

## Bend dog-musher nominated for civilian version of Congressional Medal of Honor

*by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources*

BEND, Ore. -- The Congressional Medal of Honor Society has announced its finalists for the "Above and Beyond Citizens Honor" and Bend native Rachael Scdoris will be representing the state of Oregon. Rachael was selected from a pool of more than 500 other nominees. The award honors her as an inspiration to her fellow citizens.

Rachael Scdoris of Bend, Oregon, has been chosen as a finalist in the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's "Above and Beyond Citizens Honor" award - submitted photo. At the age of 16, Rachael became the youngest athlete ever to finish a 500-mile sled dog race. She went on to end a two-year battle with the Iditarod to become the first ever visually impaired athlete to compete in the grueling competition. In 2006, Rachael's life-long dream was realized when she successfully finished the Iditarod. Last week, when two of her dogs showed symptoms of minor injuries, Rachael made the difficult decision to pull her team out of the 2008 Iditarod with just 150 miles to go. During Rachael's 2006 Iditarod campaign she raised more than \$115,000 for the United States Association for Blind Athletes and was nominated for an ESPY award for Best Female Athlete with a Disability. She was also honored by Glamour magazine as one of their "Women of the Year." For the Above and Beyond Citizens Honor, representatives are chosen from each state as well as the District of Columbia. From this list, three amazing citizens will be selected as 2008 Above and Beyond Citizen Nominees during a ceremony on Medal of Honor Day on March 25th in Washington, D.C.

Rachael is recognized as an inspiration not only for her athletic prowess, but also for her perseverance in succeeding despite her disability. Rachael was born with a rare disease known as Congenital Achromatopsia, which causes near sightedness, far sightedness and colorblindness. Talus Outdoor Technologies has teamed with Rachael to provide her with a customized version of the ColdAvenger mask to protect her face from the brutal cold during her remarkable outdoor excursions.

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