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Michael O'Hara Lynch

While responsible for global sponsorship at VISA, in 2006 Michael made the first corporate level commitment to support the Women's Ski Jumping USA team just prior to the 2006 Torino Olympics.

This sponsorship by one of the TOP Olympic Sponsors, VISA, provided an immediate level of endorsement and credibility to the women's ski jumping movement since VISA logos were prominently displayed in the strategically important first network coverage of the exclusion of women from Olympic ski jumping, shown on ABC World News Tonight. The story was shot 5 days after Michael agreed to support the US Women ski jumpers.

VISA financial support enabled the lobbying at the FIS Vilamoura 2006 Congress, leading to the approval of the 2009 Liberec World Championship and recommendation to the IOC to include women's ski jumping on the 2010 Vancouver program.

The funds provided by VISA enabled athlete training, coaching, program management, competition travel and advocacy reflected in continued efforts for 2010 inclusion with the Sagen v. VANOC Canadian court case out of pocket expenses associated with the pro bono court case in Vancouver. Michael's decade-long support culminated in the premiere of women's ski jumping in the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games. VISA ensured the ability of the pioneering women ski jumpers to pursue their Olympic dreams.