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Special Needs, Part 2
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STEVE ADUBATO, host:

Breaking down barriers for children with special needs, next on CAUCUS: NEW JERSEY.

Announcer: Funding for this edition of CAUCUS has been provided by Special Olympics New Jersey, Holy Name Hospital, PSE&G, and by The Russell Berrie Foundation.

ADUBATO: Welcome to Families in Focus. This is our very special series where we look at the many challenges and pressures facing the modern American family. I'm Steve Adubato.

Now, last time, last week we talked about the importance of including young people with special needs in school and community activities. Here to continue that discussion we have Brad Hennefer. He was the superstar you saw in the last taped piece. And by the way, log on to our Web site if you want to see it again. He's currently attending Camden County College, working two jobs, is a Special Olympic athlete and played in 19 of 26 games for his high school basketball team. Coach John Valore is a varsity basketball coach at Cherry Hill East High--I want to get this right, Cherry Hill School East.

Mr. JOHN VALORE (Boys Basketball Varsity Coach, Cherry Hill High School East): Cherry Hill High School East.

ADUBATO: That's what happens when you're in north Jersey, you don't get it right. Bob Hennefer is a professional golfer and happens also to be Brad's older brother of five years. Anthony Russ is a Lawrence High School senior who volunteers for Special Olympics of New Jersey, also has a brother five years younger with some special needs. And finally, Kris Deni is director of student services at Lawrence Township.

I want to thank you all for joining us.

By the way, log on to our Web site. You're going to see--on our CAUCUS Web site we'll be linked to Special Olympics of New Jersey, other organizations that are making a difference across this state and across this nation.

(Graphic on screen)

www.CaucusNJ.org
Breaking Down Barriers Resource Center

ADUBATO: Hey, listen, can I read from a terrific book--I happen to be a big fan of these guys, Mark Canfield, Victor--Mark Victor Hansen. They wrote "Chicken Soup for the Soul," right? You ready for this? I'm going to read to you.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER (Special Olympics New Jersey Athlete): All right.

ADUBATO: Chapter 61, "Down But Not Out." You ready for this? This is about

our friend right here.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yep.

ADUBATO: (Reading) "Beware, Brad Hennefer is a carrier. His contagious and courageous, positive spirit has more than earned the love and support of his family, friends, teammates and even the opposition." Don't blush on me. "When he prepares to throw off his warm-ups to enter a game for Cherry Hill East High School, the fans are already enthusiastically and rhythmically chanting, 'Brad! Brad! Brad!' Something happens when Brad steps up onto the court that perhaps is not seen in any other high school game in the United States of America. With the clock running down, Brad excitedly enters the game and dribbles to the three-point line and attempts a three-point shot. The crowd goes wild with approval. Brad has Down syndrome, a genetic condition that causes learning difficulties," etc., etc., etc.

Hey, how great is this that you are in "Chicken Soup for the Soul"?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yep.

ADUBATO: How did you get in this book?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: I don't know. Me and my dad went to the place up there, and there's a guy interviewed me and dad. Like, they talk about, like, me in a book, and about my father, so.

ADUBATO: Pretty cool.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER (Brad's Brother): Who wrote that passage?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Magic Johnson.

ADUBATO: Who wrote it?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Orlando Magic.

ADUBATO: The Orlando--wait, hold on. Who wrote that? Help me on this, seriously.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Who wrote that, Brad?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: John Valore, coach.

ADUBATO: Coach, you wrote this?

Mr. VALORE: Yes, I did.

ADUBATO: Coach, tell everyone the deal you have with this guy, your relationship, because I don't want to assume everyone saw the first half. And by the way, if you want to log on to our Web site, you can see the whole first half of this show. But, Coach, don't assume anyone saw it. Tell us about this guy.

Mr. VALORE: Well, it started when he was a freshman, and we included him in our basketball program and we--it developed a closer relationship as he went

through high school, whether his sophomore year, his junior year. But eventually when he played varsity for me his senior year, that's when we developed a great understanding about Brad and what Brad was all about. Up until then the freshman coach had him, the JV coach had him. And when he was ready for us, I started to really understand the type of person he is and how he helped our team immensely throughout the year. In fact...

ADUBATO: How so?

