

# Mother of Golden Girl Gabby Douglas Filed Bankruptcy This Year

by Joel R. Glucksman on August 21, 2012

While Olympic gymnast Gabby Douglas has had a very successful year, winning a pair of gold medals at the London Olympic Games, reports say her mother has been dealing with significant financial issues and actually filed for protection under bankruptcy law earlier this year.

The Chapter 13 bankruptcy filing for Natalie Hawkins, which was made in January in the Eastern District of Virginia, was originally reported by the website TMZ. The filing listed her as having assets worth just over \$163,000 with debts of roughly \$80,000 – mainly from her mortgage.

She also listed an income of roughly \$2,500 per month from Social Security disability and child support. She has been on long-term disability since 2009.

When questioned about the issue at the Olympics, Hawkins – a single mother of four – said that her former husband’s past difficulty paying child support was a factor in the bankruptcy filing. She said bankruptcy was a way for her to pay what she owed.

“It’s my story, it’s part of me. I’m not even embarrassed about it,” Hawkins said in London. “It shows that even though I didn’t like to have to do it, I’m glad there was something there for me to be able to protect my home.”

The 16-year-old Douglas helped the U.S. women’s gymnastics team earn the overall gold medal while also earning the individual all-around gold medal. Since winning, she’s already lined up multiple sponsorship deals, and is set to appear on Kellogg’s Corn Flakes boxes soon. Based on past winners, ESPN estimates Douglas could earn sponsorships worth between \$8 million and \$12 million during the next few years.