

# SportsHopes Highlights

Happy Holidays 2009

High School to College Pathway  
Student-Athlete Support  
[www.sportshopes.org](http://www.sportshopes.org)

Hello, Community!

*It's about the kids. They are the difference makers. Give them a voice, give them a place and give them a chance. Share knowledge, share time, share resources and watch them grow.*

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"Some of the greatest dangers to society today are lack of education, poverty and unemployment.

The extent to which an individual can determine one's lifepath does not entirely depend on one's own capabilities, but rather can depend on the social environment in which an individual has grown up and is exposed to. It is important to realize that there are many youth who have not been fortunate to have grown up in an environment where education was easily accessible and understood. The situation can become even more difficult when parents or guardians themselves never obtained an education for whatever reasons. It is important to provide various opportunities and entrances for youth that will enable them to get out, move forward and integrate into an environment of education and learning.

Athletics is one pathway through which an individual is able to access a higher-level education through appropriate programs and ultimately build a career and take life into one's own hands."

**- Dr. Diego Kienle, Theoretical Physicist and Researcher, Sandia National Labs, Livermore, CA**  
SportsHopes thanks Dr. Kienle for sharing his thoughts at a recent business function where the topic of the importance of diversity of pathways to college was discussed.

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## On the Local Front How You Can Help -

"In the short time that I have been superintendent of the Castro Valley Unified School District I have noticed a very strong commitment for our students and schools with our parents and the community, which ranges from volunteer time to monetary donations. I often am asked, "What can I do to help?"

The simplest answer for a parent or guardian is **be there for your students**. Listen to their concerns. Share in their excitement. Guide them on the path of growing up without doing everything for them. Our sons and daughters need to grow from a wide range of learning experiences both in and out of the classroom. Being a good parent or guardian provides tremendous support to schools.

A community member can greatly assist a school or district by understanding the issues and helping communicate accurate information. Too often I have to respond to a statement that starts with, "I heard that..." and the "that" is not accurate. Informed community members can be great ambassadors for our schools. Be involved. For legitimate concerns contact the appropriate person in a problem-solving mode.

In these difficult economic times schools throughout California are facing unprecedented budget cuts that seriously threaten the education of our students, the next generation in a democratic society. If you can, donate to one of the many foundations or parent clubs assisting our schools and/or volunteer time.

**- Jim Negri, Superintendent, Castro Valley Unified School District, Castro Valley, CA**

Suggestions/Questions: [jnegri@cv.k12.ca.us](mailto:jnegri@cv.k12.ca.us) [www.cv.k12.ca.us](http://www.cv.k12.ca.us)

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## **Diversity of Peoples, Diversity of Programs, Diversity of Pathways -**

During these challenging economic times we are all called upon to take action to help. It is not a time of me, it is a time of we. As budgets are cut we see the devastating effects these cuts are having on our school districts and educational institutions. Class courses and programs are being eliminated or offered less often. Students are unable to obtain necessary courses and must extend their timeframe for obtaining a degree. Options such as summer school and short winter sessions are no longer readily available. Colleges are raising fees, cutting enrollment numbers by the thousands and looking to enroll more "full pay" out of state and international students to make up for lost revenue. Elementary, middle and high schools are increasing the numbers of students in a given class. The picture painted is not pretty. As more cuts occur more programs are eliminated limb by limb, or in some situations, right at the trunk. Programs that provide diversity, well-roundness and bring community together within educational institutions are often hit with the axe first. Athletics and Arts are such programs that come to mind.

I believe that Athletics (and Arts) are an important and valuable part of diversity of peoples, diversity of programs and diversity of pathways within educational institutions, especially with regards to high school to college to career track successes, as well as within the greater community.

All students are not the same. Students have different views, different goals, different purposes and different passions. This is as diversity should be. While all students will hopefully have an equal academic base from which to start they will branch out and grow in varied ways. Along with regular academic focuses and studies students further compete in fields of math and science, history and English, numerous other fields, and yes, some compete in the field of athletics.

To consider that those who compete athletically somehow deserve fewer pathway opportunities, or fewer ladders of support is discriminatory. I have heard it said, "Well he/she is just an athlete." Such a statement is haunting and infers that those who compete athletically are somehow of lesser value or of lesser importance than those who compete in other ways. I find this thinking offensive.

