

Walker inspires kids everywhere to achieve



Leader Photos/Debra Jandreau

Briana Walker taught the kids how to put a little hop in their step even if they are dancing in a wheelchair.

Debra Jandreau
Leader Editor

Bunderson Elementary students were inspired to achieve whatever they can dream of even if they are facing difficulties in their lives. Briana Walker, author, model and dancer visited Bunderson Elementary on Thursday to share her message with students that they can create an amazing life – regardless of their challenges.

Briana was in car accident at the age of 23 and suffered severe trauma to her spinal cord. She now uses a wheelchair and travels throughout the county to share her message of hope and inspiration.

Her visit to Bunderson was hosted by the Disability Law Center in Utah and their "Everyone Can" program. The "Everyone Can" promotes a positive, realistic understanding of people with disabilities among youth while they are forming critical opinions about diversity, relationships and an understanding of community.

This project began when veteran

advocates at the Disability Law Center met to discuss how we could create change for people with disabilities in a new way.

According to the DLC Web site, the vast majority of complaints the center received from people with disabilities were based on experiences they had with prejudice, paternalism and ignorance.

The DLC thought there might be a way to change the attitudes that people have about individuals with disabilities. "It occurred to us that if we spent time with youth who were in the process of developing their beliefs about people with differences, we may be able to promote lasting acceptance and celebrate the unique abilities of every person. The "Everyone Can" project is a way for the DLC to build a future consistent with our vision of a just society where everyone is treated with equity, dignity and respect. The key to that future is building understanding among tomorrow's leaders that "Everyone Can."

Briana demonstrated how she has learned to live her life even in a wheel-

chair. She popped a few wheelies and taught four kids to dance a little pop with Hannah Montana music. She seemed to really connect with the youth, and even kept a straight face as she answered several personal questions from students.

Besides speaking during the assembly, Briana also read from the book "Susan Laughs" to several first and second grade classrooms. Briana is working

with Overstock.com to support the "Everyone Can" program.

Each student was given an "Everyone Can" bracelet to wear at the end of the assembly.

To learn more about Briana's story, visit her Web site at www.brianawalker.com.

(Contact Debra Jandreau at leadernews@citlink.net)

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Walker, who is the spokeswoman for Overstock.com was the guest speaker at Bunderson Elementary on Thursday. Walker was sponsored by the Utah Disability Law Center, under their "Everyone Can" Program.

Watch next week for the complete 4-H feature story.



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