



For Immediate Release
Press Release

January 31, 2016
Contact: AlgiersPress@state.gov

Sports Diplomacy Brings People Together

As part of the continuing sports diplomacy collaboration between the U.S. Embassy in Algiers and the Algerian Ministry of Youth and Sports, Sports Envoys Trooper Johnson and Carlie Cook will visit Algiers from February 1–5, 2016. In partnership with the Algerian Handisport Federation, Mr. Johnson and Ms. Cook will hold wheelchair basketball clinics and workshops for players and coaches at the Staoueli Sports Hall and Hotel El Mehdi.

Sports diplomacy uses the universal passion for sports as a way to transcend linguistic and sociocultural differences and bring people together. Sports Envoys Johnson and Cook will participate in community outreach activities, engage youth in a dialogue on the importance of leadership and respect for diversity, and learn about Algerian culture. Meanwhile, the program will provide Algerians with an opportunity to establish links with U.S. sports professionals.

Sports Envoys is a program managed by SportsUnited — a division of the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) — in more than 100 countries, in cooperation with the U.S. Olympic Committee, U.S. sports federations, and professional leagues.

Bio Express

Trooper Johnson has been a member of the United States National Wheelchair Basketball Association for 15 years, competing in four Paralympic Games. He was an Assistant Coach of the USA Women’s National Team that won a gold medal during the 2015 Para-PanAm Games in Toronto and will be competing in the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio. He is currently the Youth Sports Program Coordinator for the Bay Area Outreach & Recreation Program, providing sports and recreation opportunities for kids with physical disabilities.

Carlie Cook received an athletic scholarship for wheelchair basketball to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC); earning a second place finish at the National Tournament for the Women’s Division with the Varsity Women’s Wheelchair Basketball Team as a true freshman. Cook has extensive experience coaching the sport through the University of Illinois Wheelchair Basketball Camps as well as a variety of other basketball clinics. Cook is currently working for Lincolnway Special Recreation Association; where she is a program leader and head coach of the Varsity Wheelchair Basketball Team.

#####