

# Tualatin's Kanya Sesser Update: California Surfing Safari

BY KANYA SESSER

I was born in Park Chong, Thailand without legs. I was abandoned on the front steps of a Buddhist temple when I was one week old. A policeman found me and brought me to a Park Chong hospital. The plan was to find me a family, and more importantly a loving home. For two years I lived with an older loving couple that I like to call my grandparents. It was at the age of 5 that I was finally united with my devoted adoptive parents and destiny brought me to Tualatin, Oregon!

Growing up as a kid I made many friends. Mainly for being a friendly, funny, free spirited and outgoing human being. I believe they were more impressed by my traits and personality than

**Publisher's Note:** When Kanya Sesser's Mom stopped by my office last week to drop off this article, I thought it would be perfect to run in our 5th anniversary issue, as Kanya was featured in our premiere issue in 2009. She was just a freshman at TuHS at the time and is now a student at University of Arizona in Tucson. I found her story inspiring then and continue to admire her can-do attitude as a young woman. -JC



their curiosity of me for not having legs. Since at a very young age my approach to life has been to live without limits and to not be afraid to do new things. Even though there are certain things that I might not be able to do, that doesn't stop me from trying and finding a way to do it my own way.



Nothing but smiles from Kanya surfing at Seaside Beach in Cardiff by the Sea, California.

Since at a young age I've skated, mono-skied, hiked, surfed, and played tennis. In high school I was on the track team. As a grown up I enjoy four wheeling, shooting and a long list of awesome outdoor activities. I like to dance, break dancing specifically, and I enjoy going out when I have time. You see, my schedule is pretty tight. I start my day at about 5:00 am training to make the USA Paralympic Team in track and field. I compete in the 100, 200 and 400 meter events. I love speed! After my daily workout and practice, I head to school. And then after school, you might see me skating downtown Tucson or at the Santa Rita skate park.

Recently, I went on a surf/skate road trip to California. During the first part of the trip I had

the privilege of visiting the Billabong headquarters in Orange County. They gave me a detailed tour of Billabong HQ and introduced me to the entire Billabong family. I was so stoked! Billabong has always been one of my favorite clothing brands and now I have the inside scoop on how Billabong rolls! Towards the end of the tour they surprised me with my very own custom made wetsuit and goodies that were perfect for my upcoming surf session.

My first surf experience was in Oregon with the Tualatin Park and Recreation trip. All of my surfing has been done in the frigid waters of Oregon. While it was fun, it was also time to take my surfing up a notch, Cali style! Billabong and their friends at The View from 42 set up a surf session at Seaside Beach in Cardiff.

We all met at the beach at 10:30 am on a beautiful Saturday morning. I met with the founder of The View from 42, Randy Abbot. He was in charge of taking me out and coaching my surfing. We immediately clicked. You see, Randy has a similar challenge to mine. He is paralyzed from the waist down...but you have to see this guy surf! Nothing stops him! Randy, Josh and the positive vibes from the locals (including Joel Tudor) gave me the best surf session I have ever had. Waves were 3 to 5 feet and glassy, perfect! I learned how to get closer to the pocket of the wave and set a good line. I realized that I love going left on waves. In other words, I am a goofy foot!

I feel so blessed to know that I now have friends in SoCal and that when I need a break from school and training I can go and catch some California rollers then skate the parks.

*If you wish to follow Kanya you can visit her Facebook page or follow her on Instagram [@kanyasesser](#).*



Randy and Kanya made quick friends.



Kanya at Tualatin Skate Park.



Nothing better than the stroll to the ocean.