

Jenna O.
Cumberland Valley High School
Third Place
9th – 12th

Positive Attitudes in the Community

Gymnastics season starts in early October every year. And every year there is a feeling of pressure and nervousness. All the girls on the team practice day in and day out to perfect skills to do well. But most of the girls don't have much motivation. Some girls don't even try that hard because they are so bored with the same ole things we do day in and day out. That was the feelings I had for a while. But although I was bored with the regular day to day practices for the team, I love to help coach the Special Olympics Area M gymnastics team the practices at our gym. One of my favorite girl's name is Jess. She always practices with so much heart and persevered through every skill that scared her. Jess knew I was on the competitive team at gym and she told me she wanted to come watch me. So, I gave her the date of the next meet we had, not knowing if she would really come or not. Well, that date came. I finished my last event and headed over to get a drink from my mom when I jess standing at the wall. She had flowers in her hand for me and a smile from ear to ear. She ran up and gave a hug and continued to tell me how amazing I was and how brave I must be to do all those skills. She told me how she wished she could do half the tings I could do. That day will stick with me for a very long time.

This story is powerful to me because I realized that on that day that jess would give anything to be able to do the tings I could do. She practices so hard every day to try and reach the goals she's set for herself. She made me see that I should be more grateful for the abilities I have and to be a more positive person. Jess is my inspiration and motivation. I realize that she's the brave one. Seeing that I had an impact on a little girl mead me get out into the community and promote people to get more involved with Special Olympics. People with disabilities are often put to the side and forgotten about. But, with my experiences, they bring out the good in you. They remind us of the little things in life that can go a long way. The boys and girls that I have helped through Special Olympics are truly amazing people. I am blessed to have them in my life. They show me what life is all about and how to live it to the fullest.