



PRESS RELEASE

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Annual Metal and Muscle Sports Exhibition Opens Doors For Houstonian's 2016 Paralympic Games Dream

Jazmin Almlie-Ryan Becomes Elite Level Athlete While Training At Metropolitan Multi-Service Center

Since 2009, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's Adaptive Recreation Division has introduced military men and women returning injured from war, and other people with disabilities, to paralympic sports and recreation through the Metal and Muscle Expo. At the 2010 Expo, Jazmin Almlie-Ryan picked up the air rifle for the first time, and now she has taken on the world: she has been named to the U.S. Paralympic shooters team and soon will move to the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs to hone her skills for competition.

"We cannot be more proud of Jazmin and her accomplishments," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "She has made the most of the sports opportunities that have come her way at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center."

Jazmin has achieved excellence in several wheelchair sports through H.P.A.R.D.'s Adaptive Recreation Section.

"This amazing athlete has competed in many sports at the M.M.S.C.," said Charles French, manager of the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. "It was at the 2010 Metal and Muscle Expo that a canceled wheelchair basketball game led her to try out the air rifle exhibition. She won that match by a large margin, and earned an invitation to a novice training camp at the Olympic Training Center."

Jazmin has never looked back. Now that she has found the air rifle, she has medaled in several events, including winning silver and gold at the 2014 U.S.A. Shooting Championships. Her ultimate goal is to represent America in the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro and take her place on the medalists' platform.

"The Metropolitan Multi-Service Center and Houston Parks and Recreation Department changed my life. I would not be where I am physically, psychologically, or emotionally if it weren't for the amazing services it offers," said Jazmin Almlie-Ryan. "Through these programs, I discovered who I

was and what I wanted to achieve in life. Every day as the sliding doors open and more disabled participants arrive at the facility, I smile, thinking that another individual may be blessed as I have been. You never know where a path is going to take you, and remember: You have to dream big to win big! Go Team U.S.A!”

Since 2006, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department’s Adaptive Recreation Section has offered recreation, sports, and quality of life programming for people with disabilities at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, located at 1475 West Gray, 77019. The Metal and Muscle Expo was begun in 2009 to introduce injured military personnel, and others with disabilities, to services that benefit them, including paralympic sports. While Jazmin’s is a very public success story, many people have improved their lives through the services and facilities at the M.M.S.C.

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 37,851 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.