The M.O.R.G.A.N. Project

Kristen Malfara of Melbourne Beach has become one of the area’s most visible advocates on behalf of special needs children, having founded the M.O.R.G.A.N. Project to support parents with information, equipment and small grants, and otherwise enhance the lives of families with special kids.

Baseball fans and project supporters were not about to let Malfara go unnoticed, and so they entered her the Florida Marlins’ “All-Star” program in People magazine and Major League Baseball’s “Stars Among Us” program. One of only 30 winners – one per MLB club – she was honored with others who serve their communities July 14 in nationally televised prime-time ceremonies before at the 2009 MLB All-Star Game in St. Louis.

“Oh no way! It was the most incredible experience,” she said. “I don’t know what my favorite part was if I had to pick. The Home Run Derby was exciting. It was a blast,” she added. “Kristen was accompanied by family members, including her sister Shanna “The Reinforcer” Jones, of Melbourne, who put Kristen in the best light. Malfara became close friends with her fellow survivors, got to meet MLB players. “I was most impressed by our player Josh Hamilton. He signed autographs for kids for 45 minutes – and remembered me at the game – and generally “looked out for a kid.”

Braves manager and former Braves player did well in St. Louis overall. Prince Fielder signed a print in double, former Bewear County Mariner Ryan Braun signed in the outfield and Buster Posey, now with the San Francisco Giants, signed at home.

To learn more about the M.O.R.G.A.N. Project, visit: www.themorganproject.org.