

Bella's story.



"Everything that Bella does, she always works hard and gives her best to."

So says Theresa DeBrevi, a parishioner of Holy Cross Catholic Church. "I think it's inspiring to people because, if all of us did what she does, imagine what we could accomplish."

Bella was born with Down syndrome, but she doesn't let that stand in the way of anything she wants to accomplish — stardom included.

"One of our really big goals for Bella is her independence," said DeBrevi. "If there's something she can do herself, then I like to see her do it."

They enrolled her in CYT, a nondenominational program that teaches drama, dance and singing through camps and after-school class sessions. CYT appealed to the couple because it welcomes children with special needs; its HEART program is specifically designed to help them acclimate.

When Bella made her acting debut (in *Scrooge: The Musical*), her dad and brother were in the audience. But DeBrevi had volunteered for greenroom duty, so she had to watch the opening number on a small remote television.

As she squinted at the screen trying to pick her daughter out of the chorus, her phone buzzed. She checked a text message and smiled.

"It's from my husband," she said. "Bella is singing."

"Watching her flourish with this experience is a dream come true," said DeBrevi. "She has made so many new friendships, and it's so nice to watch as she walks in (to CYT) and there's a new child greeting her."

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