Mr. VALORE: Well, one time before the season started we talked about commitment, the team, and what is necessary to become what we thought we should become during the course of the season. And we're just going back and forth, and Brad raises his hand, he says, 'Coach, I know about commitment.' And I said, 'OK, Brad, you have the floor.' And he talked about his commitment at the age of three and four years old, and his commitment to the game of golf. And he got everybody start to focus in on Brad and he just talked about how difficult it was for him in the beginning and the commitment he had, how he stayed with it and how he is the type of person he is today, especially in golf. He can play golf.

ADUBATO: What did you see in the other players when Brad got up and did that?

Mr. VALORE: They got--definitely got--their attention span was right there. They focused in on him. And believe me, there's a close relationship between Brad and his teammates, because they know how hard he works. And if Brad can do it and work as hard as he can...

ADUBATO: Hm.

Mr. VALORE: ...to make things work for him his senior year and to develop into the player he was, they could do it also. But I think the Kodak moment came his last practice at the high school level--level, where we were getting ready for our last game, and how he just let himself go as far as joking around with the players, up and down the floor in the running drills and so forth. Players kidding with him, him kidding with the players. I have never seen that in him, because he was serious. But all the sudden he let himself go that afternoon and everybody was just--we had a great time.

ADUBATO: Why'd you do that? Why--after four years of being very serious, working hard every day? By the way, we should--for those who didn't see the first half, you're not only a basketball player, but you're a power lifter and you also play golf.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: OK. Why in the last day of practice did you just say, 'That's it, I'm just going to have fun'?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah. I like basketball a lot because I go to home games and away games. Like, away games you go on a bus, you're supposed to stay serious on the bus and listen to our CD players and iPods on the bus.

ADUBATO: And you were ready to have fun.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: That was it, you had it.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: Anthony, let me bring you back into this. Reintroduce yourself here. Tell everyone about your situation. You played a little ball, right?

Mr. ANTHONY RUSS (Lawrence High School Quarterback): Yeah.

ADUBATO: Where?

Mr. RUSS: Lawrence High.

ADUBATO: OK. And you're going to Harvard?

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

ADUBATO: We talked about, right?

Mr. RUSS: Yep.

ADUBATO: Your brother is--you have two brothers.

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

ADUBATO: But one of them is five years younger?

Mr. RUSS: Younger. Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: And has some special needs.

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

ADUBATO: You're very close to him.

Mr. RUSS: Yeah, extremely close.

ADUBATO: Let's talk about this. Again, check out our Web site for the first half. But let me ask you, Anthony, you believe that sports, in many ways, presents a tremendous avenue for young men, young women with special needs. Talk about it.

Mr. RUSS: Definitely. Sports today are definitely a huge part of our society. If you look in the news, like you said Alex Rodriguez, it's all over and everything is sports and Barry Bonds and the Super Bowl, it's everywhere in our society today. And for children with disabilities to be involved with that, I think it definitely helps them become more involved with society as a whole.

ADUBATO: You do.

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

ADUBATO: You know what's interesting, we were joking--and we are doing this program in the middle of February when it airs a little bit later, who knows what we're going to find out about whatever athlete. And that's really a negative side, Coach, and I don't want to get into a whole discussion of steroids and performance enhancing drugs. But it's interesting, that's a

sports story and this is a sports story. And this sports story is so much bigger, is so much more positive, is so inspiring.

Right, Bob?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Mm-hmm. Absolutely.

ADUBATO: So what do sports--what do you think sports represents? What opportunity is there for young people with special needs? What do you think?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Well, it represents, like you said, being involved in a community, being involved with your teammates and developing relationship with those teammates that go far beyond the basketball court.

ADUBATO: That is beyond sports, though.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: What about if a young person says, Chris, 'I'm just not into sports'? Or a parent realizes that their son or their daughter who happens to have special needs isn't as talented?

Ms. KRIS DENI (Director of Student Services for Lawrence Township): Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: Right?

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: As Brad. So do they say, 'Well, I can't do sports.' What options are available? What other options are there?

Ms. DENI: Well, in Lawrence Township we're very fortunate. We sponsor a lot of after school social skills groups. And while some of our students participate in sports, some of our students are great spectators and we actually have a unified spectator group.

ADUBATO: What does that mean?

Ms. DENI: Well, you know, it's not intuitive what goes on in a basketball game when you are a spectator. You have to learn about the cheers, you have to learn what does a high school student do at a basketball game that's cool? And wouldn't it be...

