



Here's an amazing story of hardship and determination, of passion and pride and of guts and glory — the hallmarks of a truly dedicated Special Olympics athlete.

Mrs. Jane Sample
1234 Main Street Apt 431
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Dear Jane Sample

Sara Albers has what is called Agenesis of the Corpus Collosum with a Dandy Walker Variant. In layman's terms this means her cerebellum did not develop properly and continues to interrupt her development – a challenge she faces daily.

The condition was so serious at birth that her doctor was not sure whether she would ever walk or talk.

But just look at her now! This year at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece, she won a gold and a bronze medal.

Sara runs with an unusual gait, has to wear glasses and is virtually deaf, but she has an incredible fighting spirit.

At the Games, in the 200-meter dash in her division of 12-15 year olds, she captured a bronze with a time of 32.48 seconds, improving her personal time by over four seconds.

Sara was nervous before the event. In the preliminaries she was in lane number 8, the worst lane to be in. She did not have her glasses and all she could see was a foggy finish line but she was determined to do well. She handily qualified by placing first.

In the finals she got a better lane – lane number 2 – but was flanked by two strong runners who just flew past her at the last few seconds.

In the Long Jump she won a gold medal in her division with an incredible jump of 2.68 meters.

Sara had butterflies in her stomach as she strode up to the starting line. Being deaf she could not hear the crowds cheering her, especially her seven family members who went to the games to support her. They included her mother, Jennifer Albers, her dad William, sister Rachel, brother William, her aunt Martha Doran, her uncle Steve Doran and another aunt Karen Glancy.

Her first jump was average but in the second attempt she did really well, outperforming all the others. As she completed the jump she looked back for the white flag to make sure it was a clean jump. Then there was a faint, barely audible 'yes' from her lips as she clenched her fist with joy. She had beaten her own record by 0.22 meters.

Standing proudly on the podium, as the Canadian national anthem played, she humbly accepted the gold medal. The entire Albers clan beamed with tears of joy and pride as the crowd stood up and applauded. This was their little girl, the one supposedly destined never to walk.

Jennifer Albers, Sara's mother told me, "Sarah was always interested in sports; she loved to participate with other children but the physical gap between what she could do in comparison to the average child was very apparent and heartbreaking.

"Getting involved with Special Olympics Ontario was easy!"

"I wanted her to continue participating in sports so when she was nine years old, I Googled 'sports for kids with



Sara with her coach Angela Behn

Yes, I would be proud to support more dedicated Special Olympics athletes like Sara.

I have enclosed a donation of \$ _____

Mrs. Jane Sample
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Special Olympics
Ontario

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