

Tori Takes Home Gold

In More Ways Than One



Team New Hampshire returned home from the Special Olympics USA Games in Orlando, FL, with 135 medals: 32 gold, 59 silver, and 44 bronze. Tori, a participant in our Community-Based Services program, was proud to take home two gold medals. But what shined even brighter for her than gold was a moment she shared with her father after one of her wins.

At the time trial (practice rounds) for the mini javelin, a new event for Tori, the athlete made what she thought was a perfect throw. But it landed flat and did not get the distance she anticipated. She thought, “Oh god, I threw that sloppy. I’m not going to win this competition.”



Tori throwing the mini javelin.

When it counted most, though, Tori made a throw she considers a personal best. “That’s probably the farthest I’ve ever thrown it,” Tori says. “But I was still thinking I would get fourth

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—Tori, Community-Based Services participant

or fifth place.” Shortly after the competition ended, Tori’s coach, MJ, called her over. Tori thought she was in trouble. Then, Coach MJ showed her the results sheet with her name at the top. She had won gold in the mini javelin.

“I was crying with joy,” Tori says. “I finally looked up and saw my dad, but I couldn’t find any words, so I held up my pointer finger to say first place. We were both crying happy tears.” Tori also won first place in the 100-meter run. When she did, she also immediately looked for her dad and yelled, “We did it! We did it!”



Tori with Governor Sununu at the Dover Elks Lodge.

Back in New Hampshire, Tori was congratulated by Governor Chris Sununu at the 3rd Annual Elks Riders National Rally at the Dover Elks Lodge. She plans to attend another Elks event in Nashua soon to talk about her experience in Orlando.



Tori on the podium in first place.



Tori and other athletes spending free time at Animal Kingdom in Orlando.