

FOCUS ATHLETE:

## MICHELLE PRATER GATES & CHASE GATES



**M**y son, Chase Gates has Mosaic Downs Syndrome. For the last 7 years he has been an NPC competitive bodybuilder. The first year he competed, he was recognized for his dedication to bodybuilding and it changed his life forever. He finally had a place that he fit in and could help friends learn to succeed in bodybuilding. The gym life gave Chase a purpose in life. Because the bodybuilding community is so good to us, we wanted to give back. Another promoter and I came up with the **Chase Gates FOCUS award**. Chase used to post 'motivational' videos and always said you have to FOCUS. With that in mind, I created the acronym, Follow, One, Course, Until, Success, FOCUS.

The award stands for overcoming obstacles, illness, chronic disease, or any extreme hardship that regular people at the show would not ever know, all in honor of Chase and his 'ability or unique skill set'. We have competitors fill out a form that describes their personal journey to the stage and we award the person we feel overcame the greatest struggle to make it to the stage. We share their journey and present them with the award during the evening show. Chase is increasingly becoming more involved with the speaking part and he has always been involved in choosing the winner.

Our main purpose is to give back and bring positive stories of success and how the gym helped save people in their lives. To continue a very (at times) misunderstood sport, Chase has worked in gyms since he was a teenager. He helps people train and helps with the day to day operating duties. Chase is currently an NPC nationally qualified Bantamweight bodybuilding competitor and continues to strive to be the best version of himself.



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