

August 29, 2012 **EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY** 

Contact James Davis or Kyle Downey (813) 252-5888

Jeanine McDonnell Iraq War Veteran and Chris Devlin-Young Para-Olympian

(Remarks as Prepared for Delivery) August 29, 2012

## Jeanine McDonnell:

Good evening, I am proud to be one of the 212,000 servicewomen who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan over the past decade.

As a 24 year old Virginian in Iraq, I worked with some of the most courageous men and women this nation has to offer, and we were united in a singular cause: to protect the nation that we love.

It has been my privilege to serve alongside heroes of every service. Defending this nation and its citizens is not without sacrifice for service members and the families who support them.

And that's why we need leaders who don't play chicken with our nation's defense. We need leaders who will invest in defense—not abandon it.

And that's why we need Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan.

Now, it is my honor to introduce Chris Devlin-Young, a hero in his own right, a former Coast Guardsman and a two-time Paralympic gold medalist in alpine skiing. Chris.

## **Chris Devlin-Young:**

Thank you. It's wonderful to be with you tonight.

In 1982, while flying in heavy fog during a Coast Guard mission, our plane crashed, leaving me paralyzed from the waist down. While my career as a Coast Guardsman ended, a new world of service began for me.

27 years ago, this California boy was introduced to ski racing at the first Veterans Administration Winter Sports clinic. I decided then and there to dedicate myself to racing and coaching other injured veterans.

Being a gold medal Paralympian gives me a whole new way to honor and serve my country. Being the coach of paralympic medalists gives me a way to honor and serve others.

I believe that we can all serve no matter what our challenges. Because it's not about what you've lost in life but rather what you are able to give.

And now, it is my honor to introduce a hero who has given of himself regardless of the price. He is the son and grandson of admirals, a decorated naval pilot, a war hero, and the senior senator from the great state of Arizona -- Senator John McCain.

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