



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Hailey Fuzak, PR & Marketing Manager, 610-630-9450, ext. 219 or hfuzak@specialolympicspa.org

Special Olympics Pennsylvania's 2020 MedFest to Provide Free Sports Medical Screenings to Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

(Norristown PA, March 3, 2020) – People with intellectual disabilities (ID) are routinely denied access to quality health care and are often put at an increased risk of suffering from chronic pain and disease, blindness, hearing loss and more. In response to these health challenges, Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) will host MedFest 2020 on Saturday, April 18th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, located at 525 Pine St. in Scranton, PA.

MedFest 2020, which is open to any individual with ID, cognitive delay or developmental disability, will offer **free** sports medical screenings including blood pressure, temperature, pulse, height, weight, body mass index, vision, medical history, potential medication side effects, and general physical health. Additionally, participants will be able to connect with providers within the Geisinger healthcare system to meet their identified follow-up care needs.

“Special Olympics is the world’s largest public health organization for individuals with intellectual disabilities,” said Chelsea Hammell, SOPA’s Director of Program Initiatives. “Our free screenings, health education and prevention programs as well as fitness programs help to fill our athlete’s critical need for health care. We want to ensure that our athletes are not only able to train and compete, but are also making healthy choices daily. We are proud to have screened over 3,000 athletes and impacted countless lives.”

The event, sponsored by Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, will feature fun activities such as a story-telling coloring station, an interactive snack table, DIY stress balls and more. Participants will also receive a gift bag upon departure and be given the opportunity to receive an application for participation and learn about Special Olympics Pennsylvania, which provides year-round training in 21 Olympic-type sports to more than 20,000 children and adults with ID through 54 local programs while also offering leadership opportunities and [health programming](#) designed to improve the lives of all athletes.

Free transportation is available to and from the event, and eligible individuals can register [online](#). For more information, please contact Chelsea Hammell at chammell@specialolympicspa.org or 610-630-9540 ext. 233.

About Special Olympics Pennsylvania

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to more than 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For 50 years, SOPA and its 54 local programs have used the power of sports to transform the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and unite everyone by fostering community and building a more acceptable and civil society. SOPA is much more than a sports organization.

Through its Athlete Leadership Programs, athletes assume meaningful leadership roles, influence change within the Special Olympics movement and take on roles as Global Messengers (trained as public speakers for Special Olympics), athlete representatives, coaches, board members and more. SOPA also addresses major challenges facing its athletes including healthcare. Its Healthy Athletes program offers athletes free health screenings in the form of eye, ear, dental and podiatry assessments. Athletes are also taught how to live active lifestyles, eat healthy and more. Additionally, SOPA strives to create a unified world by promoting inclusion, uniting communities, and changing attitude. Through Unified Sports, SOPA brings together individuals with and without intellectual disabilities as equal teammates in training and competition, which promotes respect and acceptance, and facilitates meaningful relationships between people of all abilities. For more information about how you can join “The Inclusion Revolution,” visit www.specialolympicspa.org

###