



Delivering on one leg

Photo by Amy Bolger

Brooklyn CCA hopes to make carrying a career

Nothing stops Brooklyn, NY Branch 41 letter carrier **Nicole Schloss** from delivering the mail—not even a prosthetic leg.

Schloss, a city carrier assistant in Williamsburg, NY, has a can-do attitude and the support of postal managers and the public to back her up.

Schloss was born with a congenital defect that gave her a very short right leg that doesn't reach past the knee of her left leg, so she has a lifetime of experience walking with an artificial limb. She was fitted with her first prosthesis when she was seven months old.

She didn't think twice when a friend who used to work for the Postal Service encouraged her to apply for a job there. She did so and was offered a position as a CCA.

"I'm used to walking," she said. "I don't mind walking." Schloss' leg has

never held her back—one of her favorite leisure activities is rock climbing, in fact.

She accepted the job and was given a route that is part mounted and part walking, including some hills and steps to maneuver.

Schloss didn't doubt her abilities as a letter carrier until she went out on her route last winter in snow and ice with a mail cart to push. She called a supervisor and said she wasn't sure she could handle it. That's when she found out how supportive her supervisors were. "They said, 'Take your time. You can do this,'" she recalled. She finished the route.

Schloss is on maternity leave until January to care for her new baby girl, Kennedy, but she hopes to make carrying the mail a career. "I love it because I get to interact with so many

people," she said. "I studied hospitality in school, so my whole thing is to be around other people."

Schloss has no difficulty getting attention from friendly people on her route, whether patrons or passersby.

"They're wonderful. In the summertime, when I wear my shorts, people driving by yell at me 'Do it! You're doing a good thing,'" she said. "Some people come up to me and shake my hand and give me a hug and tell me that I'm making them proud."

Schloss said she never gets tired of the encouragement, especially in the heat or when she's having a bad day: "When you get that from somebody, you think, 'You know what? I can do this.'"

"It's good to hear that," she added. "It puts you back in a better place and makes you smile." **PR**