



Karlos Kirby Iowa's First Winter Olympian

In 1992, Karlos Kirby became the first athlete from the state of Iowa to ever compete in an Olympic Winter Games. Always a childhood dream for Karlos, he gave up a full football scholarship his freshman year in college to travel to Lake Placid, New York and tryout for the U.S. Bobsled Team. After joining the team in 1988, the Des Moines native quickly established himself as one of the premier U.S. Bobsled push athletes. A five-time National Champion, three-time medallist in the World Championships, overall World Cup Champion, and a two-time member of the U.S. Olympic Bobsled Team (Albertville 1992 and Lillehammer 1994), Karlos has proven himself as one of the World's best bobsledders.

Now retired from the sport of bobsled, Karlos enjoys making a difference as a Firefighter and Paramedic for the city of Des Moines. In addition to his full-time duties as a Firefighter, Karlos spends an active amount of time as an officer in the United States Navy Reserve. Recently, Karlos returned from 12 months of active duty in Afghanistan where he served as part of NATO's International Security Assistance Force.

When not working, Karlos has spent his spare time volunteering with local and national organizations. With a focus on youth, Karlos has done volunteer work with the Special Olympics, the Junior Olympics and been an active member of the United States Olympic Committee and The American Lung Association of Iowa. Over the past decade, Karlos has delivered his inspirational message to thousands of kids throughout Iowa.

A strong advocate for education, Karlos has continued to strive toward higher education. A graduate of the University of New Mexico, Karlos earned both a Bachelor and Masters Degree from UNM and an Educational Specialist Degree from Drake University.

Karlos lives in Iowa with his beautiful wife and their three dogs.