



**Formula Strategy Group
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PRESS RELEASE

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USSA Athletes, Paralympian Curler to Visit Louisiana Air Force Base With Military Mentorship Program

First-of-its-kind initiative brings together Olympians and service members

WASHINGTON, D.C. —The Military Mentorship Program, an initiative of the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA), will host two of the nation’s top athletes at Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, La., during an event held from June 2-5. As part of the first-of-its-kind program, three-time Olympic aerial skier Emily Cook and Paralympic athlete Patrick McDonald will talk with service members at the Louisiana military base.

“As elite athletes competing at a world-class level, Emily and Patrick know, first-hand, the value of grit and determination,” said Luke Bodensteiner, executive vice president of athletics for USSA. “Emily experienced a severe training injury, just days after qualifying for the 2002 Olympics, taking her out of those Games; but she persevered and returned to the team, competing on the next three Olympic squads.”

Founded by Army veteran and former U.S. Ski Team member and coach Robi Powers, the Military Mentorship Program brings wounded warriors and retired service members together with top USSA Olympic athletes to share stories of overcoming obstacles. This will be the second major event for the program, which introduced two Purple Heart recipients to U.S. skiers preparing for the Sochi Olympics in January.

[PenFed](#) (Pentagon Federal Credit Union) came on board to sponsor the program this year to help inspire both members of the military and the nation’s top athletes. Formula Strategy Group, a strategic marketing and communications firm specializing in military and sports-themed events, media, and sponsorships—championed the new partnership between the USSA and PenFed for the inaugural USSA Military Mentorship Program.

“Military service and Olympics and Paralympics training are both commitments that last for years and require arduous and continuing physical training,” said James Schenck, president and CEO of PenFed. “But the similarities go deeper than that. Service members and top athletes both understand that the greatest obstacles are their own fears and their greatest strength is their willingness to face and conquer them.”

About the Military Mentorship Program

Founded by the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association in 2013, the Military Mentorship Program brings military personnel and elite athletes together to exchange and create meaningful experiences. The effort will take U.S. Olympic athletes to military bases nationwide and around the world and bring retired and active-duty U.S. military personnel, including officers, to USSA Olympic training sites. The program will enable both athletes and military personnel to mutually benefit from each other. *To learn more, visit <http://ussa.org/military-mentorship-program>.*

About the USSA

The U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA) is the national governing body of Olympic skiing and snowboarding. Developed to facilitate participation in national and international competition, the Olympic sports organization provides structure for competitive skiing and snowboarding. From grassroots programs to governance of sport, management of rules, competitions and athletic rankings, the USSA oversees athletic pipelines for development in the sports. With a vision to make the USA the best in the world in Olympic skiing and snowboarding, the USSA provides leadership and direction for tens of thousands of young skiers and snowboarders who share an Olympic dream while maintaining a strong adherence to core values. The USSA, established in 1905, operates out of the national training and education facility, the Center of Excellence, in Park City, UT. *To learn more about USSA visit www.ussa.org.*

About PenFed (Pentagon Federal Credit Union)

Established in 1935, PenFed is one of the largest credit unions in the country serving over 1.2 million members worldwide; with more than \$17 billion in assets. Its longstanding mission has been to provide superior financial services, responsive to members' needs in a cost effective manner. PenFed offers market leading automobile loans, credit cards, checking, and a wide- range of other financial services with its members' interests always in mind. Serving a diverse population, there are many ways to become a PenFed member; including numerous association members and employee groups. PenFed is federally insured by the NCUA and is an equal housing lender. PenFed does business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. *To learn more about PenFed, visit PenFed.org.*

About Formula Strategy Group

Formula Strategy Group (FSG) is a full-service, strategic marketing and communications firm specializing in military and sports themed properties. FSG features a wide array of clients that span the public sector, sports and media landscapes. Based in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, FSG has extensive experience and strong relationships working in the Nation's Capital. Our diverse capabilities help clients develop innovative solutions to reach their goals. *For more information about FSG, visit formulastrategygroup.com.*

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