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DELOITTE

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Yorkshire alpine skier is one of the Deloitte supported athletes going for Gold in Vancouver

Guiseley-born Jane Sowerby is one of the Deloitte funded athletes who will be competing for Great Britain in alpine skiing at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver which will open tomorrow (12 March).

Two-thirds of the ParalympicsGB team competing have benefited from Deloitte funding through the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS). Eight of the twelve athletes representing Britain at the Games received support from TASS, which forms part of Deloitte's Disability Sport Programme.

Geoff Taylor, Practice Senior Partner at Deloitte's Leeds office, commented: "TASS is a vital part of the disability sport athlete pathway that Deloitte is helping to improve. We are so proud that Jane Sowerby from Yorkshire is representing ParalympicsGB in Vancouver, having received Deloitte funding through TASS. Everyone here will be cheering her on in Canada."

Deloitte's ongoing commitment to disability sport will see a further 99 disability sport athletes receive funding in 2010. This means the goals set for the Deloitte scheme when it was launched back in 2006, to have supported 22 Paralympic competitors and 300 athletes in total by 2012, have already been achieved with two-and-a-half years still to go before the London Games.

Leeds-based Heather Hancock, lead partner for London 2012 and Deloitte Disability Sport, commented: "Through TASS, we help future stars on their journey to the podium. Our people are immensely proud to be making a tangible difference to these individuals' performances. We are delighted that we've already achieved what felt like ambitious goals for our relationship with SportsAid and ParalympicsGB when we began our association with them just over three years ago. It just goes to show what a difference we can make with long-term funding delivered with commitment from experts who know how to motivate top performers.



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“Whether the athletes that Deloitte supports become medal winners at the top of their game, or achieve their personal best in sport and subsequently become high performers in their chosen careers, because we helped them manage education and sporting progress in parallel, we wish them the very best for the coming year.”

Deloitte’s financing of TASS awards allows athletes to achieve their sporting potential and keep up their education at college or university. The funds help to finance training, competing and support services whilst encouraging an education route that is suited to the individual. A TASS award provides strength & conditioning, lifestyle management and physiotherapy support, and overall aims to reduce the number of athletes who drop out of sport due to academic and financial pressures. Most of this year’s crop of athletes will receive an award worth £3,500; ten of them, identified as ‘potential medal winners’ at the London 2012 Paralympic Games, will receive a £10,000 ‘TASS 2012’ award.

The Deloitte scheme has already supported Paralympic Gold Medallists in Beijing including the BBC’s Young Sports Personality of the Year for 2008, Eleanor Simmonds MBE, and sharp-shooting Matt Skelhon.

In Vancouver, Deloitte funded athletes Anna Turney, Jane Sowerby, Talan Skeel-Piggins, Tim Farr, Russell Docker and Sean Rose will compete for Great Britain in alpine skiing whilst Aileen Nelson and Jim Sellar will represent the country in wheelchair curling.

When the flame finally goes out on Vancouver 2010, the eyes of the Olympic and Paralympic world will quite rightly fix on London – but Deloitte Disability Sport aims to leave a lasting legacy beyond London 2012. Parasport, which this week won the Hollis Sponsorship Award for Grass Roots Sponsorship, (www.parasport.org.uk) will continue to connect people with a disability to high-quality sporting opportunities, whilst Deloitte Ride Across Britain (www.rideacrossbritain.com) will continue its breathless sightseeing bid to raise £1million for ParalympicsGB by 2013.

ParalympicsGB Chief Executive Phil Lane concluded: “Across Britain, people with a disability have been inspired by the achievements of Britain’s Paralympians and dreams of London 2012. Deloitte Disability Sport is helping a new generation of Paralympians to emerge with more than just dreams. They will have realistic hopes built on solid foundations.”



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Ends

Note to editors

About TASS:

- The Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme, or TASS as it is better known, is a Government funded programme to support and fast-track young sporting talent, the potential medal winners of the future.
- TASS is one of the main funders of disability sport and is overseen by the UK's pre-eminent sports charity, SportsAid.
- TASS is a unique partnership between National Governing Bodies of sport and educational institutions, designed especially to cater for the needs of athletes within the education system during higher and further education.
- For more information, please visit www.tass.gov.uk or www.sportsaid.org.uk.