



Pacific National Exhibition

2901 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V5K 5J1 Telephone: 604 253-2311 Fax: 604 251-7753 www.pne.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 20, 2006

NEWS RELEASE

PNE AWARDS MAY 2006 MIRACLE MILE BURSARY TO WHEELCHAIR ATHLETE MICHELLE STILWELL

VANCOUVER, B.C. - The Pacific National Exhibition's May 2006 Miracle Mile Athlete Bursary has been awarded to Michelle Stilwell of Nanoose Bay, a gifted wheelchair athlete who has faced a number of obstacles in her life with grace and determination. She is more than an athlete, she is also a role model for her community and an educator.

Michelle Stilwell was a high performance athlete and Paralympian in Wheelchair Basketball when she underwent brain surgery in January of 2005. After the surgery, Michelle was devastated to learn that she could no longer play wheelchair basketball. Showing incredible spirit and drive she didn't let this new challenge keep her from continuing to compete. She was introduced to wheelchair racing and was hooked to the sport instantly.

"We are so proud to award our May 2006 Miracle Mile athletic bursary to Michelle Stilwell," says Michael McDaniel, President and CEO of the Pacific National Exhibition. "She is an inspiration to us all. She has a passion to compete that has endured numerous challenges. She has met each of these challenges with a determination to move forward, never looking back."

Michelle's competitive nature made her an ideal wheelchair track athlete, evidenced by her comprehensive list of achievements, from placing first in the Vancouver Sun Run to participating in the European Championships. Michelle is currently training for the World Championships and has her sights set on representing Canada in 2008 at the Beijing Paralympic Games.

Although Michelle Stilwell can no longer play wheelchair basketball she continues to give back to the sport as a coach and member of the BC Wheelchair Basketball Board of Directors. She is also an Ambassador for the Rick Hansen Foundation and as a volunteer at her son's school teaches children that even with a disability there are many things you can do.

"Michelle is the type of athlete every one would want to have in their sport community – an athlete who gives back and shares their knowledge and enthusiasm with others," says Carrie Linegar, Managing Director of the BC Wheelchair Basketball Society.

For more information on the PNE's Miracle Mile Bursary visit www.pne.ca or call 604-251-7708.

-30-

Owned by the City of Vancouver, the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) is a healthy and vibrant non-profit charity organization dedicated to providing over 3 million visitors a year with first-class cultural, sporting and family entertainment events. Founded in 1910, the PNE operates from a 114-acre site at Hastings Park, a multi-facility venue in Vancouver where the organization operates four activity streams: an annual 17-day Fair, Playland Amusement Park, maintenance and care of the Hasting Park site and management of the site's year-round facilities. These facilities are utilized to celebrate a variety of hockey, amateur sporting, music, community, social, cultural and commercial events throughout the year.

For more information, please contact:

Laura Ballance, Media Relations - Pacific National Exhibition
604-684-3170 / 604-771-5176 (cell)
laura@curvecommunications.com