

The Andrew David Beck Memorial Wheelchair Athletic Scholarship



*Remaining positive in the face of
adversity and going forward
through the tragedies of life is
what separates the champions
from the participants*

In 1978, The University of Texas at Arlington began a program through the Handicapped Student Services Office and entered the national spot-light with its development of a wheelchair sports program. The intent of the program was to develop physical capabilities, build self-esteem, teach discipline and work ethic for both personal and team benefit. While the success of the wheelchair basketball team and the wheelchair track and field team is outstanding, the real winners are the individuals who have come through the program. Andy Beck was one such individual.

When Andy came to UTA he had only been wheelchair bound for a year as the result of an automobile accident. He required assistance with most of his daily activities and struggled to push his wheelchair from point to point. With some encouragement, Andy joined the sports program, began to lift weights, and became a member of the UTA Freewheeler Track Team. Within two years, Andy was functioning independently. He was living in his own apartment, had made the Honor Roll academically, had been selected for the Texas Wheelchair Track Team that represents the State in National Competition, had realized a high self-esteem which allowed him to re-establish his identity and become a college student who incidentally used a chair for mobility.

Wheelchair sports provide real benefits that go beyond physical development and the rewards last a life time. UTA is honored to provide such programs but we see a need to go one step beyond our current level of operation. We want to offer wheelchair athletic scholarships to young college level handicapped students for two reasons. **First**, the cost of attending college is enormous. When you add the cost of wheelchairs and living aids, obtaining a college education can be impossible. We want to change that for deserving young students. We believe that individuals should learn to care for themselves, not be cared for through tax dollars. The **second** reason is to honor Andy Beck.

Andy was tragically killed in January. The strides he made as a wheelchair athlete allowed him to become a fully realized member of the community and he believed in the benefits of the program. As a result, professors and students alike believed in Andy and his abilities. His so called disability was relegated to an inconvenience in life, not a determining fact of lifestyle. That is the benefit of wheelchair sports.

The Andy Beck Memorial Wheelchair Athletic Scholarship Fund was established at UTA in February. We would like to begin offering scholarships for the Fall semester. To accomplish our goal, we need to generate \$5000.00 within the next two months.

If you can help, please send a donation to:

The University of Texas at Arlington
The Andy Beck Memorial Wheelchair
Athletic Scholarship Fund
c/o Handicapped Student Services
Box 19348 UTA Station
Arlington, Texas 76019-0348

If you have any questions, or if we may ever be of service, please give us a call at (817) 273-3364.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jim Hayes
Director
Handicapped Student Services