

# Press Release

## **Allianz congratulates Paralympic athletes and says: 'Believe in Yourself'**

- **Best Paralympic winter sport athletes, officials and media awarded in Beijing**
- **Allianz' Paralympic engagement ready for London 2012**

The International Paralympic Committee announced the winners of the Paralympic Sport and Media Awards 2011, honoring those who contribute directly to the Paralympic Movement. Allianz, the first international partner of the Paralympic Movement, proudly supported this event, which took place in Beijing on the evening of December 10.

The winners included German top athletes Gerd Schönfelder (Alpine Skiing) and Verena Bentele (Biathlon and Cross-Country Skiing), the Japanese Ice Sledge Hockey Team, newcomer Oleksandra Kononova (Cross-Country Skiing) from Ukraine as well as Swiss Games Official Christian Egli.

The Paralympic Media Awards went to the TV news channel Sky Sport New Zealand, newspaper journalist Gary Kingston from the Vancouver Sun and photographer Jeff Crow from Australia. They were honored for their outstanding media coverage of Paralympic Sport.

As the International Partner of the Paralympic Movement, Allianz took an active part in the award ceremonies. Christophe Aniel, CEO of Allianz Global Assistance in China, presented the prestigious award to five-time Paralympic Gold medalist Verena Bentele.

"Paralympic athletes are a great source of inspiration for everyone," said Mr. Aniel. "Their outstanding achievements, as well as their dedication, courage and team spirit deserve special recognition and are worth spreading the word about." Allianz is very proud to be a partner of the Paralympic Movement and supporting the International Paralympic Committee to raise awareness for such an important cause."

Through a successful partnership with the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the German National Paralympic Committee, Allianz has been committed to the Paralympic Movement, its athletes, values and ideals since 2006.

In 2011, Allianz became the first International Partner of the IPC and is a National Supporter of eight National Paralympic Committees on a local level (Australia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, Germany, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey).

With only 263 days to go until the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Paralympics on August 29, Allianz wants to further foster public awareness and generate an even greater interest in Paralympic Sport by sharing knowledge on Paralympic Sports.

"The emotional motto of Allianz' Paralympic partnership 'Believe in Yourself' encourages everyone to identify with the inspiring achievements of Paralympic athletes and to find the motivation to move on and strength to move up in life", said Joe Gross, Head of Group Market Management of Allianz SE.

As a consequence, Allianz facilitates a variety of information and organizes events where the public as well as the media can learn more about the fascination of Paralympic Sport and the amazing achievements of Paralympic athletes in the lead up to the London 2012 Paralympic Games. In order to gain more insights into Paralympic sports, Allianz has produced royalty-free ready-to-air TV video footage and information graphics about various sports and disciplines.

Royalty-free material that is currently available:

- Ready-to-air TV video footage of Paralympic athletes
- Infographics on winter sport disciplines: Alpine and Nordic Skiing, Ice Sledge Hockey and Wheelchair Curling

Upcoming new material that will follow in February:

- More video material of the London 2012 medal hopefuls
- Infographics on Paralympic Cycling, Football 5-a-side, Long Jump, Sprint, Swimming, Throwing Disciplines, Wheelchair Basketball and Wheelchair Racing

Materials can be downloaded under the following link:

<http://sponsoring.allianz.com/en/paralympics/paralympics/>.

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