

Watchung Hills Regional High School Hall of Fame



Josh Pauls
Class of 2011

Josh Pauls is one of the most decorated athletes to ever graduate from Watchung Hills. He is a four-time Paralympic gold medalist and five-time world champion in sled hockey.

Josh was born without tibia bones which led to a double amputation above the knees as a ten month old. However, even as a ten year old, Josh wished to compete in sports, and he discovered sled hockey and no one could stop him. His athletic career took off soon after he became a sophomore. He was asked to join the U.S. team as one of their youngest players, 15 years old, and only two years later, he became the youngest member of the U.S. Paralympic Sled Hockey to win a gold medal. His first triumph occurred at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver. In 2014, in Sochi, Josh helped his team become the first ever sled hockey team to win back-to-back gold medals in the sport. In 2018, in PyeongChang, Josh was named team captain and contributed mightily by assisting on the game winning overtime goal. In the most recent Paralympics in Beijing, Josh became the first sled hockey player ever to win four career Paralympic gold medals.

Josh has earned several other distinguished international accolades and athletic awards throughout his career. A few examples include: being voted the Best Defenseman at the 2015 World Championship and the 2016 Pan Pacific Championships. He is proud to have been nominated for a 2015 ESPY for Best Male Athlete with a Disability. Three years later, he was selected as an ambassador for the NHL's "Hockey Is For Everyone" campaign. In 2019, Josh became a published author: *Lessons Learned: My Journey to the Podium*, a reflective memoir about his journey growing into an international spokesperson for the USA. His autobiography highlights his appreciation for all he has known while offering deeper insight into motivational leadership: Josh Pauls takes nothing for granted playing the game he loves, appreciates bonding with ultra competitive teammates and always looks forward to the next play, game, championship. Aside from the trophies and the medals, Josh believes his greatest honor is representing the country he loves.