ADUBATO: What?

Ms. DENI: Wouldn't it be nice to have a peer with you just to kind of shepherd you through what goes on? So we do that.

ADUBATO: So let me get this straight. You need to know that if someone is at the foul line and the score is tied and there are three seconds left, you don't get up and scream at the top of your lungs when they're about to shoot. Is that what you're talking about?

Ms. DENI: Yes. And I'm no good at that, so I usually...

ADUBATO: That's why you need a mentor when it comes...

Ms. DENI: I do need a mentor for that. But, you know, we practice together with--we practice cheers, we practice here's where you go to get a hot dog, this is when you ought to get back, this is the guy to watch, this is what the position is called. So honestly, both sides of that coin offer a lot of opportunities for a long-lasting social relationships.

ADUBATO: Let me ask you a question about the media, because, you know, I don't like to bite the hand that feeds me, even though on PBS we don't get fed that much. That's another story. But let me--let me just put this out there.

Ms. DENI: Uh-huh.

ADUBATO: The media--I mean, we in the media send some pretty powerful messages, right? And not all of them are good messages. But there are--there have been shows--we were actually talking about this at lunch with our producers. Help me on this, guys. We were getting ready. There was a program that aired, I believe it was in early '90s, was it? There was a program that aired, I think it was--Patti LuPone was on the show. There was a young man, his name was--was it Corky?

Ms. DENI: Chris.

ADUBATO: Help me on this?

Ms. DENI: What's his name, Corky?

ADUBATO: Corky. Why are you guys acting like nobody knows what I'm talking about.

Ms. DENI: Uh-huh.

ADUBATO: What was the name of the show, guys?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: "Life Goes On."

ADUBATO: "Life Goes On."

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: You know the show?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Mm-hmm.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: I know it, too.

ADUBATO: How do you know it? You were too young to know this show.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: I know one person, his name is Chris Burke.

ADUBATO: Yeah.

Ms. DENI: He's the actor.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: He has a DVD called "Life Goes On."

ADUBATO: You know, it's interesting, because that show, "Life Goes On," had this young guy, Corky...

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: ...who was very popular, and he was--but he was an actor, he was a kid who really had Down syndrome, I believe.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yep.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Yeah.

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: And he was terrific. He was charismatic, he was dynamic and everyone loved him. And I thought, listen, I know it's television, it's Hollywood and, you know, a lot of things are glossed over, but what a great opportunity for those of us in the media to say, hey, wait a minute. Mainstreaming, bringing young people in with different needs right into the group--right, Anthony? ' Mr. RUSS: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: It can be done. We in the media play a powerful role here, Coach?

Mr. VALORE: No question about it. I think you get--you let it out where how important it is to have inclusion with the team, with the school and so forth. The media helped us greatly last year to let other people within the Down syndrome society that, through the work of Brad and how hard he worked...

ADUBATO: Right.

Mr. VALORE: ...how successful he was. Other people can get involved, have the parents get their kids involved, spend time, include them in a lot of different activities.

ADUBATO: But the media doing feature stories helps.

Mr. VALORE: Right.

ADUBATO: Positive stories.

Mr. VALORE: There's no question about it. We had nothing but positive press. We had it as far as Spain. An article was written on Brad in Spanish.

ADUBATO: Right.

Mr. VALORE: And...

ADUBATO: And he's in this great book, "Chicken Soup for the Soul."

Mr. VALORE: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: But let's deal with this. Teasing. I have a 16 1/2-year-old son, and my greatest fear--one of my greatest fears when he was going to high school--he's a quiet kid, hard-working student, just a really good kid, good person, not typical jock. Plays tennis, but not a typical jock. I shouldn't say that, I don't know what a typical jock means. But not one of those kids who's out front and getting cheered on the football team. And I would think

to myself, there's so many different kinds of kids in school, and my--one of my greatest fears was that he would be teased.

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: And he would be teased in a way that would hurt him and it would go to his self-esteem. Have you ever been teased?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: No. Not at all.

ADUBATO: Not at all.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: No.

ADUBATO: Well, you're the only one that I know who hasn't been teased. Really?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: I think he has my protective thing here.

ADUBATO: But he's not--respectfully, your brother--your brother's not there all the time. You're saying that you've never had to face teasing?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: No.

