

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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**U.S. PARALYMPIAN AND GOLD MEDALIST APRIL HOLMES STOPS BY  
THE OSCEOLA BRANCH OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA**  
*World's Fastest Amputee Talks to Youth About Facing Challenges and Staying "On Track"*

**WHO:** The **world's fastest amputee and U.S. Paralympian and Gold Medalist April Holmes** and Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida members, staff and volunteers

**WHAT:** After a quick tour of the Osceola Branch in Kissimmee, Holmes will address Club youth and staff about the importance of facing life's challenges and "staying on track" to reach their full potential to BE GREAT.

A champion for our cause, Holmes is no stranger to facing challenges. Like many of the youth served by the Club, she fell down in life – both figuratively and literally. But with the proper support and her own strength and determination, April turned moments of seemingly defeat into triumph. Her life lessons transfer to many areas of life and serve as inspirational messages for youth of all backgrounds.

**WHY:** Every generation faces its share of challenges and this current generation is no exception. With an increasingly diverse population – ethnically, culturally, religiously and ability – it is critical that American youth learn how to operate in a much more global and diverse world.

Understanding the need for young people to be able to succeed in an increasingly diverse environment, Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) and The Allstate Foundation developed "Youth for Unity" (YFU), a national diversity education program created to engage young people and parents in activities designed to promote diversity and combat prejudice, bigotry and discrimination.

**WHEN:** **3:45 p.m., Friday, September 4, 2009**

**WHERE:** **Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida, Osceola Branch**  
**2510 N. Thacker Ave.**  
**Kissimmee, FL 34741**  
**407-847-2833**  
**[www.bgccf.org](http://www.bgccf.org)**

**ABOUT HOLMES:** In 2001 April Holmes was involved in a train accident that resulted in the loss of her left leg below the knee. As she lay in her hospital bed a doctor told her about the Paralympic Games. At that point, Holmes decided she would turn a tragedy into a triumph. Holmes began her career in Paralympic track & field in 2002, and has continued to succeed. Her latest feat includes completing her fifth consecutive undefeated season in the 100 meters for leg amputees, which earned her a gold medal at the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing China. Speed and quickness are her best friends as she continues to break her own world records every season.

Off the track, Holmes runs the April Holmes Foundation, a non-profit organization tasked with assisting people with physical and learning disabilities. Having recently completed her MBA in Marketing, Holmes plans to increase awareness of persons with disabilities.

While in the Boston area Holmes also will address Club staff from across the region at Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Northeast Region IMPACT Conference. As luncheon speaker Holmes will present BGCA's Youth for Unity Leadership Award, which is funded by The Allstate Foundation as part of its multi-million dollar commitment to support diversity, the award recognizes a local Boys & Girls Club organization for successfully developing and implementing youth-led diversity activities, projects or events that address diversity issues in their Clubs and communities.

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