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Gold medal teamwork

Special Olympians, high school students bond, compete on athletic field

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Students from Jefferson City and Capital City high schools had a chance to compete and bond Friday with Special Olympic athletes.

The first unified track meet at the Missouri Special Olympics campus off Christy Drive took place at the start of the weekend. Members of the Capital City High School soccer team and members of the student council at Jefferson City High School took part in the events.

Dillen Mayfield, Unified Champion Schools program coordinator for Special Olympics, said athletes with disabilities were paired with students without disabilities, and they competed in a running event, a throwing event and the standing long jump.

"This will be the first of what will hopefully be many events," Mayfield said. "We have another meet planned for next week with some surrounding schools, and we hope more and more schools come."

Organizers had planned to hold such a meet before the tornado that hit the facility in 2019 and caused millions of dollars in damage to the campus.

Repairs were completed last year. Since this past summer, the campus has been hosting events.

Mayfield said it's important for the Special Olympians and the high school students to be able to interact with each other.

"Sports has the ability to break down barriers," Mayfield said. "Some of my best friendships came out of my time playing various sports. These kids are showing what they can do no matter who they are."

Special Olympics officials said 22 similar events are scheduled between now and June 5 across the state.

Julie Smith/News Tribune

Khalil Ray, 15, a Jefferson City High School student, takes part in the standing broad jump Friday.



A hearty and heartfelt congratulations to Kristin Sills son who received 3 Gold and 1 Bronze medal Friday.