ADUBATO: Talk to us about it. Did you?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Oh, of course I did.

ADUBATO: Did you?

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Every high school kid does.

ADUBATO: You did, you did, I did. Did you?

Mr. VALORE: Yes, I did.

ADUBATO: You didn't. Women don't.

Ms. DENI: Never.

ADUBATO: Girls, I hear, are pretty tough. Teasing.

Ms. DENI: They're much tougher.

ADUBATO: Talk to us about the teasing factor here, because I'm curious about it.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Well, I think that was my biggest concern going away to college with him going to high school was I know what high school is like, and kids can be cruel. And, you know, how would he handle that? But the basketball obviously helped him, because he'd developed kind of a protective circle with those basketball players.

ADUBATO: What do you mean?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Well, he developed close relationships with them. For example, one of the kids on the team was a senior, and he invited Brad as a freshman to sit down at lunch and have lunch with the high school basketball seniors.

ADUBATO: Unheard of.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Absolutely unheard of. No freshman sits down and has lunch with seniors ever.

ADUBATO: Do you remember this guy's name?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Who was it, Sule?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Brian Young.

Mr. VALORE: Brian.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Oh, Brian Young.

Mr. VALORE: Brian Young.

ADUBATO: The reason is I want to give him some credit...

Mr. VALORE: Yeah.

ADUBATO: ...for stepping up and being a leader.

Mr. VALORE: Plays for the University of Delaware right now.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: Did you--do we--and you may not even have known this happened, and I don't want to make too big a deal about it. But this guy, Brian...

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: ...he said, 'Come on, have lunch with us.'

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: When that happens, what happens?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Well, that takes all the pressure off me. It makes a big relief for me, because I know that he's got guys that are four years older than him looking after him. And no freshman's going to try to mess with a senior. And if a senior has a freshman kid's back, he's gold. He's done. He's not going to get any ridicule and he'll be looked out for the whole time he's there.

ADUBATO: Did you know early on that that happened, Bob?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: No. I didn't know until probably about his sophomore year, when he--you know, Brad told me that he was having lunch with the seniors. I said, 'What are you talking about?' I said, 'That doesn't happen.'

And--but that was him. That's his personality, outgoing, friendly.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: And he developed those relationships that just kind of just surrounded himself with great people.

ADUBATO: Jump in, Kris. I see you thinking.

Ms. DENI: Well, I mean, I think a lot of it has to do with what's the culture that we promote within our schools. And, you know, if you promote a culture of kindness, it sounds so simple.

ADUBATO: How do you do this?

Ms. DENI: Well, you know, we do it through a lot of different opportunities. You know, we do social skills groups. We don't expect...

ADUBATO: What does that mean, social skills groups?

Ms. DENI: Well...

ADUBATO: Because this guy just--this guy, Brian, just said, 'Come on, let's go.'

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: I don't know if he was coached or mentored or was in a social skills program.

Ms. DENI: Well...

ADUBATO: It was his instinct.

Mr. VALORE: It was instinct.

ADUBATO: It was his leadership sense. It was--he liked this guy.

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: I do.

ADUBATO: You liked him, he liked you. My point is, how much of it has to do with individuals like you, good guy who happens to have a younger brother who's been challenged.

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

ADUBATO: But he's not the only person you look out for. No one made that guy, Brian, do it. So how much of it is programmatic things that you do in schools, and how much is who the kid is?

Ms. DENI: I think it's certainly a mixture of both. But I can tell you that Coach Radice talks to his young men. He refers to them as gentlemen, he treats them as gentlemen.

ADUBATO: That's your coach?

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

ADUBATO: OK. I'm sorry.

Ms. DENI: He expects them to treat one another well. And he talks to them about kindness and he talks to them about inclusion, and his eyes are everywhere.

ADUBATO: Time out. This is the coach of what sport?

Mr. RUSS: Football.

ADUBATO: Go back. Coach, you know who you are. You remember in high school, you remember, Coach Marino, you'd grab me by my face mask and scream at me and use language that you can't use on PBS and tell me terrible things? You know who you are. For several years.

Are you saying your coach, in football, a violent game...

Mr. RUSS: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: ...an aggressive game...

Mr. RUSS: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: ...talked about treating each other like gentlemen?

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: And lived it every day?

