

## Sight Night

As a boy growing up in Fortaleza in northeast Brazil my world was a colourful, vibrant place. A warm climate and an ocean at my doorstep meant my days were filled with soccer, swimming and surfing.

Almost three years ago I came to Calgary. I'd saved my money so that I could live in an English-speaking country and become immersed in the language that would be most useful to me once I completed my degree in international business.

In September 2008 I was hit by a stray bullet and lost my eyes. One minute I had sight, the next I didn't. Close your eyes. Now, imagine you can never open them again. Could you run, again? Could you cycle, play ball, or ski? With support and encouragement, training and coaching, the answer is "yes".

The Alberta Sports and Recreation Association for the Blind (ASRAB) knows the power of sport to build confidence and enhance the lives of blind and visually impaired Albertans.

I know the power of sport, its ability to motivate and to connect us with others. I have always believed in the importance of taking care of my body, mind and soul. Today, through participation in tandem cycling I am able to keep in shape and to again, feel the wind in my face. It is not easy but I am thankful that I can do it.

This is why I am proud to co-chair Sight Night on November 20th with Mayor Dave Bronconnier. Please support us as we raise money so that all visually impaired and blind Albertans can take to the trails, feel the thrill of the ride and the challenge of competition in whatever sport they choose.

Run alongside us, donate or volunteer. Come have fun. Run after dark. I hear vision is optional! Though we may not see you, we will know you are there.

Since I lost my sight, Calgarians have shown me their generosity of spirit. Thank you for stepping up once more.

Jose Ribeiro Neto