Academics, Athletics (and Arts) help to create inclusive, multi-dimensional and diverse educational institutions. The concept of diversity is important, but what is key is diversity of *all*. We need to do whatever we can to retain it. Stand-up, speak-out, write letters, write grants, raise funds and volunteer. These are our communities, these are our backyards, these are our youth and they are our future.

**- Jennifer Oliver, Founder and President, SportsHopes, [joliver@sportshopes.org](mailto:joliver@sportshopes.org)**

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## **Fee Waivers for SAT / ACT / NCAA –**

In order for a high school student to receive a fee waiver for either the SAT or ACT the first step in the process normally begins with the student contacting his or her high school counselor. The fee waivers are sent to the high schools by the testing agencies and there are certain financial guidelines that high schools need to follow in order to issue fee waivers to students. In general, if a student qualifies for free or reduced lunch at their high school they will likely meet the threshold required to receive a fee waiver.

Since some specific student situations are not so cut and dry (for example where a family was doing fine but a parent recently lost his or her job) these types of factors may be taken into account. The length of time used to determine whether or not a student qualifies is short, so as long as a student starts the process before the registration deadline for the respective tests has passed they should be okay.

If a student obtains a fee waiver for either the SAT or ACT they are also eligible to have their NCAA Eligibility Center registration fee waived as well. Contact your high school counselor.

**Learn more about SAT/ACT/NCAA fee waivers by visiting these websites:**

SAT: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/calenfees/feewaivers.html>

ACT: <http://www.actstudent.org/faq/answers/feewaiver.html>

NCAA: <http://www.ncaa.org/wps/ncaa?ContentID=49603>

## SportsHopesSnapshots –



**Brian Thomas**, sophomore, Chabot College (JC), Hayward, CA, (6'-6" 330 lbs. OL football player) reaches out to four-year colleges and coaches via email, letter writing and phone calls. He is eligible to graduate "early" in December 2009.



SportsHopes welcomes our newest student-athlete Mentor, **Danielle Harris**, freshman, Laney College (JC), Oakland, CA. Danielle competes in track and field and does volunteer work in the community.



**Monique Aldridge**, senior, Castro Valley High School, CV, CA, with mother Rosie at her side, registers with the NCAA Eligibility Center. Monique is a track athlete and made it to State prelims in the hurdles spring 2009. This was Monique's first year of track.



**Ashawndaus "Ash" Woods**, senior, Hayward High School, Hayward, CA, (football/track) volunteers hours before leading his FB team to victory as QB (and DB/WR) against a local rival. **Kristina Utley**, junior, Castro Valley High School, CV, CA, (soccer goalie/basketball) is our newest Volunteer, an early riser and first onsite to help.





Damion Rosby, junior, Castro Valley High School, CV, CA, (track/football) talks with Aaron Thigpen (Gamespeed). Damion raced a 10.89 100m at regional '09 USAT&F JO prelims.



Darnell Reed (center of photo), senior, Castro Valley High School, (football WR/DB) visits Butte College (JC) in Oroville, CA, on an unofficial visit and to watch a Bowl game.



Volunteer Arianna Posey, JR, CVHS, basketball/track; Mentor Dash Oliver; volunteer Ash Woods, SR, HHS, football/track; volunteer Brianna Miller, JR, CVHS, track/basketball; volunteer Marzetta Davis, JR, CVHS, track; Mentor Danielle Harris; volunteer Brianna Giscombe, JR, CVHS, volleyball/basketball/softball/track; volunteer Alex Foster, JR, CVHS, basketball/track; and volunteer Damion Rosby, JR, CVHS track/football assist at the SportsHopes booth during the Castro Valley Education Foundation's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Health and Fitness Fair held September 20, 2009 ([www.cvef.org](http://www.cvef.org))



Volunteer Damion Rosby, student-athlete Mentor Alyssa Boisse, freshman, dance athlete, Las Positas College (JC) and volunteer Alex Foster, staff the SportsHopes booth at the local health/fitness fair.



SH volunteer Alex Foster, junior, Castro Valley High School, (basketball/track) and Mentor Dash Oliver, freshman, track athlete, UC Berkeley, help local youth unload ewaste.

## An Olympian's Story

By Jennifer Oliver

Her name is Marilyn King. Her journey from early beginnings to today is an amazing one, as can be with the life stories of athletes who work hard, persevere through challenges, find their way to special places, and then once there, turn around and give back all they can to help others.