Mr. RUSS: Yeah. I mean, on the football field, obviously, there's going to be--emotions are going to get heated. But off the field and even after, if some kid got yelled at on the team, if he yelled at me, yelled at a receiver or something, he'd always come over at the end of practice and say, you know, like, 'I shouldn't have done that. That's not how you should treat people. It's not how I should've treated you.' And yeah, for things--coming into high school, football coaches are always portrayed as big, mean guys you don't want to mess with.

ADUBATO: Yeah. That's right.

Mr. RUSS: But yeah, my coach definitely not that stereotype at all.

ADUBATO: This is interesting.

Coach, your philosophy--and I don't want to make this about sports and about coaches, but it just seems to me that what you're talking about, Kris, when you were talking about Anthony's coach, is not about sports. It's about being a gentleman.

Ms. DENI: Hm.

ADUBATO: Or being a decent person who understands how to treat other people. How much of that--because you said that creates a culture.

Ms. DENI: It does create a culture. And the...

ADUBATO: How much of your coaching doesn't have to do, Coach, with X's and O's and game plans, and has to do with how we treat each other?

Mr. VALORE: Well, an example would be last night. In a critical situation, we had the lead with about 25 seconds left in a very important game. Things happened and we happen to lose the game in the course of a couple turnovers. When we got back into the dressing room we talked about situations, how to control our emotions. If we lose the ball stay under control, know the situation. And we learn through our mistakes. Don't worry about things you can't control, such as the official making a call at that time or we lose the ball at that time. We went from winning to losing in 25 seconds. And I just mentioned that--how much I enjoyed the game.

ADUBATO: You just lost the game.

Mr. VALORE: I just lost the game. I thought it was a great game. I said that's why I'm in coaching. I'm 64 years old and this what keeps me going, this competitiveness. And we just talked about all the positive things, you know, about the situation. Now, would I have been that way when I was 21, 22? My life has changed over the years and I look at it differently now than ever before.

ADUBATO: So is a lot of this about perspective? Is a lot of this about--because I know you're very competitive and you want to win.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah, I do want to win.

ADUBATO: How do you handle when you lose?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Just shake everybody's hands, say good luck to the games.

ADUBATO: That's it.

Mr. HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: You don't scream and yell.

Mr. HENNEFER: No. I mean, Coach does, but not me. I just sit there and focus the game.

ADUBATO: Just on the game. This is interesting. So culture in the community is created by coaches. It's created by brothers and sisters. It's created by parents. But it's also created by teachers.

Ms. DENI: Uh-huh.

ADUBATO: I want to talk about teachers a little bit here.

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: How are teachers coached or trained to deal with a student who has

special needs? Or are they? Help us on this, Kris.

Ms. DENI: Well, I think that you can't do enough.

ADUBATO: You can't do enough.

Ms. DENI: You really can't do enough. And what we found the most effective thing to do is it really is a coaching model. We call it coaching. You know, we'll do a training session with our staff, but then we follow them into the classroom and we provide ongoing coaching and clinics, just like you've done a basketball clinic. We do the same thing with our teachers because...

ADUBATO: What happens there?

Ms. DENI: Well, what happens is people take risks.

ADUBATO: Give us a for instance.

Ms. DENI: We would like our teachers to say, 'Try something really risky.' We'd like our kids to move around a lot, and they'll say, 'Ah, it's going to get chaotic in here.' And we'll say, 'Let's try some chaos and let's try to control it a little bit, and let's see what we can get from the kids.' And so you have to--with your players you say take a risk, try hard. You do exactly the same thing with your teachers.

ADUBATO: But if you have a--if you have a student who has special needs, that's what I'm trying to get at here. Are you saying--I want to be clear here. Aren't there times where there are teachers who say, 'I don't think I can handle it'?

Ms. DENI: And we'd like them to tell us that, because then we can say what is it about the situation that is concerning to you, and what can I do help? And that's what the role of a director is supposed to be. You know, we...

ADUBATO: What do you mean, director?

Ms. DENI: A director of special education. You know, we...

ADUBATO: So but--so if the teacher says, 'Listen, I have no experience.'

Ms. DENI: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: 'I'm not confident. I'm concerned that I can't handle it.' You say, 'We'll help you.'

Ms. DENI: We say we'll help you, and we say we'll send you Elise or we'll send you you the learning consultant and...

ADUBATO: Somebody to help.

