

Special Olympics Featured in Latest *Humans of New York* Book

Three Special Olympics athletes are featured in the recently released *New York Times* best seller *Humans*. In the book, author Brandon Stanton shares stories and photographs from more than 40 countries, each drawn from his popular website and social media series called *Humans of New York*, which *The Washington Post* described as “one of the most influential art projects of the decade.”



“We are the first female athletes from Saudi Arabia. It makes us feel wow.

It’s one of the nicest moments in our life. I have to be happy and positive because I am the basketball team captain. Whenever we make a shot, I clap.

I also clap if we miss it. And I clap if the other team makes it. If somebody is sad I tell them don’t be upset my sweetheart. And then I rub their shoulder. This is my teammate

Dawiah — I am her friend and she is my friend. I love her so much. She loves food and we dance together. We blow each other kisses during the game.

Yesterday we won. But it doesn’t matter if we lose because at the end we always dance.”



Unified athlete and her teammate Dawiah Mohammed Al Subhi, Saudi Arabia (basketball)

“This is the first time in my whole life that I got a gold medal in the World Games.

I was very calm and controlled my emotions. When I left home, my mom said to focus hard on my trainings and make Egypt proud of you.



Sometimes when I’m on my horse I pretend like my mom is right beside me and not all the way back in Cairo. I want to thank her so much. She does everything for me. My dad is in heaven and I want him to know that I miss him and that I love him so much. All the time I hear him saying ‘do a good job’ and ‘take care of yourself.’ I want to thank God for helping me win a gold medal. I want to thank my brother Islam for calling me yesterday and saying: ‘I hope you win the gold medal.’ That helped so much. I also want to thank my Coach Dahlia because she is a person that I love. She is almost like my little sister. Right now I feel like life is so beautiful. I feel a smile all over my face. I love everyone. And I am feeling very much like everyone loves me because I’m beautiful.”

Mariam Adel Azzab, Egypt (equestrian)

“Ms. Purevsuren is everything to me. She’s the best special education teacher in all of Mongolia.

She loves all of her students. When my mother died two years ago, my school wanted to send me to an orphanage. But



Ms. Purevsuren volunteered to take care of me. She has children of her own and her salary is low — but still she takes care of me. She lifts me up. She pays for all my expenses. She cooks me food every night. She even gathered a collection to buy me this judo uniform. It’s the first time I’ve ever worn new clothes. My mother would be so happy if she could see me right now. She’d be so thankful. I want so badly to win a medal, but I know that’s just a small thing. One day I will truly pay Ms. Purevsuren back. I will become an adult. I will make her proud. And I will take care of her when she’s old — just like she took care of me.”

Baldankhainyam Tuyasuren, Mongolia (judo)