I met Marilyn for this interview at a tiny coffee shop within walking distance from her home in Oakland, CA. She was as I thought she might be, tall and athletic-looking with short and graying hair. Her eyes expressed life and experience, her stance reflected strength and courage, and her words reflected understanding and wisdom. A name like King brings to mind a symbol of someone of who has done exceptional things in one's life, and such is the case of Marilyn, exceptional of the Olympian variety.

Marilyn was born in Boston, MA, but she didn't stay there for long. As the daughter of a Coast Guard employed father the family moved often. At one point the family lived in Santa Clara, CA, and it is here during elementary and middle school years where she first got involved in sports. "I was very shy as a youth and not a great athlete," Marilyn recalls, "but I got involved in community sports to make friends."

"My family relocated to Staten Island, New York, in 1963 when I was a freshman in high school. I attended Tottenville High which was the smallest public high school in New York at that time. In the spring of 1965 during my sophomore year my mother told me of a track meet, a pentathlon, being held in Long Island. She suggested I go and give it a try. Two girls had signed up and they needed a third. Of the five events I had only done the sprint and the hurdles prior, not the shot put, long jump nor high jump. I competed and ended up being third best on the east coast."

"It was then that I knew track was where I belonged. You have to understand at that time there were very few sports opportunities for girls. I started to train seriously and hard *for something* with a new mindset that what and how you think effects performance."

"The following year the same two girls showed up at the pentathlon competition. I beat them both and ended up being the Eastern States champion. There were articles in the newspaper and locals donated small amounts of money to help me pay for a flight to California to compete in the pentathlon at the 1966 National Championships. I was 16 years old."

"This was a pivotal time in my life. The Olympic Committee was there at Nationals, and they invited some of the girls to participate in Olympic training for the Olympics. Among the girls invited were the two I had actually competed against and beaten prior. I did not receive an invitation."

"I was stunned," Marilyn said. "I felt if those girls could be in the Olympics than I knew I could be, and that thought played out in my mind every day. I went back to Staten Island and everything changed. I knew if I worked hard I could be in the Olympics. Before my trip I had friends who would walk around the track while I ran. When I came back I changed friends to be with those *who too would run*."

"A neighbor hand-made me a couple of hurdles, and I would practice running the hurdles with my pet dog at my side as my training partner. The winter weather in Staten Island is not favorable to outdoor sports, so I often trained in the hallways of Tottenville High. The principal would leave his office door open so I would have a longer stretch of space in which to run."

"I knew if I wanted to be in the Olympics I would have to return to California as that was where track was happening. I had to get a better job as my parents could not afford out-of-state tuition. I also had to get a pentathlon coach. I did my research and found three at that time and ended up going to Ed Parker of the Millbrae Lions Track Club in the San Francisco Bay Area. I started training with Coach Parker and made the 1971 Pan American team as a pentathlete. It was an unbelievable experience."

While training for the Olympics Marilyn pursued her academics as well. She started college at San Fernando Valley State College (now called California State University, Northridge) in southern California, and transferred after one year to California State University, Hayward (now called East Bay) in northern California. She graduated from Hayward in 1973 with a BS in Kinesiology.

"Along with my education I set my focus on the 1972 Olympic games in Munich, Germany, with some additional international competitions in between. At the 1972 Olympics I was like a spectator on the field but I knew I wanted to go back next time as a participant. I started to train for the 1976 Olympics in Montreal, Canada. I made it and placed 16<sup>th</sup>.

"This was another pivotal moment for me. I watched the performances of the Russian and East German athletes and I felt they were not much better than us, yet they had much better training and tools available."

"I wanted to get to another Olympics. I set my sights on the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. At that time I was working full time as the women's track coach at University of California, Berkeley. While coach there I obtained a spare room located in the basement of the building, had plans designed and got some equipment in order to create the first weight room there for the women's athletic teams."

"When I was hired at Cal I requested a one year leave of absence in order to train for the 1980 Olympics. They agreed to it, so in the Fall of 1979 I started to train full time for the Olympics. That November my life would change forever."

"One day while driving my car I was hit from behind by a truck. I suffered a bulging disc in my back and had head to heels pain. I could not get out of bed and could do zero amount of training. I started repeating a mantra in my mind, 'I am getting better every day and I will be in the top three at the Olympic Trials,' but I wasn't getting better and physical therapy was not working."

