



## **Special Olympics** Colorado

### **MEDIA ADVISORY**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LAW ENFORCEMENT TO GATHER AT STATE CAPITOL FOR 2007 FLAME OF UNIFICATION CEREMONY CELEBRATING ATHLETES OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS COLORADO**

[Denver, Colorado] – On Thursday, May 31, 2007 at 11:30 AM, nearly 100 law enforcement personnel along with Special Olympics Colorado athletes will gather on the West Steps of the State Capitol to participate in the 2007 **Law Enforcement Torch Run Flame Unification Ceremony**. This event brings together the symbolic Special Olympics Flame of Hope torches that have been carried by law enforcement and Special Olympics athletes on community relay runs through the entire state – covering nearly 1,800 miles. For the past month, personnel from every facet of law enforcement have run with the Flame of Hope through the streets of their local communities to raise both awareness and funds for Special Olympics Colorado. From the Unification Ceremony, a single Flame of Hope will begin the final leg of the run where on Saturday, June 2 it will light the cauldron during Opening Ceremonies of the **Special Olympics Colorado 2007 Summer Games** at Nottingham Field on the University of Northern Colorado campus.

**WHO:** Nearly 100 personnel representing every facet of law enforcement as well as Special Olympics Colorado athletes.

**WHAT:** **Three different legs of the Torch Run will reach the West Steps of the State Capitol to kick off the Flame Unification Ceremony:** one leg arriving from Lincoln Park; the other from Lincoln and 14<sup>th</sup>; and the third from Lincoln and Colfax. A brief Ceremony will take place including words from Special Olympics Colorado President & CEO, Mindy Watrous as well as Special Olympics athlete, Brian Terry. Following the Ceremony, a single Flame of Hope torch will depart for the University of Northern Colorado for the final leg of the run. The run culminates at Opening Ceremonies for the **Special Olympics Colorado 2007 Summer Games** at Nottingham Field on Saturday, June 2 at 6:30 PM.

**WHEN and** **THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2007**

**WHERE:** **11:00 AM** (*staging*) Law enforcement runs in formation from Lincoln Park; Lincoln & 14<sup>th</sup>; and Lincoln & Colfax to the West Steps of the State Capitol.

- **11:30 AM** Special Olympics Colorado President & CEO, Mindy Watrous and Special Olympics athlete, Brian Terry speak during a brief ceremony.
- **12:00 PM** Law enforcement leave the West Steps of the Capitol heading down the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall.
- **12:30 PM** Law enforcement, athletes, and media invited to the Breakplace Conoco (1500 7<sup>th</sup> Street / Denver, CO 80204 – located in the southwest corner of the Pepsi Center parking lot off of Auraria Parkway) for a barbeque lunch.

**WHY:** This event, resulting from the efforts of more than 1,000 officers statewide, signifies communities working together to raise awareness for one cause, Special Olympics Colorado. People with intellectual disabilities are members of every community. It is law enforcement's commitment to help raise awareness for Special Olympics athletes and to help showcase these individuals tremendous talents & abilities. The Flame Unification Ceremony also helps build excitement for the **Special Olympics Colorado 2007 Summer Games** which kick off on Saturday, June 2 running through Sunday, June 3. Summer Games includes competitions in the disciplines of aquatics, athletics (track & field), gymnastics, powerlifting and soccer.



## **Special Olympics** **Colorado**

### ***About Special Olympics Colorado***

Special Olympics Colorado (SOCO) strives to change lives by promoting understanding, acceptance and inclusion between people with and without intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics believes that through sports training and competition, people with intellectual disabilities benefit physically, mentally, socially and spiritually; families are strengthened; and the community at large, both through participation and observation, is united in understanding people with intellectual disabilities in an environment of equality, respect and acceptance. Through year-round sports training and athletic competitions as well as other related programming for over 8,500 children and adults (ages 8 and up) with intellectual disabilities across Colorado, SOCO has created a model community that celebrates people's diverse gifts. Special Olympics Colorado provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship. There is no cost to participate in Special Olympics Colorado. ***For more information contact Terri Takata-Smith, Marketing Manager at (720)359-3115 / [tts@specialolympicsco.org](mailto:tts@specialolympicsco.org) or visit [www.specialolympicsco.org](http://www.specialolympicsco.org).***

### ***About Colorado's Law Enforcement Torch Run®***

Here in Colorado, the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) raises money (over \$300,000 annually) and awareness to support the 8,500 Special Olympics athletes who participate year-round in 22 different sports with Special Olympics Colorado. Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2006, the Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics is the movement's largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle. In its 25th year, the Torch Run raised \$25.5 million for Special Olympics Programs around the world. At its most basic level, the Torch Run is an actual running event in which officers and athletes run the "Flame of Hope" to the Opening Ceremonies of local Special Olympics competitions, state/provincial Games. At its most fully developed, the Torch Run initiative encompasses a variety of fundraising vehicles in addition to the Torch Run itself. ***For more information about Colorado's LETR, contact Jeff Wells, Law Enforcement Torch Run Manager at (970) 245-7035 / [jw@specialolympicsco.org](mailto:jw@specialolympicsco.org).***

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