

Elizabeth Flora-Swick
National Squad Bio

I started playing Paralympic boccia at age 8 after attending a local, adaptive sport event in Kansas City. I remember being thrilled that there was a sport I could play competitively given my physical limitations. So from the start, I loved boccia. I competed at that same regional event for the next several years, winning my first game four years after I began playing. I still remember that moment.

From there, my parents and coach encouraged me to go to boccia nationals. I played in my first nationals as a novice in 2006. Although I didn't win a game that year, experiencing nationals motivated me to take boccia to the next level. I wanted to be as good as the veteran players I saw there. Every year after that, I trained hard for nationals, building strength and developing strategy. Strategy and precision are key to boccia.

Over the years, my training has enabled me to excel at the national level. I have consistently placed in the top three at every national games in which I have competed, earning 3 individual national titles. Because of national ranking, I have also been honored to compete at the international level. In 2011, I competed on Team USA in the Parapan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico. I also competed in the 2013 Boccia America's Cup in Kansas. I cherish these experiences, and the friendships I have made with athletes across the world.

Today, I am a member of the national team squad and a committed advocate for the growth of boccia in the United States. I am passionate about reaching out to young people with physical challenges and sharing boccia with them. To accomplish this goal, I co-chair the Youth Development Taskforce dedicated to seeing boccia grow as an adaptive sport for children. My life was changed the day I realize there was actually a sport in which I could excel, and I want to share that joy with kids who may have written off competitive sport from their list of possibilities.

Although I love many sports, boccia will forever be my one true sport. It is a sport all can play.