



PRESS RELEASE

Contact:
Doreen Pustizzi
Senior Director, Communications
609-896-8000 ext. 274,
dlp@sonj.org

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Special Olympics Athlete from North Plainfield Lobbies on Capitol Hill

-- Proposed Eunice Kennedy Shriver Act of 2010 with Olympian Carl Lewis and pop star Joe Jonas--

LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ – On Wednesday, January 27, Special Olympics New Jersey athlete Ashley Weber joined with other athletes, program leaders and family members from 45 states to participate in the annual Special Olympics Capitol Hill Day. This year the group went to honor the legacy of Eunice Kennedy Shriver.

At a meeting with Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ), Weber was joined by Special Olympics, Inc. chairman Timothy Shriver, Joe Jonas of the Jonas Brothers, and Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis.



Eunice Kennedy Shriver dedicated her life to providing opportunities for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) to become fully integrated in society. Special Olympics urged Members of Congress to authorize *The Eunice Kennedy Shriver Act*, which will continue a national commitment by the U.S. Congress made with passage of the *2004 Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act*. This new legislation continues the legacy of Mrs. Shriver by authorizing funds for specific programs supporting persons with IDD in health, education and global program initiatives. Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who passed away in August 2009, founded Special Olympics in 1968.

More than 200 million people worldwide have intellectual disabilities, making this the largest disability group worldwide. Intellectual and developmental disabilities cross racial, ethnic, educational, social and economic lines, and can occur in any family.

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ABOUT SONJ: *Special Olympics New Jersey provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.*