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Local Special Olympics athlete honored

Picker won for her participation in the U.S. Olympic trials in Eugene

By ROBERT DEANE
The Hermiston Herald

Local Special Olympics sprinter, Stacy Picker of Hermiston, was one of 16 athletes honored at the Governor's Gold Awards for her participation in the U.S. Olympic Trials in Eugene last July.

The Governor's Gold Awards, presented by KeyBank, honored members of the Special Olympics Oregon team that ran at the July trials.

Picker said she was very happy to have received the award.

"I was kinda nervous, but it was really awesome that I got the award," Picker said.

Local Special Olympics program coordinator, Phyllis Town spoke highly of Picker and her participation in the program.

"She (Picker) is a superb athlete and everyone likes her," Town said.

Town said Picker works really hard and in the three years that she has known her, Picker has really improved in her athletic abilities.

The Shriver Greatness Award is given at the dinner to honor Special Olympics Oregon athletes who competed in World Games or similar athletic events.

Eugene trials comprised a men's and a women's team of eight athletes each. The athletes were selected for the teams based upon qualifying time trials held to determine the fastest sprinters in the Special Olympics program this summer. The athletes then participated in a 100-meter-dash exhibition at Hayward Field at the University of Oregon.

The Governor's Gold Awards, an annual invitation-only dinner event now in its sixth year, provides an occasion to present a prestigious, one-of-a-kind Oregon award while benefiting Special Olympics Oregon. Gerry Frank served as master of ceremonies of the dinner and fundraiser.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski and three former Oregon governor — Barbara Roberts, John Kitzhaber and Victor Atiyeh — made the selections for this year's awards.

The event raised \$130,000 for Special Olympics Oregon this year.

Special Olympics Oregon is a statewide organization serving thousands of individuals with mental disabilities through participation in Olympic-style sports.

Through Special Olympics, people with intellectual disabilities can enjoy the opportunity to be treated as people, not just as disabled.

In sport, athletes gain self-confidence, social competency and other enhanced skills, both physical and social.

A full schedule of events and additional information can be found at



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