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Hugh Freund '11 Captures Silver Medal in 2016 Paralympics

Part of a three-man sailing team, architecture alumnus wins silver in Rio games



U.S. Parasailing Team members (from left to right) Rick Doerr, Brad Kendell and Hugh Freund '11. Image Credit: Courtesy of U.S. Sailing

September 19, 2016 | Public Affairs Staff

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL – A Roger Williams University alumnus set sail into the history books this weekend. Representing Team U.S.A. in the Sonar sailing class, [Hugh Freund '11 captured a Silver Medal](#) at the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games.

Joining Freund – who received a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from RWU – for victory in the three-person Paralympic keelboat were teammates Rick Doerr and Brad Kendell.

The team entered competition as the reigning champs of the 2016 Parasailing World Championships. Although they experienced mixed results at the start of the 11-race competition at the Paralympics, clocking in at seventh place in the first race, they quickly cruised to the top of the competitors' board – taking second and third place in most of the races.

For the [final medal race](#), Freund's team was the first to sail past the finish line, besting Team New Zealand by a tenth of a second in classic Olympic style. With the U.S. Paralympic sailors earning silver, the Australian team won gold and the Canadian team took home bronze.

"We came into today in a similar position as we had at the World Championship earlier this year, with everything to play for on the final day," said Freund in an [interview with U.S. Sailing](#). "We really sailed the way the three of us know how to sail this boat."

According to Team U.S.A. Parasailing, Freund “was diagnosed with bone cancer, and lost his leg while still a student. During his time attending Roger Williams University, his college head coach, Amanda Callahan, suggested that he pursue Paralympic sailing. Callahan had done an Olympic campaign with Betsy Alison, the U.S. Sailing Team Head Paralympic Coach, and was familiar with the world of adaptive sailing.”

With his hard-earned Olympic medal, Freund, who grew up in South Freeport, Maine, joins the ranks of fellow RWU Olympians. At the 2016 Rio Olympic Games, [Cy Thompson '11](#) (who also competed in the 2012 London Olympics) earned a 19th-place ranking in the Men’s Laser division, and incoming freshman [Maia Agerup](#) captured 14th place in the Women’s 49er FX division.

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