



# SHIFTING SANDS

## Project: Just Like You

A new Facebook Page is highlighting individuals with disabilities all around. Sean Cross, a Porto 104 member, has been one of the persons the project has included in their Facebook page. Here's the write up that was published about Sean:

Sean is 24 years old and diagnosed with Down syndrome. There are three sets of the 21st chromosome. Which means there are developmental delays and health issues. According to his wonderful mom, Brenda, "We received a prenatal diagnosis at 4 months and did much of our research before he was even born. Books and doctors informed us of limitations, but our parent support network gave us positive information and hope. We relied upon these families to give us guidance during those critical early years.



When Sean was a toddler we visited a physician who changed our lives. His words were simple: "Decide what you want for your child and don't take no for an answer". This became our mantra and our guiding force. We formed a long term plan – we wanted Sean to socialize and be educated alongside his neighborhood peers, which was not common at the time. We wanted him to learn how to live independently in the real world. We faced an uphill battle but refused to compromise, and we were ultimately successful.

Our mantra took on increasing meaning. It became our family philosophy. Sean grew up feeling no limitations, and became someone who also "didn't take no for an answer". He had goals, but was willing to work hard to achieve them. He wanted to play sports in high school, so in addition to Special Olympics, he made the school wrestling team. He earned the highest award in Boy Scouts, his Eagle Scout award. He wanted to go to college, so he applied to George Mason University's LIFE program and was accepted. He graduated in 2015. He wanted to be a weatherman, which was a challenging goal, but he persisted

and ultimately worked at an internship for a local meteorologist. He wanted to live independently, and he now lives in a house with four friends. He loves hanging out "with the guys", planning football parties, and living his life to the fullest. Next on his list: getting married to his beloved girlfriend Tasha. I have no doubt that he will make his dreams come true. We couldn't be more proud!

My child enjoys football, basketball, soccer, meteorology, drinking Corona, hosting football parties, and hanging out with friends. Spending time with his girlfriend Tasha, and listening to music. His favorite artist is Shakaria.

My child is awesome because he knows what he wants and doesn't let anyone limit him."

Sean, you are an incredible model of how life looks when one doesn't accept "no" for an answer. You live out your dreams and goals to the fullest and your life is a shining light to all those around you. Now that you have graduated college, live independently with friends, we can't wait to for the next chapter of a possible marriage to your girlfriend, Tasha! You are living life in an incredible way because you and your family always believed it!

Sean is [#JustLikeYou](#)

