



Jennifer (Jen) French



Key Sailing Accomplishments:

- ◆ Top Disabled Female Skipper, Milan-Gruson Award 8-time winner
- ◆ Gold Medal 2009 US Disabled Sailing Championship
- ◆ Silver Medal 2011 & 2012 IFDS World Championship
- ◆ Silver Medal 2012 London Paralympic Games
- ◆ 2012 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year

Key Career Accomplishments:

- ◆ Bachelor of Science, Aviation
- ◆ Masters in Business Administration
- ◆ Accomplished Public Speaker
- ◆ Founder of Neurotech Network
- ◆ First woman to receive the FES Stand & Transfer Neural Prosthesis
- ◆ Published in scientific journals
- ◆ Member of several scientific and disability advisory boards

As a result of a snowboarding accident, Jen became a quadriplegic from a C6-7 incomplete spinal cord injury in 1998. Prior to her injury, she was recreationally active with such sports as canoeing, snowboarding, sailing, fly fishing, scuba diving/snorkeling and cycling. After her injury, she still participates in all those activities. In November 1999, she received the Implantable Stand & Transfer System provided by the Cleveland FES Center, MetroHealth Medical Center and Veterans Affairs; the first woman to receive such a system.

Residing in St. Petersburg, Florida, Jen serves as Chairperson of the Committee to Advocate for Persons with Impairments for the City of St. Petersburg and is a state trained Peer Mentor for spinal cord injury. Over the course of her career, Ms. French has helped launch successful divisions in such organizations as Bombardier Capital and PC Connection, Inc. As a user of neurotechnology who has reaped its benefits, she is the Founder of a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, The Society to Increase Mobility, dba Neurotech Network and currently serves as Executive Director. The organization's focus is to educate and advocate to and for persons with impairments, their care-givers and health care professionals regarding neurotechnology.

She serves on the Advisory Boards for the Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) for Cerebral Palsy project at Stanford University, the Brown University Institute for Brain Science, and the Advanced Platform Technology Center in Cleveland. She has addressed such organizations as National Academy of Sciences, the American Physical Therapy Association, ISCoS/American Spinal Injury Association, The American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine, the American Occupational Therapy Association and NIH/NINDS Neural Interfaces.

Prior to her disabling injury, Jen was introduced to windsurfing as a college student while on her second date with her current husband, Tim. She caught the bug. Now, as a quadriplegic, she actively races in the Sonar class, both abled-bodied and disabled. Jen is a member of the U.S. Sailing Team Sperry Top-Sider, 8-time winner of the Milan-Gruson award for top disabled female skipper and a silver medalist from the 2011 & 2012 IFDS World Championships. While representing Team USA, she and her teammate, JP Creignou, won a Silver Medal at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London. She was also named 2012 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year; the first woman with a disability to do so.