

Keith Thomas Nistler Endowment

“Keith has sports in his blood!” Words taken directly from an awards presentation given Saturday, September 19, 1998, during the North Dakota Special Olympics annual awards banquet. At the end of that speech, Keith Nistler was honored as the *1998 Male Athlete of the Year*, the highest North Dakota Special Olympics recognition given to a male participant.

Kathy Meagher, director of North Dakota Special Olympics, explains, *“You know how you should never have a favorite person in programs such as Special Olympics? ... Keith is so cool, he really is my favorite.”* Those close to Keith describe him as congenial, giving, hard-working, responsible, outgoing, determined, and always seeing the bright side of things, even when he’s down.

Keith was born September 28, 1968. He is a 1990 graduate of Devils Lake High School. His parents, Regina and Tom, both echoed that high school graduation was one of Keith’s proudest moments. In fact, it was during high school that Keith’s determination was tested. Some say he is credited for helping to break down barriers for people with disabilities. He was chosen as member of the Devils Lake track team. Currently, he is employed with Pugsley’s Manufacturers and has worked there since 1990.

Keith is an example of skill, courage, sharing, and pure zest for life. *“Keith really is an inspiration to all of us, because things aren’t always easy for him, yet it*

doesn’t stop him from taking on new challenges,” adds Kathy Meagher.

Keith’s love for athletics goes beyond participation. He’s active in Devils Lake as a volunteer

with the Devils Lake High School football team. You’ll also find him on the sidelines and in the locker rooms at UND Fighting Sioux football games.

Many people in the Lake Region have helped make Keith’s enjoyment of life and especially sports a reality—the Lake Region’s own Jamie Hoffner and Jamie’s father Adrian Hoffner, a retired educator and coach; Mike Bellmore, sports editor for the *Devils Lake Journal*; Mark Beighley, sports announcer for Radio-Works; Myron Loberg, Devils Lake High School track coach; and finally, Bob Homan, retired Devils Lake High School varsity football coach. The list of individuals who have made

dreams realities and goals attainable for Keith is too long to mention.

That’s why Tom and Regina Nistler have established this special endowment. It’s their way of thanking so many people for giving of themselves.

Earnings from this endowment will be used to provide tutors and equipment each year for the college’s TRiO program and Academic Skills Center. This will help physically or learning-disabled students attending Lake Region State College to attain their educational goals and, more importantly, to attain their dreams! ●

