

Tania, Russia Program Coordinator received this wonderful news from a family that adopted an older Russian girl...

I just had to share something about Ana with you all. We are SOOO proud!

Ana has just finished her first year of year round swimming. She has worked so hard and just loves it! She swam in her second meet over the weekend. Ana was the youngest swimmer but hung with the big girls and did great. In her own words she "persevered" and completed 50-meters in free style, breast stroke and back stroke. A big accomplishment for a 6 year old. Ana was so excited and nervous to be swimming.

The news I had to share though...her coach pulled me aside tonight to ask me if Ana was going to be at the end of the year awards banquet tomorrow night. I told her no as Ana had dance class. She was disappointed and hesitated a moment. We thought since it was Ana's first year it wouldn't be a big deal for her to miss. Apparently all of the coaches unanimously are awarding Ana "The Most Improved Swimmer of the Year Award"! They said they have never had a child work so hard and ALWAYS have such a positive attitude as Ana has. That her love and passion is refreshing to all of them. They said they can correct anything Ana is doing and she thanks them with a big smile and does her best to fix what she's not doing correctly. Ana doesn't know yet but will absolutely be beside herself when she is called up for this award.

Ana swims for Raleigh Swim Association. The team has over 300 kids so this is HUGE! We're so excited and I can't help but think that 2 and a half years ago she had never been in a pool. To think that she would have missed out on this breaks my heart but thrills me at the same time. What a blessing Ana is to all who meet her.

It's a small moment to celebrate all of your hard work and know that you help make moments like this possible for kids. Thank you!!!!

Jamie

The next day we received this update:

I cannot begin to tell you how excited Ana was tonight to receive her award. When they called her name she literally squealed with delight and jumped up and down all the way to get her award. She stood in front of the coaches jumping up and down, laughing in pure delight. The coaches told me they had been waiting all day to give her the award as they knew how much it would mean to her and how excited she would be. I had to convince her that sleeping with her awards wasn't a good idea. J

What a wonderfully exciting day for Ana. Thank you for letting us share our joyful evening with you and again, thank you for all that you do. I hope that the

big smile on Ana's face can serve as a moment of inspiration for the wonderful work that all of you do at CAS. Without your help children like Ana wouldn't have the opportunity to experience these wonderful moments.

Jamie