"I decided to obtain films of the world record holders in all five pentathlon events, and I watched these films 3-4 hours a day for months from my bed or a chair. I kept thinking, 'I am going to be in the top three in the Olympic Trials,' even though I could not physically train. I began envisioning practices, envisioning walking through each practice, each step and each technique, and I envisioned my competition. When the weather got better in the spring of 1980 I started to get out to the local track at Laney College in Oakland, CA. A friend of mine set up all the equipment for each of the five events and I envisioned training, going through each movement and each motion of each of the five events. As the Olympic trials neared I requested to be comped in to compete in the trials and was. I had not physically trained for seven months. In order to compete I had to have a shot of Novocain in my back."

Marilyn placed second in the five event pentathlon trials, and all the while her competitors did not know what she had been through and that she had not been able to physically train.

"I did not want them to know," Marilyn said. "I isolated myself. When I took a second in the trials I knew what I had been through was life altering. I was shocked. Most people would say it was not possible what I had accomplished yet I had done it. Because of this experience I knew that something extraordinary had happened, something exceptional. What all that history led to was the real value I learned."

"I resigned my job as a track coach and launched into an exploration of exceptional human performance. The basic question I asked was, 'What is present, what happens, when ordinary people do extraordinary things?' I was an average athlete who worked hard. I became a student again and launched into a pathway of studying imagery and visualization. I was only at the beginning. I discovered things that were at the infancy of sports psychology, things that were being taught to elite athletes in Europe, to astronauts, to cancer patients and to others."

"What I realized however was by itself visualization is not enough on its own. To do the extraordinary three things must be present:

*"Passion (you've got to have something you are passionate about, something that matters to you more than anything), Vision (your thinking skills) and Action (you must have a game plan and daily mental and physical practices). This is the path that led me to build my business, Beyond Sports. Achievement is not just physical, it is also mental and emotional."*

"The most important two minutes of your day are when you wake up and envision your gold. You are already wired to win. Begin your day the Olympian way. It is the most important daily practice you can do. It is simple to say but not easy to do. It takes an act of courage."

All of our life experiences lead to today and this is where Marilyn's heart is. She took everything she knew, everything she had lived and learned and believed in, and founded her business, Beyond Sports, in Oakland, CA, in 2004. A key concept of her business is that of, "Olympian Thinking."

*Olympian Thinking elements fit into three categories: Passion (spirit), Vision (mental) and Action (physical).*

"The largest category is Mental skills," said Marilyn. "Clearly the first step to any achievement is to dare to imagine you can do it, create a crystal clear image of the goal and with the goal in mind the how-to steps emerge creating a pathway to reach your goal. One part of the mental skills area is the mental rehearsal of precise details of a performance which helps in execution of the performance."

"While mental skills play an important role in superior performance it is the Passion or spirit that give Olympians and other peak performers the energy to do what it takes to succeed. Being passionate about something unlocks all the energy and creativity necessary to achieve a goal."

"The third category is Action, with the key being daily mental and physical practices in support of the goal."

"Other aspects of the Action component are things like developing a support structure. An example is parental, guardian or mentor support where youth are supported in the belief that all things are possible to those who are passionate and persistent."



"Passion is the energy source of peak performers and each of us has the ability to look deep inside to identify what we value most. With one person who believes in us we are all capable of creating a crystal clear image of the goal, knowing that the how-to image will emerge. Armed with our passion and our vision we can search out or create the kind of daily support that will allow us to do what must be done to make our dream come true. While other elements like risk, fear and failure come into play it is the essential alignment of body (physical), mind (mental) and spirit (emotional) that form the foundation of superior performances."

Marilyn's "Beyond Sports" provides programs in three principal domains:

Business domain: Providing inspirational, motivational, performance and leadership workshops and key note addresses to businesses and organizations. Marilyn has worked with companies such as AT&T, Ford Motor, Starbuck's and Ikea. She travelled to India for Ikea where she worked with people from seven countries in problem solving. Marilyn works with educational and learning institutions, sports, health and fitness organizations as well as non-profits and numerous others.

