

Woodstock Community Unit School District 200

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Special Olympics athletes win 17 medals at State

Woodstock Community Unit School District 200's Special Olympics athletes took home 17 medals including 13 golds at the June 9-11 State Championship Summer Games at Illinois State University.

"This weekend was so much fun at the 2023 Special Olympics Summer Games. Our Athletes worked so hard and did such an amazing job!" said coach Jennifer Moskowitz.

The opening ceremony featured the final leg of the Law Enforcement Torch Run, in which officers from both Woodstock and the McHenry County Sheriff's departments participated.

District 200 students competed in powerlifting, track & field and gymnastics events as well as participating in the always popular Victory Dance in uptown Normal. They were welcomed back June 12 at Creekside Middle and Prairiewood Elementary schools by cheering summer school students and staff with a recognition parade.

The team is coached by Moskowitz, Cory Knopik, Natia Hong, Mary Engle, Jeannine Vetter, Aimee Marquardt, Mike Vorderer among other volunteers who help throughout the seasons.

Superintendent Mike Moan said he was extremely proud of the Special Olympics athletes and excited about the experience they shared. "These athletes and coaches work so hard and perform well at State. We're always proud of the efforts they give and proud of how they represent our schools," Moan said.

In total, the D200 team took home 13 Gold Medals, two Silver Medals, two Bronze Medal, two 4th Place Awards and one participation award.

The Summer Games results for D200 athletes are as follows:

- Jalen Means – Gold Medals in Deadlift and Combination Lifting, Silver Medal in Bench Press
- Aubrey Zientek – Gold Medals in both Ribbons and Ropes for Rhythmic Gymnastics
- Blake Svitak – Silver Medal in Mini javelin, 4th place in 100 M run
- Kailyn Hedke – Gold Medal for Ball Routine in Rhythmic Gymnastics
- David Gruett – Gold Medals in Standing Long Jump and 200 M run
- Olivia Covell – 4 Gold Medals for her Clubs, Rope, and Hoop Routines and All Around in Rhythmic Gymnastics along with a 4th Place Ribbon.
- Madison Kniola – Gold Medal for Hoops Routine and Two Bronze Medals for Clubs and Ribbons Routines in Rhythmic Gymnastics.
- Easton Freund – Gold Medal in Tennis Ball Throw
- Maddie Durante – qualified in Track & Field but was unable to attend