

DAC Achievement Award Nomination Form

Nominee Information

Nominee Name - Jennifer Reyna

Nominator Information

Nominator Name – Julie Perren

Nomination Category (please select one): *

Individual *

Organization

City of Fresno Employee or Department

Nominated for:

- Improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities.
- Advocacy for issues pertaining to individuals with disabilities.
- Volunteerism that has a positive impact on individuals with disabilities.
- Development of new programs or services impacting individuals with disabilities

Nomination Statement

I'm nominating Jennifer Reyna as the City of Fresno Disability Advisory Commission's Achievement of the Year Award recipient for 2019. 'Jenn', as she is known, is the Manager and Coach of the only wheelchair basketball team in the central San Joaquin Valley, the Central Valley Ballers. The closest other wheelchair basketball teams are in Sacramento and San Jose. The team was established in 2014 with a coach, Bao and borrowed basketball wheelchairs. Jenn assumed management responsibilities of finding a practice venue, organizing weekly practice, public relations and tournament logistics for the team. After their coach accepted a position in Washington DC., Jenn also assumed responsibilities of coaching as well. After initiating the process, Jenn was able to obtain non-profit organization status with a 501 (c) 3 tax exemption for the team. Therefore, I'm nominating Jenn in the categories of Improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities as she accomplished this by helping establish the team, managing it and making it a non-profit

organization; Advocacy for issues pertaining to individuals with disabilities, she advocates for the team by being the spokesperson, grant writer and manager as well as coach; Volunteerism that has a positive impact on individuals with disabilities, she has achieved all of this as a volunteer; Development of new programs or services impacting individuals with disabilities, again, helped establish and has continued to support the teams existence; and Innovation or Entrepreneurship by an individual with a disability or that has a positive impact on individuals with disabilities, Jenn wrote a grant obtaining additional equipment for the team so people who can't afford a basketball wheelchair are able to play. This year Jenn wrote a grant to the Christopher and Dana Reeves Foundation asking for five new basketball wheelchairs for those who aren't able to play as they can't afford one and for a trailer to house and transport them in. The Foundation contacted Jenn that her grant application was accepted and the team would be granted new basketball wheelchairs and a trailer. These are incredible feats that Jenn has accomplished with the help of her husband, team player Raul and their teammates. Jennifer holds a Bachelors degree in Education from California State University Fresno and is an Autism Specialist/Para Educator for the Fresno Unified School District. She and Raul reside in Fresno. It is for all of these reasons I'm nominating Jennifer Reyna as the 2019 DAC Achievement Award recipient for the City of Fresno Disability Advisory Commission.

Submitted by
Julie Perren
July 31, 2019

Dennis Barker

7-30-2019

I want to nominate Jennifer Reyna for this award, for all the hard work she puts into coaching the wheelchair Basketball team I play for. Jennifer works almost by herself tirelessly to keep our Basketball team running smoothly. She finds and books gyms for our team to have places to hold practice. She comes up with lessons plans for our team to practice drills and get better by learning the game of wheelchair Basketball all by herself. Our team used to have a dedicated coach named Bao Yang, Bao got a job offer out of state and took it. Leaving our team without a coach, without hesitation Jennifer stepped in and took over coaching, with no prior coaching experience. In addition to the coaching, Jennifer also manages the team. She books hotel rooms for the entire team for when we have out of town tournaments that we compete in About 5 times a year. She was the main driving force in getting our team into a LLC and attaining non profit status, giving our team some legitimacy. She deals with many different disabilities in being our and does a great job catering to specific needs for the different disabilities when it comes to being able to play basketball. Jennifer and her husband, who plays on the team, transport a few basketball wheelchairs and the rest of the team's equipment every week to practice, which is not an easy feat. She does all this while working a full time job as teacher. Playing wheelchair Basketball has been a great outlet for me to meet other people in similar situations, and compete despite being disabled. I am so thankful that Jennifer has put in so much work to keep the team going for people like me and others in the Valley who benefit from it.

07/29/18

My name is Kristopher Bland, want to nominate Jennifer Reyna for the award because thanks to her people like me have an outlet to play sports in the community. For those who don't know Jennifer has been helping the community with disabilities for a long time. Thanks to the creation of Central Valley Ballers I have a place that I can call home. I been playing wheelchair basketball for almost 4 year now. Since I know Jennifer always been a very hard-working person that had always been giving 100% to our cause even if she can't. She created the Central Valley Ballers with the idea of giving to adults with injuries or disabilities a place to re-create themselves and have something to look forward to. For some of us playing sports is our life and it also is the place where we can let go of our problems or difficulties in life. The fact that Jennifer took the initiative to make this for us means a lot to me especially when she has a lot of things to take care in her life also. The reality is that the not a lot of people are going to worry about a bunch of adults in wheelchairs that want to do something with their lives but she did. For the team Jennifer is the coach, the mom at times, a sister and good friend. She is also the one that you the road is difficult she keeps pushing and pushing to get it done. I don't think Jennifer realize how much she has done for us but thanks to her I belong to something and I to push myself hard to become better and help others in the process. I will always admire dedication and I think she deserves this award because I want her to know how much she means to us. For more information you can call me at

Thank you,
Kristopher Bland