



First students qualify for the Beijing Olympics : 20/02/2008

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It has been confirmed that two second-year Economics students from Royal Holloway are off to the 2008 Beijing Olympics this summer. Zeina Shaban (who is also studying Management) and Rodrigo Ideus are both members of the College's STARS bursary scheme, which supports promising athletes, and are representing their countries in table tennis and rowing respectively.

Zeina will be representing West Asia, including her home country of Jordan. Having won the Arab Championship and been voted Jordanian athlete of the year in 2003, Zeina is already an established sports personality in her own right. Beijing will be her second Olympics as she competed in Athens in 2004.

Rodrigo, from Bogota, Colombia, has ranked highly in international competitions; he achieved nineteenth place in the World Rowing Championships in Munich last year and has become the first Colombian rower to compete at the Olympics. Rodrigo will be participating in the men's heavyweight single scull, even though he is typically categorised as a lightweight, and will be taking on competitors over 20 kilograms heavier than him.

On his qualification, Rodrigo said, 'This achievement is one that I could not have obtained without the help of many individuals; parents, coaches, friends and everyone who has helped me become who I am now. Now my life has changed dramatically, I can safely say that I will have a serious training programme right up until Beijing in August!'