

# Students with disabilities helped by senior project

## Commentary

Three years ago when I was introduced to the idea of senior projects at Columbus East High School, I began thinking of what mine could be. I already knew that I wanted to have a project centered on basketball. After all, I've been playing since I was in third grade. It wasn't until about halfway through my freshman year that I decided exactly what my project was going to be. I want to be a teacher for students with disabilities, so in combining the two the I-CAN Basketball Camp was born.

At first the idea of a basketball camp for students with disabilities seemed impossible and incredibly overwhelming, but I talked with my parents and some teachers, parents and administrators involved with students with disabilities and everyone I talked to got excited about it. Their excitement only helped fuel mine. By the time I proposed my project to my senior project board, I couldn't wait for June 7, the day of my senior project, to arrive. I worked on planning the camp for about three months; and through donations I was able to get T-shirts and trophies for each participant, and I received a donation of



with each other. We used a 4-foot goal, so that everyone would be able to score, and participants from the other team were tipping the goal to help others score. It was amazing to watch because there were no selfish players, everyone shared the ball and everyone was having fun. During the last part of the camp, we handed out

T-shirts, trophies and water bottles. Everyone was excited to receive all three, but two parents said that their children received their very first trophies that day. One camper came in extremely shy and reserved and halfway through the camp he was playing with the other kids, jumping around cheering and high-flying everyone, and when he received his trophy, he hoisted it high in the air and was smiling from ear to ear.

When I reflected back on the camp, I knew it was a success. The camp really taught me a lot, but the most important thing that it taught me was that kids don't see kids with disabilities. Kids just see kids.

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*Shannon Van Horn is currently a senior at Columbus East High School.*

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100 water bottles to hand out. I adapted the drills for the camp ahead of time, to ensure that each participant would be able to participate and finally, the day of the I-CAN Basketball Camp arrived.

On the day of my camp I was both excited and nervous. It was storming outside, so I wasn't sure how many people would show up. Not everyone who registered showed up, but everything worked out. The camp became the ideal: an inclusive camp for children with and without disabilities. Some volunteers brought their children with them, and since not everyone showed up, they were able to play. After doing some drills using varying goal and ball sizes, we played a game of three-on-three. Each team had children with and without disabilities, and instead of the game being one team totally against another.

It was six kids playing



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