

Comal Independent School District

NEWS RELEASE

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Comal ISD STAR Athletes compete in largest track meet of school year

When Helen Vaello's son Cole was born with Down syndrome, she saw it as a gift.

Cole repaid his mom for her unconditional love Friday by giving her an early Mother's Day present.

Some of Comal ISD's most important students competed in the STAR (Specialized Training in Athletics and Recreation) track and field meet on May 7 at Canyon Lake High School.



It was the largest event of its kind ever held in Comal ISD as more than 80 athletes from Smithson Valley High, Canyon High, CLHS and Canyon, Mountain Valley, Spring Branch and Smithson Valley middle schools participated in the meet.

They competed in wheelchair races, the 100-meter dash, shot put, javelin, discus, softball toss and the long jump.

"It was just awesome," Vaello said. "If everyone could come out at least once and watch these children, they would come away with a new sense of what's really important in life."

Volunteers included the CLHS Army JROTC teachers and student-cadets, other CLHS faculty, students and cheerleaders, as well as many parents of these dedicated athletes.

Everyone that participated received a trophy, and JROTC instructors Michael Collyer and Michael Medina handed out the prizes.

“It was another wonderful event, and it was a great way to cap off another successful year for our STAR athletes,” said Terry Werchan, head of Comal ISD’s STAR Sports Program. “There are always a lot of great success stories here, a lot of smiles and a lot of tears from parents so happy that their kids are having so much fun.”

CLHS senior Samantha Wright is a veteran of track and field and other STAR events like bowling competitions, which are held in the fall.

“These events mean a lot to me because we always practice so hard for them,” Wright said. “It’s always great to see my friends from the different schools and to make new ones.”

Vaello said watching her son, a freshman at CLHS, compete in the track and field meet was the only Mother’s Day present she wanted.

“I didn’t need anything else to unwrap,” she said. “My kid had a smile I will never forget.”

-CISD-

IN PHOTOS:

1-Canyon High student Linsey Ponfick gears up to make a long toss in the softball throw as Canyon Lake High paraprofessional Erich Robinson looks on during the STAR athlete track and field meet at CLHS on May 7.

2-Mountain Valley Middle student Colton Riggs shows fine form in the softball toss as teacher Kaye Mayer gets ready to write down his score.

3-Canyon Lake High student Mackenna Ramsey races down the track during a wheelchair event at the Comal ISD STAR Athlete track and field meet at CLHS on May 7.

