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Athlete and Activist who Made History in France Set to Break Next Record in Big Apple

Joe Kals Stairway to Hope Tour 2018-19

Dunedin, FL - Joe Kals made history in 2011 by being the first paraplegic athlete to cross France over the course of 7 months. (This 815 mile feat is the equivalent of an able bodied person running 2 marathons a day.) His next historic endeavor was climbing 1665 steps to reach the top of the Eiffel Tower in 2014. In August 2018 he partnered with Marriott Hotels and began his ***Stairway to Hope Tour*** here in the U.S. which kicked off at the Marriott Sand Key Hotel in Clearwater, Florida with Joe climbing 10 flights of stairs. In September he achieved the goal of reaching the top of the 27-floor Marriott Waterside in Tampa and later that month he ascended to the 28th floor of the Marriott World Center in Orlando.

On October 27th, Joe will face his biggest challenge on the tour by taking on the 56 floors of the Marriott Marquis in Times Square. Achieving this will set a new record.

The purpose of these spectacular endeavors is to bring awareness to the real consequences of spinal cord injury and shine a light on the urgent need for medical advancement. Every day in America around 50 people will suffer a spinal cord injury and without a breakthrough procedure to reattach the spinal cord, they will suffer the limitation of a wheelchair or worse for life. Joe's dream and mission is to change this fate for future generations. He says that in this modern age filled with new technologies and research monies, this is absolutely unacceptable.

"During my year of rehabilitation in 1982, the Doctors were predicting that by the early 90's research would find a way to reattach the spinal cord after an injury," recalls Kals. "Yet 36 years later, if you sever your spinal cord they put your vertebrae back in place but still do not have the ability to reattach your spinal cord."

He was just 21 when he suffered his injury from a motorcycle accident. Not one brain signal has traveled to his lower extremities since that day. He utilizes only his upper body strength and the incredible power of his mind to accomplish these super human feats. He is motivated daily by his deep desire to make a difference.

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Stairway to Hope ... to Repair SCI

OCTOBER 27, 2018
MARRIOTT MARQUIS
NEW YORK CITY



Joe Kals,



**a complete paraplegic will climb
56 floors of the Marriott Marquis
with his upper body strength alone.**

Date: October 27, 2018

Press Conference: 1:00PM

Climbing starts: 2:00PM

Address : 1535 Broadway, New York, NY 10036

For more information about Joe Kals, please visit:

Facebook: [joekalsusa2018](#)

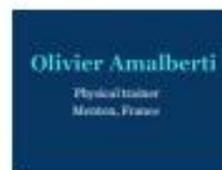
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and build a better future.**

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Paraplegic Dunedin man wants to walk from New York to Los Angeles

"I want to inspire the society and that way we can push by doing research on the spinal cord," he said from his Dunedin apartment on Monday.

Author: Bobby Lewis

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Joe Kals hasn't been able to walk normally since 1982. A motorcycle accident sent him to his wheelchair. The paraplegic man had a new set of challenges to overcome.

"I want to inspire the society and that way we can push by doing research on the spinal cord," he said from his Dunedin apartment on Monday.

"I was like a zombie at the top," he said with a chuckle.

There isn't much time to rest. Kals plans to make the same climb at an Orlando Marriott on September 9. He will also climb a 46-floor hotel in Miami and 56-floor hotel in New York by the end of October.

"I was so impressed," said his friend, Sophie Joost. "I was thinking that it's humanly, physically impossible."

The end goal for Kals, a French native who once made the journey across his home country on crutches, is to 'walk' from New York to Los Angeles. It's a 3,000-mile journey that would be difficult for most able-bodied people.

But, that's why he wants to do it.

"I have a purpose and my purpose by doing this climbing the stairwells to bring an awareness that it's time to push at the main level the research for spinal cord injuries," he said.

Kals is raising money for his travels and for research of spinal cord injuries. He hopes to help fund vital research to find faster and quicker ways to get paraplegics back on their feet.

August 27th, 2018

Man on crutches ascends Tampa hotel, declares: 'We are not made to live sitting in a wheelchair'



Joe Kals takes a selfie with his cousin, Nick Szabo, before he climbs the 27 floors at the Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel and Marina on Saturday. [MARTHA ASENCIO RHINE | Times]

TAMPA — It took almost three hours to the minute, but Joe Kals made it.

The man who set out to climb all 27 floors of the Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel and Marina on Saturday accomplished the feat with the help of his family, his crutches and his mantra.

"I repeat to myself with each step, 'I am my legs,'" Kals, 57, a French national hoping to raise awareness for those living with severe spinal injuries, said at a news conference before the event. "To shine a light on something we have to elevate it. That's why I'm going to the top."

PREVIOUS: Paraplegic man attempts to climb 27-floor Marriott hotel

Kals, who lives in Dunedin, said in the news conference he is hoping someone will sponsor him and his family so they can stay in the United States.

A crutch in his right hand, the stairwell railing in his left for much of the climb, Kals ascended the steps one at a time. His cousin captured nearly the entire climb on Facebook Live, offering words of encouragement to Kals from viewers around the world.

Kals paused a few times during the climb to give interviews to local press outlets gathered at his climb and to refuel with bananas and water. Around 6 p.m., Kals ascended the final few steps to the 27th floor of the Marriott.

He plans similar ascents Sept. 9 at an Orlando Marriott and Sept. 25 at a Marriott in Miami.

"We are not made to live sitting in a wheelchair," Kals said upon reaching the top Saturday. "That's my message."

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