded Warriors participate free of charge. Friends and family members of persons with disabilities are welcome to participate in the outrigger canoe programs. Paddlers with disabilities interested in any of CAOO's programs should contact Jan Whitaker at president@adaptivecanoeing.org or call (585) 292-6107 for more information about scheduling.

WATER SPORTS: Western New York Adaptive Water Sports offers sailing excursions on the Erie Canal Harbor, Buffalo, Saturdays June through Oct. 15. Other adaptive classes include water-ski clinics July 24, Aug. 21, and Sept. 4; fishing clinics Saturday mornings June through Sept. 24; and First Dive Scuba Clinics. For more information, visit www.wnyadaptivewatersports.org.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN SAILING: The Community Sailing Center and Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports have summer-long programs and instructions for all abilities from beginners to private boat rentals for the seasoned sailor. Canoe and kayak instructional lessons are also available. For more information, visit <http://communitysailingcenter.org/community/adaptive/> or call (802) 353-3178.



Photo by Ken Watson