Ms. DENI: Somebody to help. Somebody to mentor and somebody to problem solve.

ADUBATO: Well, let me ask you this. We have five minutes left. It's amazing how fast time goes. What final messages do we want to send to people out there? Because I know the term mainstream is a funny term. It's inclusion more than anything else. It's bringing people in. Is there any reason why a

young person who has certain needs, special needs, shouldn't be included? I mean, include them.

Right, Bob?

Mr. BOB HENNEFER: Absolutely. Give them every opportunity. You have no idea what they can do until they prove you wrong, until they--you don't know what they can do until they say they can't do it.

ADUBATO: And in Special Olympics, which is interesting, there's no reason why any kid can't compete in Special Olympics, because they can compete on any level, right, Anthony?

Mr. RUSS: Yeah.

ADUBATO: And so you've seen--you've got real talented athletes, right?

Mr. RUSS: Mm-hmm.

ADUBATO: But you have kids that aren't that talented, per se. But there's a place for them in Special Olympics.

Mr. RUSS: Oh, yeah, definitely.

ADUBATO: Have you ever had to encourage kids to get involved?

Mr. RUSS: As athletes or as volunteers?

ADUBATO: Yes, as athletes.

Mr. RUSS: Oh, not so much encourage, but you kind of have to point the way. Because like you said, they may not be as talented, so they're nervous to take a shot.

ADUBATO: What about if they quit? Do you see what I'm saying? Like, a lot of people quit.

Mr. RUSS: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

ADUBATO: So you lose the race, you don't do well.

Mr. RUSS: Oh, you...

ADUBATO: `That's it, I'm done.'

Mr. RUSS: You have to encourage them to keep going. Not everyone wins. I don't always win. I'm sure Bob doesn't always win when he golfs. It's just part of life, it's part of how things go. So you've just got to encourage them to get back on their feet and work as hard as Brad does. Because if you work hard, anything can happen.

ADUBATO: You know, it's interesting, because that thing you just said about not winning all the time, that is such an important life lesson. And a kid could quit pretty quick, right?

Mr. VALORE: A kid could, yeah.

ADUBATO: A kid with special needs or without those particular special needs. And the thing about you that I--that I really like is I don't think you're--I don't think you could ever quit.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: No.

ADUBATO: Why not?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: I like to be happy and be smart.

ADUBATO: But, Brad, it's going to get even more, like, challenging. You're at Camden College, right?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: Are you worried at all about that?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: No. I wasn't scared because I go to Camden County, like, two nights. I do computers and business and public speaking.

ADUBATO: You do public speaking?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: Tell me about that.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Public speaking, I talk to all my eighth grade middle school...(unintelligible)...I talk that well, except I can't spell bananas.

ADUBATO: Do you get nervous when you have to speak in public?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: No. Not at all. When I'm onstage, I don't get stage fright at all.

ADUBATO: Nothing.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Nothing at all.

ADUBATO: What do you say? Because I coach people in public speaking, it's one of the things that I do.

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Yeah.

ADUBATO: And a lot of my students say, 'I can't do it, Steve. You don't understand, I just can't get up in front of people and speak.' What do you say to those people, Brad?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: I'm not sure at all. I like being around the parents and be happy for the kids.

ADUBATO: But give them some advice. Give advice to the people who are afraid. They say, 'I can't do it. I can't speak to them--in front of people.' What's your advice for them?

Mr. BRAD HENNEFER: Don't be afraid. Be yourself and be respectful.

ADUBATO: I've got nothing left. I got a minute left in this show.

I could--go ahead, Coach, give me some final words of wisdom. Be my John Wooden for me right now.

Mr. VALORE: I think--I think we should all step up and get involved. I think involvement means a lot.

ADUBATO: Hm.

Mr. VALORE: I think if parents understand if they do get their children involved and work with them from the get-go, possibly the success that Brad has gone through, they can also experience it.

ADUBATO: You know, you are a great inspiration to all of us. You also make sure that we don't use excuses. But also I want to say something else. You are a great role model and so are you. And it's going to take all of us. And Coach, I want to thank you.

Mr. VALORE: Thank you.

ADUBATO: Kris, I want to thank you and our friends at Special Olympics for allowing us to do this work.

Announcer: If you would like more information on this program or if you'd like to express an opinion, e-mail us at info@caucusnj.org and visit us online at caucusnj.org.

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