

This I Believe by Marissa Levia

I believe everyone should be given the same opportunities as everyone else regardless of their abilities. It has been proven enormously by athletes who have overcome their disabilities and achieved greatness in the game they play. Any game or activity can be modified for students with disabilities and they should be included in physical education classes like every other student.

In my high school we had quite a few students with disabilities. Everyone knew who they were and it wasn't necessarily by the way they looked, but everyone just knew. They were never included in any of the classes my peers and I were in. Could I even call them my peers when I was never able to interact with them? I wanted to, I just never knew how.

I remember specifically during my lunch period students who were physically disabled would enter the lunch room, get their food and immediately leave. I never knew any of their names or what their disabilities were. I never even knew where in the building they were located or what they did throughout the entire school day. It's not that I didn't care, I just didn't know. I was never aware.

Now being a twenty year old college student and no longer the clueless teenager I was, I am now aware. I am aware that the students that I had overlooked and underestimated in high school are more than capable of achieving amazing things. I am aware they should be valued and cherished just like any other classmate. I am now aware that they were indeed my peers and I wish I would have been aware sooner.

I no longer look at a person with a disability differently. They are just like me and can achieve just as much as I can, if not more. I truly believe everyone deserves a chance to experience success. When I become a P.E. teacher and leader I am going to make sure all my students are aware because I never was. There needs to be a change. Bringing in guest speakers who might have some form of a disability would be a great way to make students aware and inspired. My students with disabilities will be included in every activity in class. Activities can be modified for anyone. It is possible and anyone is capable of being successful. I believe every single person in this world should be given the same opportunities as everyone else regardless of their abilities.

This I believe.