



Special Olympics
New Jersey

PRESS RELEASE

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All Eyes on Idaho for 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games

Focus will be on the power of youth as global leaders in shattering stereotypes and changing attitudes.

Washington, D.C. – From February 7-13, Idaho will play host to the world for the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games. Up to 3,000 athletes from more than 100 countries will compete in seven Olympic-type sports: Alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, figure skating, floor hockey, snowboarding, snowshoeing, and speed skating. Held in the spectacular mountains of Boise, McCall and Sun Valley, Idaho, the 2009 World Games is expected to be the largest World Winter Games in the history of the movement.

The Special Olympics World Games, held every two years and alternating between Summer and Winter Games, are much more than just a sporting event. In addition to showcasing the skills and achievements of Special Olympics athletes, the 2009 World Games will embody the movement's messages of acceptance and inclusion. These Games will bring together heads of state, celebrities and leaders in the fields of education, healthcare, business and sports to witness firsthand Special Olympics' ability to transform communities and the lives of more than 190 million people worldwide with intellectual disabilities. Most importantly, the 2009 World Games will focus on the power of young people as leaders in shattering stereotypes and changing attitudes.

"The global Special Olympics movement is bigger and stronger than ever," said Special Olympics Chairman Timothy Shriver. "But there is still a lot of work to be done. A generation of young people is looking for something to inspire them, to engage them, something they can take ownership of and pride in. Our athletes provide that inspiration every day, and we invite the world to experience it firsthand."

The 2009 World Winter Games will launch the new Be a fan™ campaign which invites people to join Special Olympics to experience the joy and transformation of the movement. The launch will include the announcement of new Celebrity Global Ambassadors and the first-ever Youth Rally for Special Olympics.

Among the highlights of the 2009 World Games are: a Global Law Enforcement Torch Run™, sponsored by DHL, culminating with the Final Leg team bringing in the Flame of Hope to light the Special Olympics cauldron at Opening Ceremony; a Host Town Program in which delegations will spend four days prior to the Opening Ceremony living in Idaho communities to learn about American culture and acclimate to a new environment, while helping the citizens of Idaho learn more about people with intellectual disabilities; a Global Youth Summit where young people with and without intellectual

(MORE)



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disabilities will share ideas for involving youth in the Special Olympics movement; the Special Olympics Sports Experience, which provides a firsthand opportunity for the community to meet and experience the joy of competition with Special Olympics athletes; Special Olympics Healthy Athletes[®], through which athletes receive free health assessments and services; and the Family Forum, which enables family members of Special Olympics athletes to connect with a network of friends and supporters and to learn more about the opportunities available with Special Olympics.

“Idaho has the great honor of hosting the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games,” said Idaho Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter. “It will be my privilege as Governor to welcome the world to our home and to invite everyone to be a fan of both this tremendous international event and the Special Olympics global movement. We are looking forward to a competitive extravaganza – as well as a diverse and profoundly human experience as the athletes showcase their abilities on the world stage.”

For more information about the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games, visit www.2009worldgames.org

About Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives by promoting understanding, acceptance and inclusion among people with and without intellectual disabilities. Through year-round sports training and athletic competition and other related programming for 2.8 million children and adults with intellectual disabilities in more than 180 countries, Special Olympics has created a model community that celebrates people’s diverse gifts. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship. Visit Special Olympics at www.specialolympics.org.