



PERSPECTIVES

Fresh Ideas from Around the World

A Newsletter from *Wildflower Caterers*

Frenchwoman with Down's Syndrome Fulfills TV Dream

A young Frenchwoman with Down's syndrome has fulfilled her dream of presenting the weather on television after a Facebook campaign that was supported by more than 200,000 people.

Melanie Segard, 21, hosted a segment of the forecast on the national public channel France 2 on Tuesday night. The campaign "Melanie peut le faire", or Melanie can do it, was set up by a French charity in an effort to promote awareness and inclusion.

"I'm different, but I'd like to show everyone that I can do a lot of things," she said.

She received four days of training from France 2's weather team, including tips on presenting in front of the green wall where the graphics are digitally projected.

Her story has been covered extensively on French media and shared widely on social media.

"Melanie cannot read or write. The goal is to make her feel integrated," Nathalie Rihouet, head of the weather service of France Televisions, told the **French newspaper Le Parisien** (in French).

During her training, she was followed by her 27-year-old brother Cyril, who offered her some advice: "Imagine you're alone at

home doing the weather. Have fun."



Libero purus sodales mauris, eu vehicula lectus velit nec velit.

Ms Segard told Le Parisien: "It's work! But it's OK. My dream was to show people the weather. And this can open doors to other people with disabilities."

France 2 was not the only channel to offer her a chance to present the weather. Another invitation came from news channel BFMTV.



Ms Segard lives with her parents and enjoys going out to parties and restaurants with her brother and friends. When younger, she underwent therapy to improve her motor skills and speech.

And since September, she has worked in a company where she makes packaging.

The campaign was set up by **Unapei**, a charity helping people with disabilities. Its services reach some 200,000 people.

Launched on 26 February, the **Facebook page** reached its goal of 100,000 likes in 36 hours and received a lot of support on social media.

"Symbolically, it's very strong that a young woman with an intellectual disability can come before millions of French people to do something that is close to her heart. This shows that these people have abilities," Unapei's presi-



dent Luc Gateau told **La Croix newspaper** (in French).

But becoming a TV presenter is not Ms Segard's ultimate dream. She says that what she really wants is to be a makeup artist.

Please send feedback or subscription requests to perspectives@wildflourcaterers.com