

2017 Bo Tipton Student of the Year – Male

Jesse Hosier Villela

Jesus, known as Jesse H. Villela is a ninth grade freshman, a young man attending Kelseyville high school this year. He is in my special day class at the school. This is the first year I have had the opportunity to get to know Jesse and work with him. He uses an eye gaze device with which to communicate with the class, his teachers and to share his thoughts.

Jesse was born with cerebral palsy and has been in a wheelchair his entire life. He was able to acquire his communication device and an electric wheelchair through the assistance of the school district. He has been a student at Kelseyville schools his entire school career. Jesse has an aide who helps open doors for him, get him aligned with his eye gazer so that he can work, and to help feed him and give him water. Jesse does not have the use of his hands, though he has a small amount of control over their movement.

You have never seen a bigger fan of the San Francisco Giants than Jesse. He has a lot of team spirit and watches every game. Also, he loves the Oakland Warriors and other sports teams. Jesse has a few other team members at school who check in on him periodically for his assistive technology, therapeutic and speech needs. They are all fans of him in a big way.

The reason I wanted to nominate Jesse is his positive spirit. Going through all that he has to accomplish in one day is a challenge, and yet Jesse spreads love and is a shining example of an enthusiastic young person. He lives with challenges and rises above them every day. When it is raining, he comes to school in a manual wheelchair that his aide pushes and he is smiling. Jesse is an inspiration because he lifts the mood or who may be all around, even other students who may be in a depressed mood or who may be tempted to misbehave. Jesse encourages others and is an incredible asset to our class every day.

Jesse is in a woodshop class where he has drawn designs for shelves and other creations. He is also in an art class where a specially designed drawing pad is set up for him; he communicates with the class and is well loved by other students. He takes part in PE classes and gets to stretch during this time which is really relaxing for him. In Math, Jesse is studying Pre-Algebra and working hard, completing homework daily. In Social Studies and Science, Jesse is a willing participant and often gives reports he has researched. In English Jesse is a great reader and a growing writer. I am inspired by this incredible young man who gives all of the students a great example of what good citizenship means in an easy to understand manner.