Education domain: "The *Olympian Initiative* is my goal is to get Olympian Thinking to middle school children, starting in the city of Oakland, CA," Marilyn said. "The Olympian Initiative is designed as a comprehensive program that attracts and aligns existing resources to support youth in achieving their goals. Young people can acquire the same powerful thinking skills Olympians use and transcend challenging environments. The Northern California Olympians (NCO) is a regional alumni association of Olympians who have made a commitment to help and support youth, starting in Oakland, CA, to *Live Olympic* and envision and achieve their goals. Olympians intend through our networks to make this program available to youth worldwide."

Peace domain: "People need to learn about and be knowledgeable about peace so they can act effectively and be part of the Peace Team. The Peace Team is an international Action Network led by Olympic athletes to think effectively and do our part each day to increase the peace," said Marilyn.

"Olympians know that ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things by aligning passion, vision and action. This universal principle can be applied to creating peace as well as to winning Olympic events."

The annual International Day of Peace is September 21. Please visit: [www.pathwaystopeace.org](http://www.pathwaystopeace.org)

**For more information about Beyond Sports and Olympian Thinking contact Marilyn King:**



Today and yesterday....  
Thank you, Marilyn – *SportsHopes*

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## Five Olympic Rings

The five rings represent the continents of the Americas (North and South), Australia, Europe, Africa and Asia. The rings are interlaced to show the coming together or meeting of the continents at the Olympics. The logo was designed by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympic Games, in 1913. The rings were first introduced at the 1920 Summer Olympics in Antwerp, Belgium.

### **SportsHopes Updates:**

**Website:** Our website is approximately 80% completed. Please visit: [www.sportshopes.org](http://www.sportshopes.org)

**Ewaste fundraisers and donations:** Our first fundraisers were small but all went well. August 2009 fundraiser enabled a \$250 donation to Castro Valley High School Athletics. October 2009 fundraiser enabled a \$250 donation to Hayward High School Athletics.

### **Resume Writing and Job Interviewing Techniques:**

S.F. Bay Area resident and Human Resources Consultant, **John Klinestiver**, has volunteered to assist local high school students and college students with resume writing and job interviewing techniques. John has over 15 years of Human Resource and general management experience in various industries. He has an M.S. in industrial organization psychology from California State University, San Francisco. For more information please contact John at: [jgklinestiver@hotmail.com](mailto:jgklinestiver@hotmail.com)

### **Thank You:**

**Alicia Utley**, CPA, Bailey & Utley Certified Public Accountants: [baileyutley@prodigy.net](mailto:baileyutley@prodigy.net)

Alicia donated her time to assist SportsHopes with filing for 501c3 status.

The principal docs and supporting docs will be filed by late December.

**David McBarron**, Operations Manager, We the People: [wtp.hayward@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wtp.hayward@sbcglobal.net)

David assisted SportsHopes with the filing and incorporation docs for the State of California.

**Chris Perry**, Webmaster: [vsproductions@live.com](mailto:vsproductions@live.com)

Chris has lived in the local community all of his life and at 22 years of age is doing a great job in I.T.

### **Student-Athlete Mentors:**

**Alyssa, Danielle, Dash and Jimmy** (all fulltime local college students) met recently to draft a first presentation, *Raising the Bar Starts with One's Self*, to be made to local middle school youth in 2010.

**Dave Ellington**, Board member and San Leandro High School teacher & coach assisted the Mentors.

### **About SportsHopes: SportsHopes is an all volunteer not-for-profit org. FEIN #27-0420819**



Founder and  
President,  
Jennifer Oliver  
[joliver@sportshopes.org](mailto:joliver@sportshopes.org)

**Mission: To help student-athletes graduate from high school, move forward to college, play the sports they are passionate about in college, stay in college and graduate from college. Let's help them Get There!**

**SportsHopes** was founded in July 2008 by local parent, Jennifer Oliver, when a need for knowledge and support pertaining to the high school to college pathway for student-athletes was realized. Oliver is a graduate of California State University, Hayward, with a BA in Mass Communication. She is a 4<sup>th</sup> degree black belt in tae kwon do and taught martial arts to children and teens in the Hayward community for 13 years. Oliver served as president of a local high school Athletic Boosters for two years and has enjoyed long distance running for decades. She has two sons, one a student-athlete and one a student-actor. Both attend California public colleges. **SportsHopes** currently serves high school and JC student-athletes from Castro Valley, Hayward, San Leandro and San Lorenzo communities.