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FORMER MISSOURI VALLEY COLLEGE LADY VIKING WRESTLER TO COMPETE IN 2008 OLYMPIC GAMES IN BEIJING.

Marshall, Mo. (August 7, 2008)—She wore orange and purple. She's earned the right to wear red, white, and blue. And she's going for the gold.

When Clarissa Chun began wrestling in 1999 during her junior year of high school, she thought it was a pretty good transition from judo, the sport she started when she was seven. She had no idea that it would provide her the chance to go to college, let alone the opportunity of a lifetime.

Although her high school wrestling career was short, Chun had plenty of time to make a name for herself. She was the first girls wrestling state champion in the 98-pound class in Hawaii.

Chun went on to Michigan in the summer of 1999 to compete in the girl's national high school tournament. After a third place finish, she found herself with a bit of a surprise.

"That summer, a packet from Missouri Valley College was sent with a partial scholarship for women's wrestling," Chun said. "I had no idea there was wrestling after high school. I was a little hesitant at first going to Missouri from Hawaii, but the decision was made with the help of a scholarship. The timing couldn't have been better."

MVC created the second women's wrestling program among American institutions. And Chun was one of the first to sign up.

Although a knee injury during her sophomore year slowed her down, Chun was a standout for the Lady Vikings. In 2001 the Lady Vikings were the U.S. National Champions.

"It was a great program and it's funny because it was a new program and there were a bunch of us girls, most of who were on boy's teams and never had been on an all girls team before," Chun said. "We felt like we had to prove a lot to each other and ourselves. It was fun, it was new, and there were obstacles to overcome. I met a lot of great people and made some great friendships on our team."

After her junior year in 2002, Chun made the decision to leave Valley when the International Olympic Committee decided to include women's wrestling in the 2004 Olympics and opened a women's wrestling program at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.

"I believed it was the decision I had to make to further my wrestling career—to totally focus and train for the Olympics," Chun said. "It is a great environment to be surrounded by athletes who have the same goals—to be an Olympian and an Olympic gold medalist."

Chun didn't make the U.S. team for the 2004 Athens games, but she wouldn't give up then. In the 2008 trials, Chun knocked off long-time rival Patricia Miranda June 13 in Las Vegas. She beat the 2004 bronze medalist twice in a best-of-three format—4-0, 0-6, 3-1 in the first round and 1-0, 3-1 in the second. She will wrestle in the 48 kilogram class in Beijing.

"The feeling to be able to represent the U.S.A. in women's wrestling in the Olympics is surreal," Chun said. "It truly is a dream come true. It is the most exciting time of my life. I want

to represent my country, my family, my friends, and all the programs and people I've come across to help me get here."

Chun will get the chance to represent when the 2008 Games kick off August 8, which she says is the second greatest accomplishment of her wrestling career.

"The greatest accomplishment will come when I get that Olympic gold medal around my neck and hearing the U.S. National anthem," Chun said.

Although she is the first to be on Team U.S.A., Chun won't be the only Olympian produced by MVC this year. Senior Maria Dunn won the Oceania freestyle championship earlier this year and will represent Guam in the 63 kilogram class. She is the first Guamanian woman to qualify for the sport in the Olympic games. MVC 2008 graduate Jeff Cobb represented Guam in the 2004 Games following his freshman season at MVC.

For more information about the 2008 Olympic Games, visit <http://en.beijing2008.cn/>.

ABOUT MISSOURI VALLEY COLLEGE

Missouri Valley College is a liberal arts college that provides educational, social and cultural experiences in a decidedly Christian environment. Established in 1889, MVC offers 27 majors and 7 pre-professional programs, and 12 sports and 20 varsity teams. The liberal arts heritage focuses on scholarship, critical thinking and academic excellence to prepare students to become members of a responsible citizenry. For more information, call (660) 831-4000 or visit www.moval.edu.

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