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Lindenwood Alumnus David Horvath Thriving As Paralympian

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David Horvath has big aspirations. He's determined to achieve his goals, no matter what challenges he faces. His work ethic is steadfast, and he remains humble and grateful for how far he's come.

Horvath was born with spina bifida, a congenital disability that affected his spinal cord. He has been in a wheelchair his entire life, but that hasn't stopped him from succeeding.

"I've just grown up with that, just rolled with the punches a little bit my whole life," Horvath said. "It was never too difficult just because I had a great support system growing up, great family and friends and everyone worked together to help me out whenever I needed it."

Attending Linn High School in Osage County, Missouri, Horvath set four Missouri High School Athletic Association state track and field records in the para events in 2019. A year later, Horvath was introduced to powerlifting.

"I tried it, and I loved it," he said.

Horvath competed on Lindenwood University's powerlifting team. He put in endless hours of work, honing and perfecting his craft. Then, an opportunity presented itself.

During a competition, Horvath was approached by a member of Team USA para powerlifting.

"(They said), 'All right, if you lift this next weight, I'll give you my card,'" Horvath recalled. "And so, I lifted the weight (and) she gave me her card."

In March 2022, Horvath officially became a member of Team USA. He competed at America's Championship that July. In November 2023, he traveled to Santiago, Chile, for another competition.

Meanwhile, Horvath had to juggle his studies while training and competing. The challenge was anything but easy, but Horvath's relentless determination to adapt and overcome every obstacle paid off.

“I’ll be honest, it was daunting of a task at first,” Horvath said. “I was very overwhelmed by it. Google Calendar became my best friend. ... I became very regimented and disciplined about my schedule, and that helped. That was basically how I got through it.”

Horvath graduated from Lindenwood in May 2023 with a BS in Exercise Science.