

National Veterans Wheelchair Games



Tricia LaBar – Turning Challenges into Opportunities

While her calm and friendly demeanor reveals nothing to us about this strong competitor beneath it all, Tricia LaBar loves a challenge. “For me, a challenge is not a wall,” she says. “A challenge is an opportunity for me to exercise my brain and figure out how I’m going to adapt.” This 51-year-old entrepreneur from Rockwall, Texas, believes that the National Veterans Wheelchair Games provide the perfect outlet for her to face new challenges and turn them into opportunities.

A former stocking and accounting specialist in the Army, LaBar now owns her own business, *ABC Home Medical*. A medical supply business based in Texas, the company is also a bronze level sponsor of the Wheelchair Games.

LaBar has attended the Wheelchair Games every year since 1995 and insists that every year brings new challenges. Meeting those challenges doesn’t seem to be a problem for her, either. Last year she won a gold medal in three of the four events she entered and this year her goal is to get gold in all four. “I was asked to be in the Slalom “Super G” and I’ve been practicing, so I’ll be ready,” she says. The event is for the best of the best in a grueling obstacle course that replicates some of the barriers wheelchair users face every day.

When she isn’t busy with her business or her own family, which consists of three children and four grandchildren, LaBar loves to travel. During her trips, she is quick to point out improvements that hotel managers can implement to make amenities more convenient for someone in a wheelchair, while at the same time maintaining convenience for someone who is not. She says, “I don’t want to live in a world that excludes me, or excludes anyone without a disability – I just want to live in a world where everyone’s needs are included.”

This year LaBar has teamed up with a well known children’s author on a series of stories about Dana, a girl in a wheelchair and her dog, Jack. “Most books concentrate on the child and their disability,” LaBar says. “We concentrate not on her being in a wheelchair, but on the adventures she has, and that is the appeal.” The stories have been well received by adults and children and LaBar hopes they will be produced in time for the Games in July. Whether she’s competing in the Games, busy at her job, spending time with family and friends or embarking on new endeavors, LaBar remains ready to face any challenges she comes across so she can keep on turning them into brand new opportunities.

