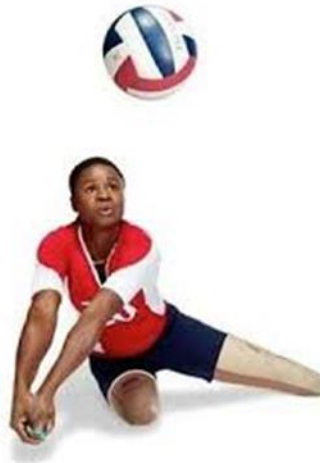


Paralympic Gold Medalist, Coach, Role Model

Kari Miller - USA



Kari Miller was serving in active military duty, getting ready for officer training school, when a drunk driver smashed into the car she was traveling in. The driver of her car was killed. Kari survived, but lost both her legs in the crash; one amputated above the knee, one below.

As she recovered, Miller first competed in wheelchair basketball, then discovering sitting volleyball. It was an intense experience: the first ball came at her like it had smoke and fire shooting from it. "I just screamed and dove out of the way," she says. "My coach immediately informed me that there is no screaming in sitting volleyball."

Miller joined the U.S. Paralympics Women's Sitting Volleyball National Team in 2006, and two years later helped the team earn a silver medal in the Beijing Paralympic Games. Kari played every set of every match as the team's libero, one of the key defensive positions that anticipates return balls, then passes them to the setter with hard, controlled hits.

The awards have continued since:

- Miller served as a starter for Team USA when they took the silver medal at the 2010 Sitting Volleyball World Championships and that year was ranked No.1 libero in the world.

- In 2012, Kari was a pivotal player at the London Paralympic Games, helping USA win the silver medal.



- In 2013, Kari was nominated for the USAA Athletic Inspiration Award.
- In 2016 she was a key member of the Gold Medal Women's Sitting Volleyball team at RIO Paralympic Games.
- She was named a "Hero of Fortune" by Fortune Magazine, recognizing outstanding individuals who work for Fortune 500 companies.

Today, in addition to training with the sitting volleyball team Kari works with the Paralympic Military Program at the Walter Reed National Medical Center. She teaches wounded soldiers how to use sports in their recovery, works with families of soldiers in adapting, and coaches at the Warrior Games.

"You can see the hope come back," Miller said." It's easy for a doctor to say it, but for someone to actually see it in someone like me, it makes a difference."

She has since served as a community programs coordinator for the US Air Force's Wounded, Ill and Injured program.