



JUSTIN COWBOY CRISIS FUND

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Rodeo is truly a dangerous business. In fact, it is considered America's original extreme sport. With each ride, the rodeo athlete risks losing more than just the next opportunity to compete and win. He or she can also lose the ability to meet the mortgage payments or the ability to feed and care for his or her family. With no guaranteed salaries or injured reserve provisions in the sport, these professional athletes are often left with no place else to turn when faced with serious, sidelining injuries and the accompanying financial hardship.

Recognizing that serious injuries can be traumatic enough in themselves, without the additional burden of financial worries, the Justin Boot Company formed a partnership with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) and the Women's Professional Rodeo Association (WPRA) in 1989 to establish the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund (JCCF). The JCCF was formed on the premise of lending a helping hand to professional rodeo athletes and their families in the event of catastrophic injuries. Thus, filling the void created by financial hardships when the inevitable serious injury interfered with the careers of those who have dedicated their lives to the sport.

By May of 2006, the JCCF's running total of disbursements surpassed \$4 million in financial assistance to more than 600 individuals and their families. Assistance awards are based on the severity of injury, number of dependents and the applicant's financial situation. The Fund also takes into consideration the individual's involvement in and/or contribution to the sport of professional rodeo.

Unique among today's numerous charitable organizations, the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund stands apart from the rest by dedicating 100 percent of all contributions received for disbursement to eligible applicants. This uncommon trait for a charitable organization is made possible by the joint commitment of the Justin Boot Company and the PRCA to underwrite all administrative costs associated with managing the JCCF, leaving all monies received through contributions (as well as investment earnings) to serve their intended purpose.

Top Montana contestant Chuck Simonson was among the first JCCF recipients. The former National Finals Rodeo qualifier in both bull riding and bareback riding has received assistance since a 1989 bull riding wreck in Caldwell, Idaho, left him paralyzed from the waist down. The JCCF has helped Simonson help himself by providing a specially equipped truck with full hand controls and having a custom saddle made for him. Additionally, the JCCF helped in literally getting Simonson back on his feet by providing a set of leg braces that enables him to occasionally leave his wheelchair behind as he tends to his fledgling bucking horse business. Currently, the JCCF is assisting Simonson in pursuing a computer education program.

"The Fund focuses on those individuals who make professional rodeo their career and who dedicate their life to it," said Tom Feller, Director, Event Marketing for Justin Brands and PRCA Board of Directors member. "That includes contestants, announcers, clowns, bullfighters, judges and specialty

act performers. Generally speaking, recipients receive monthly living expense stipends to keep life as stable as possible during their recovery period, which helps defer any loss of assets or other financial troubles.”

Of course, the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund does not limit assistance to just PRCA and WPRA members. In addition to helping PRCA and WPRA members, including several past world champions, the JCCF has provided assistance to professional rodeo athletes from a number of other associations. As you might expect, this includes a host of Professional Bull Riders (PBR) contestants, since bull riding is the most dangerous of all rodeo events. In fact, bull riders have been the recipient of some 65 percent of the millions of dollars in assistance awarded to date.

Individual contributions make up the bulk of the donations received by the JCCF, according to Feller. PRCA rodeo committees also make a significant impact with either direct contributions or monies donated from fund raising activities such as cowboy golf tournaments or celebrity events. Through its annual Wrangler National Finals Rodeo Style Show and Luncheon, the Pro Rodeo League of Women makes annual contributions which total over \$750,000 to date.

For additional information on the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund, please call 888-662-JCCF (5223), or you can e-mail the fund at jccfinfo@prorodeo.com.

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