



Special Olympics Colorado

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Denver Nuggets Host Basketball Clinic for Special Olympics Athletes

DENVER, Colo. -- Nearly 150 Special Olympics Colorado athletes were recent guests of the Denver Nuggets for a basketball skills clinic. The event took place Tuesday, Jan. 6 at the Pepsi Center, the home court of the Nuggets. This is the sixth-successive year the Nuggets' staff and players have volunteered their time to host the event.

The 90-minute clinic included rotating stations with instruction on conditioning, passing, dribbling, defense and shooting drills compliments of the entire Nuggets' coaching staff and roster of players. The Denver Nuggets organization is the ONLY one in the National Basketball Association that does an all-player/all coaches clinic for Special Olympics. According to Deb Dowling Canino, Vice President of Community Relations and Fan Development for Kroenke Sports Enterprises, the clinic for Special Olympics Colorado is the only mandatory team appearance required each year for the Nuggets and is considered a favorite among staff and players.

"We give these special athletes our time and, in return, they give us their spirit," said fifth-year Nuggets' head coach George Karl after the event. "The NBA does a great deal with Special Olympics. Our organization is very proud of its relationship with Special Olympics Colorado."

This year's clinic was once again sponsored by Kroenke Sports Enterprises and Comfort Dental.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for our athletes to meet some of their favorite professional basketball players and interact with them in a way that leaves a lasting impression," Mindy Watrous, President & CEO of Special Olympics Colorado remarked. "What better way to improve their basketball skills then by learning from the Denver Nuggets! The players are true pros on and off the court -- providing a wonderful opportunity for our Special Olympics athletes to showcase their tremendous abilities, rather than their disabilities. Year after year, our athletes have the time of their lives during this clinic. We are extremely grateful to the Denver Nuggets and Kroenke Sports for this opportunity and to Comfort Dental for their sponsorship of the event."

Since 1969, Special Olympics Colorado (SOCO) has been strengthening families, athletes and the very soul of our community through sports training and athletic competitions. Special Olympics Colorado provides year-round training and sponsors over 80 competitions at the area and state level in 20 sports for over 8,500 athletes statewide. With a base of more than 6,000 volunteers, hundreds of hours are donated allowing SOCO to support athletes of all ages and abilities, allowing them to build athletic, learning and social skills. Participation with other athletes, non-disabled peers (Unified Sports® partners), coaches, sponsors and volunteers builds confidence and creates opportunities to participate as productive and respected members of society by increasing public awareness of the athletes' capabilities. There is no cost to participate in Special Olympics.