

Dear Thais,

4-7-15

I visited my sister in Mesa Arizona over spring break and she had registered us to run a 5K race. When we arrived and picked up our packet I found out it was a fundraiser for research on Cerebral Palsy.

Thais, I wish you could have been there! There were individuals of all ages who participated in this race either by walking, using crutches, wheelchairs by their own power, electric or good old human power. Families and friends of these participants who are living with CP were so upbeat and supportive throughout the race. Everyone cheered each other on to do their best.

Thais, as I was running, I dedicated my race to you and pushed hard in the 85 degree heat to finish strong. Well, I won 1st place in my age group and my sister got second!

Thais, ever since I first met you in our summer Learn to Swim program eight years ago, you have inspired me by your determination and perseverance to learn how to swim! You worked so hard and listened to every skill step I demonstrated for you. Every afternoon you had your Mom bring you to Open Swim so you could practice your swim skills to improve a little bit everyday! A lot of times you were in our pool three times a day coming back for evening Open Swim time!

Mastering your swimming and diving skills was not a fast process but one that you really worked hard at for several years to learn to swim and dive! But even more unbelievable is how RELAXED you are in the water! I feel so proud and humbled to watch as you swim, perform rhythmic breathing and dive off the side of the pool!

Thais, you are AMAZING! You inspire individuals every day of your life to those of us who are Blessed to know you and even those who don't know you by name. You lead by example showing there is nothing that you are going to let stand in your way or hold you back from accomplishing any goal you have set for yourself!

I won this medal and shirt and want you to have it! This First Place Finish is for all the firsts you will continue to accomplish in your lifetime! You are such a great academic student at Hobart in High Ability classes, you can swim and dive and are one of the sweetest girls and best student leaders we have at Hobart Middle School!

Thais if you ever want to participate in a race and need a running partner, I would be honored and privileged to compete as your teammate!

All the best and many more successes for you, Thais,

Ms Funkhouser AKA: Coach Funky ☺

PS: If you ever run for President, you'll have my vote!