



State Capitol Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony



December 9, 2008

Michaela Tritch, of the Los Angeles community of Eagle Rock, has been selected to participate in the 2008 State Capitol Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 9. Representing the more than 230,000 children and adults served by the Department of Developmental Services, Michaela will help the governor light the tree, decorated with 1,500 ornaments created by Californians with developmental disabilities.

Background: Described by her sister, Amanda as "truly the fruits of the spirit," Michaela will turn 9 years old just days before Christmas. The youngster, who has Down Syndrome, has received services from the Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center since she was three months old. Michaela is a third grader at Delevan Drive Elementary School. She adores gymnastics - especially the trampoline - and is active in an equestrian program, where she has learned to stand on the horse and can perform other fun stunts. Her parents, Jeffrey and Rhonda Tritch, say the program has helped with her balance, posture, strength and even her speech. In addition, Michaela loves playing soccer with her sister, Brittany, and has become an avid member of the American Youth Soccer Organization's Region 13 VIP team. She is equally enthusiastic about reading Curious George and Sponge Bob books with her Dad, Jeffrey, and singing along to music in the family car.

"She is the heart and soul of our family," said her mother. "She seems to know when you need a hug and so just comes up and gives you one."

Information about the Tritch family

Father's name: Jeffrey

Occupation: Manager, Tritch Hardware (family-owned business)

Mother's name: Rhonda

Occupation: Homemaker

Sister, Brittany Press, 15

Sister: Amanda Press, 18

Brother: Kenneth Tritch, 28



Michaela Tritch
2006-2007

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Michaela Tritch (middle) with Sisters, Amanda Press (left) and Brittany Press (right)



Michaela Tritch (Soccer — Fall 2008)



Michaela Tritch (left) with parents, Rhonda (right), and Jeffrey (middle)