



PRESS RELEASE

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3,500 People Make History at the Lincoln Tunnel Challenge *Event Benefits Special Olympics New Jersey*

Weehawken, NJ - Wall-to-wall runners and walkers of all ages and abilities took the challenge of a 5K (3.1 mile) race through the Lincoln Tunnel on Sunday, making the event the largest and most successful in its history. The 23rd Annual Lincoln Tunnel Challenge 5K Fun Run/Walk, which included 3,500 registered participants, is the only time that pedestrians are allowed access inside the tunnel. The event benefits Special Olympics New Jersey.

This year's Lincoln Tunnel Challenge, which raised more than \$165,000, was presented by AmeriHealth New Jersey, hosted by the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey and sponsored by the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics New Jersey.

"The uniqueness of this event is really catching on with people. It's the only time that pedestrians are allowed access into the tunnel and people really seem to like that thrill," according to Port Authority Police Detective Larry Mays, Race Director. "We're very grateful to everyone who participated and supported the race this year, from the runners and walkers, to our team of volunteers, to all of our great sponsors. It's with everyone's help that records were made and support will grow for the athletes of the Special Olympics New Jersey program."

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This year's overall winner in the male category went to Alan Wells of Orlando, Florida with a finish time of 16:26 (5:17 pace). Top female overall winner was Kathleen Castles of New Providence with a 17:32 minute finish time (5:39 pace). This growing event saw runners from 17 states to conquer the tunnel's steep 8.5 percent grade.

WCBS News Radio 880's Tom Kaminski was the emcee of the day; race starters included PIX-11's Weatherman Mr. G and executives from WCBS. Category prizes were awarded for top overall finishers and top finishers by age and team. Top fundraising individual was Darin Fass of Mount Kisco, NY; largest group was Coach USA with 184 registered participants.

"We thank everyone who participated in the 23rd Annual Lincoln Tunnel Challenge. Your participation supports our belief that success in sport translates to success in life," according to Marc Edenzon, President of Special Olympics New Jersey. "By supporting this event, you've helped to create awareness of the Special Olympics movement, and in so doing, you've helped us reach out and bring more opportunities to more children and adults with intellectual disabilities throughout the state."

According to Judith L. Roman, president and CEO of AmeriHealth, "AmeriHealth New Jersey is committed to supporting New Jersey on a local level throughout the entire state, especially great causes like Special Olympics New Jersey." Roman continued, "Through our extensive wellness programming, AmeriHealth is committed to improving the health of people throughout New Jersey. Events like this one encourage everyone who participates to live healthier, more active lifestyles."

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Race results are available at www.compuscore.com. Please call 609.896.8000 or visit www.sonj.org for additional information on competition, events, volunteering, or support for Special Olympics New Jersey.

In its 26th year, the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics New Jersey is led by a dedicated committee of 38 volunteers from all branches of Law Enforcement. The Torch Run Committee supports the athletes of Special Olympics New Jersey through a host of year-round fundraising activities and awareness campaigns. Additionally, members of the Torch Run award medals at athlete competitions; and each year travel on foot throughout the state carrying the Special Olympics "Flame of Hope" to ignite the cauldron and officially open Summer Games. In 2008, the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics New Jersey raised more than \$2.2 million.

Special Olympics New Jersey provides free year-round sports training and Olympic-type competition in 24 sports for more than 18,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or other closely related developmental disabilities offering an avenue for success in life through sport.

AmeriHealth New Jersey provides health care coverage to nearly 230,000 New Jersey residents. The company's contracted hospital and physician network includes thousands of physicians at 76 hospitals throughout its service area. AmeriHealth New Jersey has offices in Mt. Laurel and Iselin. For more information on AmeriHealth please visit www.amerihealth.com.

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