

RESOLUTION NUMBER 205
Dawn Harper

WHEREAS, we have been apprised that on Thursday, October 23, 2008 at the Hyatt Hotel the Metro Sentinel Journal News will convene its 33rd Annual "Yes I Can" awards banquet; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of Michael C. Williams, owner and publisher, the Metro Sentinel Journal News continues to recognize the meaningful contributions of stellar St. Louisans; and

WHEREAS, local leaders have been nominated by their peers and admirers as "Special Achievers" in 2008; and

WHEREAS, these local leaders have established themselves as outstanding professionals in the public, private, non-profit, government and educational sectors; and

WHEREAS, Dawn Harper was born May 13, 1984 and is from East St. Louis, Illinois. She is the daughter of Henry and Linda Harper and has one sister, Keya, and one brother, Bryton. She attended UCLA and majored in psychology; and

WHEREAS, Harper resides in Los Angeles, Calif. She is trained by Bob Kersee, husband of Jackie Joyner Kersee, six time olympic medalist; and

WHEREAS, Dawn Harper made it to the Olympic Trials to qualify for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. With a time of 12.62, she barely crossed the finish line third. "I honestly did not know if I finished third or not," said Harper to Belleview News-Democrat. "I was able to get off the starting blocks well, but then I hit the seventh and eighth hurdle and I saw my dream maybe ending. I just leaned at the finish line as far as I could." After her other teammates Lolo Jones and Damu Cherry qualified for Beijing, former 100m hurdles gold medalist Joanna Hayes came up to all three of the girls and said, "Do you three believe you can go 1-2-3 at the Olympics?" After each replied yes, Hayes replied, "That's all I needed to hear."; and

WHEREAS, Dawn Harper went into the race as the underdog, with fellow teammate Lolo Jones the clear favorite. However, as they ran the race, Lolo clipped a hurdle, and stumbled, taking a disappointing seventh place, while her other teammate Damu Cherry took a disappointing fourth. However, Dawn Harper surged through, and victoriously became the gold medalist. She claimed she would "shock the world," and apparently she did. "I just knew I needed to react to the gun, and just you know, head down, and focus on me and be quick and attack each hurdle and then head for the line," said Dawn Harper. Then, she took her victory lap around the track holding the USA flag, winning another gold medal for the USA track and field team. "This is a kid that nobody knew, and now she's the Olympic champion. It's breathtaking," said Bob Kersee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen for the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize Dawn Harper for her stellar accomplishments and commitment to making our region a better place to live and work. We direct the Clerk of this Board to prepare a commemorative copy of this resolution to the end that it may be presented to our honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the sponsor.

Introduced on the 24th day of October, 2007

Honorable April Ford-Griffin, Alderwoman 5th Ward

Adopted this the 24th day of October, 2007 as attested:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen