



SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
**USA GAMES**  
SEATTLE 2018



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## CELEBRATING THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS MOVEMENT

### **WHO:**

More than 4,000 athletes and coaches from all 50 states and the District of Columbia along with 10,000 family members and friends will descend upon Seattle and the surrounding region for the 2018 USA Games. In total there are 14 sports that will be offered including swimming and softball in Federal Way. Over 10,000 volunteers have already been recruited to support the USA Games and 70,000 spectators are expected to attend.

### **WHAT:**

#### **History of Special Olympics**

Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the sister of former President John F. Kennedy, launched a crusade to change the way the world treated – or ignored – intellectual disability. This program gained credence as the Kennedy's disclosed that one of their family members, Rosemary Kennedy, had an intellectual disability.

Throughout the 1960's, Shriver's commitment saw not only landmark legislation dealing with intellectual disability and disability rights, but was also instrumental in bringing intellectual disability out of the darkness and into the light of public acceptance.

The genesis of Special Olympics was a summer day camp that Eunice and her husband, Sargent Shriver, started in the backyard of their Maryland home. The goal was to explore the children's skills in a variety of sports and physical activities.

The Special Olympics movement has grown to more than 5.7 million athletes and Unified Partners in 172 countries and in 2018 will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. With the support of more than 1 million coaches and volunteers, Special Olympics delivers 32 Olympic-type sports and over 108,000 games and competitions throughout the year. In the United States, over 700 thousand athletes and Unified partners from 52 state Programs participate in sports offered at the national, regional, state, local and area levels.

#### **USA Games Mission**

The USA Games showcase the abilities of athletes with intellectual disabilities and the impact of Special Olympics through world-class competition, inspirational experiences, and modeling inclusion for all. The first event took place in Chicago in 1968 where 1000 athletes from the U.S. and Canada took part in a one-day event funded by the Kennedy Foundation and the Chicago Park District.

#### **Special Olympics USA Games**

The Special Olympics USA Games is a premier, national sports competition that showcases the power and joy of sports at the highest levels. The USA Games take place every four years with previous host cities being Ames, Iowa (2006); Lincoln, Nebraska (2010) and Lawrence, New Jersey (2014).

### **Special Olympics Motto**

*"Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."*

## **WHY:**

The Special Olympics is the leading voice in raising awareness about the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities. Through sports, they showcase the skills and dignity of athletes. They also bring together communities to see and take part in the transformative power of sports. They know the odds that athletes must overcome and the barriers they face every single day. They see this at training events and competitions as athletes push to beat their personal bests – and exceed them. Their stories and successes inspire us all.

### **Building Communities**

Special Olympics works to spread compassion and acceptance in a way that can unite the world. Their goal is to awaken everyone - and every community - to each person's common humanity. This vision of inclusion starts at the local level. It is expanding on a global scale.

There are up to 200 million people with intellectual disabilities around the world. Special Olympics want to reach out to every one of them – and their families and communities as well. Special Olympics does this through a wide range of trainings, competitions, health screenings and fund-raising events. They also create opportunities for families, community members, local leaders, businesses, law enforcement, celebrities, dignitaries and others to team together to change attitudes and support athletes. Some of their key program efforts to build communities include: Unified Sports, Athlete Leadership programs, Family Engagement, Healthy Athletes and Young Athletes.

Special Olympics knows no boundaries. Without regard to gender, race, religion, economic or education level, the Special Olympics has the ability to unite all walks of life.

### **Participants**

Every person with an intellectual disability who is at least eight years of age is eligible to participate in Special Olympics. There is no maximum age limitation for participation in Special Olympics. Each state selects individuals for their state team to participate in the USA Games.

### **City of Inclusion Initiative**

The 2018 USA Games will serve as a catalyst for the City of Inclusion initiative and will showcase the work that Federal Way area businesses and organizations are doing to create a community where people with intellectual disabilities are meaningfully and fully welcomed and valued.

## **WHEN:**

### **Key Events and Ceremonies in Federal Way**

- **Volunteer Training** | June 3, 8:00AM-4:00PM | Federal Way Performing Arts and Event Center
- **#RiseWithUs Rally** | June 9 | Federal Way Farmers Market  
The Federal Farmers Market will introduce the Team Washington athletes who will participate in the 2018 USA Games. Ray Roberts, Seattle Seahawks Legend, will be the emcee. Additionally, buildings in Federal Way will be lit up in the purple to promote the USA Games. Buildings will be lit up in purple throughout the first week of July as well.
- **Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg** | June 28, 1:00PM | Celebration Park  
An elite group of law enforcement officers and Special Olympics athletes will escort the Special Olympics Flame of Hope on a journey across Washington Station, visiting Federal Way on June 28 at Celebration Park. Forty-seven law enforcement officers and six Special Olympics athletes will make up the prestigious “Final Leg” team. The Torch Run aims to raise awareness for Special Olympics and to generate excitement for the USA Games. The 2018 Final Leg will end on July 1 when the team escorts the Flame of Hope into the Opening Ceremony at Husky Stadium.

- **Welcome Day** | June 29-30 | SeaTac International Airport  
Fans and volunteers will welcome more than 4,000 athletes, coaches, and delegates to Seattle.
- **Opening Ceremony** | July 1, 12:30PM | Husky Stadium  
The Opening Ceremony kicks off the six days of competition and special events. Thousands of Seattleites and visitors will experience the transformative power of sport and the positive impact of a more inclusive world for all. General tickets are \$20 and reserved seating is \$65.
- **Softball** | July 2, 3, 5 | Celebration Park  
ESPN, the official media partner of the Games, will be in Federal Way during the first week of July to cover the Special Olympics.
- **Swimming** | July 2-6 | King County Aquatic Center  
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- **Red, White, and Blues Festival** | July 4 | Celebration Park  
The City of Federal Way welcomes, athletes, coaches, officials and family and friends of the Special Olympics to join our community for a day filled with food, live entertainment, arts and crafts and a fireworks show!
- **Softball Awards Ceremony** | July 5-6 | Town Square Park  
In addition to the Softball Awards Ceremony that will take place at Town Square Park, there will also be a special fan experience for attendees of the USA Games.
- **Closing Ceremony** | July 6, 7:00PM | Lake Union Park  
Celebration and culmination of the 2018 USA Games.

#### HOW:

- [Volunteer for the Games](#)
- [Become a partner sponsor for the Games](#)
- [Donate to Special Olympics](#)
- [Be a Spectator](#)
- Participate in City of Inclusion Training
- Be aware and prepare for increased hotel/motel guests/restaurant traffic
- Potential to advertise your business in the USA Games program
- If advertising in The Mirror, remember to say “Welcome Special Olympics Athletes”

**For any questions, please contact:** Tim Johnson, Economic Development Director, City of Federal Way (253) 835-2412