



Sport: Gymnastics

Hometown: Harwood Heights, IL

Age: 22

1. How long have you been with Special Olympics?

I started to participate in Special Olympics when I was 10 years old, in gymnastics. Since then I have participated in Special Olympics in other sports as well: bowling, skiing, snowshoeing, field and track, and basketball.

2. How has Special Olympics changed your life?

Special Olympics helped me to gain confidence, learn respect, it taught me how to work hard to achieve my goals, and it taught me how to deal with disappointments. In addition, I met so many great people (athletes and coaches).

3. What has been your biggest obstacle to overcome?

I learned that I don't have to win every time to celebrate my achievement. I'm very competitive and it was very hard for me to accept that I can't win every time. I also had a fear of heights and now I can do bars and rings.

4. What makes you most proud?

It makes me really proud when I win or do something that was hard for me, but I did it because I worked very hard.

5. What are some other accomplishments you are proud of?

I was on my high school basketball team and I played in the United Center in Chicago, where Chicago Bulls are playing. I was featured in our local newspaper and on the ABC 7 news because of my participation in Special Olympics activities like gymnastics and Plane Pull.

6. What other interests or hobbies do you have?

I'm interested in all kinds of sports like basketball, gymnastics, skiing, snowshoeing, bowling, track, and archery. I'm also very involved in my church, serving as an altar boy. Another passion of mine is music. I'd love to be a DJ and I love to sing.

7. Who do you admire most and why?

I admire Michael Jordan because he was a great basketball player and I would like to play in the NBA like him.



8. What does attending USA Games mean to you?

It means the world to me. I'm very excited and looking forward to the whole experience and of course winning the gold medal.

9. How are you preparing/training for USA Games?

I'm training with my gymnastic team Elite Stars and I attend additional workout sessions to build up my strength.

10. Have you been to a World Games or USA Games before?

I attended Summer Games in Bloomington a few times as well as USA Games in Atlanta where I did gymnastics.

11. Are you employed? If so, where at and what's your role?

I'm currently working through the school transition program at the warehouse where we repack stuff for distribution

12. Are you a currently a student? If so, where and is it a Unified Champion School?

I'm a student at West Leyden High School in the last year of the transition program. I'm not sure if the school is UCS.

