



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Outreach Programs

www.tsbvi.edu | 512-454-8631 | 1100 W. 45th St. | Austin, TX 78756

From Home, to School and Into the Community

Authors: Denitra Rideaux, Family Leader, Rockdale

Abstract: Following is a presentation Denitra and Trey gave at the 10th Annual Texas Chargers Family Retreat. Trey was honored as the 2015 Star Charger. On behalf of the Texas SenseAbilities editorial committee, we celebrate along with the Texas Chargers community all that Trey has accomplished through the years.

Hello my name is Denitra Rideaux and I am the mother of a young man by the name of Trey Lewis who was born with several obstacles and challenges. Look at how he has been blessed and turned into this wonderful 17 year old and is honored to be the 2015 Star Charger. Our family lives in a small town called Rockdale Texas where the population is about 5,500. So just imagine with a town that small all we have is a Walmart and 1 grocery store. We love living in a small town because everyone knows everyone and Trey is well known in this town. He loves music with playing the keyboard, listening to Pandora, pasta, Mexican food, riding horses, participating in rodeos, winning trophies and ribbons, attending the Sports Extravaganza for the blind and visually impaired where he has won several medals over the years, getting his hair cut and going to church.

Currently he is a student at TSBVI in Austin Texas and loves attending there and has grown in so many areas and has gained so many skills. Some of his favorite things he likes to do at TSBVI are swimming, obstacle course and exercise in PE, grinding coffee beans, animal care and recycling.

Recycling is his favorite and is something he does on a daily basis. So last summer Trey's teachers came out to our home before school was out to see how can we set up a summer schedule by incorporating some of the activities from school to home. We sat down and brainstormed how to set up a weekly schedule of activities on certain days. We had the same events on the calendar for the whole summer on each particular day. Some of the activities that we incorporated were exercise by walking around the track, swimming, watering plants, and recycling. Recycling was on a daily basis and was Trey's all-time favorite.

What we did to set up Trey's recycling service was to talk with my Pastor at our church and Trey's barber to see if we can set up a poster with Trey's picture on it and a plastic recycling bucket underneath the poster. They both agreed and were excited for Trey. So what started out small has now grown into something big. It is now still going on and we will need to get bigger recycle buckets because our community has really stepped up and have enjoyed helping Trey with providing bags and bags of recycling.

During the school year Trey's day to recycle is on Tuesday but we now have to add more days during the school year during the week because we can't keep up with it only going the 1 day. I have people from the community who have heard about his service and they will call or come by my job and ask what can they do to help this young man and where can they take their items. I love seeing how everyone is getting involved and wants to make a difference in his life.

This is something we will continue and would like to expand by collecting cans because DARS, Division for Blind Services recently heard about his service and asked if they can purchase a can crusher. Of course we were delighted about that so we now have a can crusher and this will be another additional service we will try to add for the summer. All the funds from the can crushing will go towards Trey's shopping because this young man loves to shop.

I want to thank TSBVI for helping our family find something that Trey is not forced to do but loves to do. Recycling makes him feel and know that he is accomplishing something, and that makes him feel whole and complete. When Trey no longer has school due to being an adult, our goals are to already have something in place to keep him active, give him a sense of fulfillment, and help him know that all things are possible. Just because you have a disability, it does not mean there are not possibilities.



This project is supported by the U.S. Department of Education Special Education Programs (OSEP). Opinions expressed here the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Department of Education.