

Canadian Paralympic Sitting Volleyball Team Member, Jolan Wong, Teaches Sitting Volleyball to students across RCCDSB

January 6th, 2025 - During the last few months of 2024, Renfrew County Catholic schools in the Pembroke and Petawawa area had the privilege of having Paralympian Jolan Wong teach students about sitting volleyball to encourage accessible, inclusive, and equitable sports.

Jolan Wong is a Paralympic Bronze Medalist for Canada and a pioneer in the sport of sitting volleyball. Jolan lost her leg when she was 13 years old due to osteogenic sarcoma, the same bone cancer Terry Fox had. She has always been a passionate athlete, playing able-bodied sports throughout high school until she realized, 5 years after her amputation, that there was another world of inclusive sports including sitting volleyball. She is currently in her 16th season on the national team, with 3 Paralympics under her belt.

Jolan discovered sitting volleyball at 18 years old when her coach reached out to Volleyball Canada to inquire about adaptive options. Since the sport's inception in Canada, she has proudly represented Team Canada for 16 years. In 2024, the team brought home Canada's first-ever Paralympic medal in the sport of sitting volleyball when they defeated Brazil in the Bronze medal match.

Her passion for sharing and teaching students about parasport stems from growing up not knowing of any adaptive versions of sports for anyone with different abilities. Showcasing sitting volleyball opens up the conversations about accessibility and inclusion in sports. "For me, being introduced to parasport 5 years after I acquired my disability gave me a level playing field. Whether it's able-bodied people or disabled people playing the sport, we are all then on the same playing field. I'm not trying to do things that maybe my body isn't quite capable of doing." Jolan shares on her journey in parasports.

Alongside training and competing at an elite level, Jolan is a mom of 3 children and has played a crucial part in their education through homeschooling, or as she likes to call it world schooling. She has a passion for and strongly believes in educating people about disabilities and parasport.

The workshops were a resounding success, with all students engaged and showing skill and sportsmanship. Students had the opportunity to listen to Jolan speak about her experience with sitting volleyball and parasports, then learned some techniques of the sport and got to play a game with their classmates. Each school she visited was filled with enthusiastic staff and students who were treated to an unforgettable learning experience.

To thank Jolan for her commitment to teaching RCCDSB students about sitting volleyball, adaptive sports and the Paralympics, Clint Young, Superintendent of Educational Services, Damian Solar, and Angela Bergeron presented a gift of thanks to her and her daughter, Keira.



Left to right: Clint Young, Superintendent of Educational Services; Jolan Wong, Sitting Volleyball Paralympian; Angela Bergeron, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Itinerant Teacher & Accessibility Special Assignment Teacher (SPAT); Damian Solar, Outdoor/Physical Education/Elementary Pathways Special Assignment Teacher (SPAT)



Students at Our Lady of Lourdes watching a sitting volleyball demonstration from Jolan Wong.