

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SPECIAL OLYMPICS PA TO HOST NINTH ANNUAL PATERNO FAMILY BEAVER STADIUM
RUN/WALK DURING PENN STATE BLUE WHITE WEEKEND, APRIL 22ND**

Over 3,500 Participants to Attend In Person and Others to Participate In Virtual Run/Walk Component

NORRISTOWN, PA (April 17, 2018) – [The Paterno Family Beaver Stadium Run](#) for Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA), presented by the Sheetz family, returns to Penn State on Blue White Weekend for a ninth consecutive year. Runners and walkers of all ages and abilities will participate in a 5K run or 2 mile family fun walk at Penn State University on Sunday, April 22nd at 11 a.m. The Run will begin in the vicinity of the Bryce Jordan Center on Curtin Road, move through Penn State's scenic campus, and conclude with runners racing through the Beaver Stadium Tunnel and onto the Nittany Lions' home turf to "finish at the fifty!"

If you can't make it to State College on April 22nd to participate in-person but still want to get involved by fundraising and/or being part of a team, **register today as a [Virtual Runner/Walker](#)!** Virtual running/walking is a way to participate that can be done at any location, any time, any pace, and at the distance of the participant's discretion (3.1 mile run or a 2 mile fun walk). Interested parties can walk, jog, use the treadmill, run outside, or participate in another "real-world" race as long as their activity transpires between April 1st and April 30th to closely coincide with the official Beaver Stadium Run.

The Beaver Stadium Run is a [Law Enforcement Torch Run](#) event that includes individuals from law enforcement, SOPA athletes, the Paterno and Sheetz families, various Penn State University groups, members of the community, and hundreds of Sheetz, Inc. employees. The fun-filled event will also feature an array of celebrity participants that includes Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Steelers Running Back Franco Harris, who will serve as the official starter for the Run.

Run/Walk Fees are as follows: pre-event day registration \$25; student rate \$20 (must show I.D.); race day registration \$35; and children under the age of 8 are free. All participants will receive an official Beaver Stadium Run T-shirt, bottled water and other refreshments. Participants can also raise funds online for added incentives by creating their own fundraising page to garner support from their friends, family and co-workers. Online registration for the Paterno Family Beaver Stadium Run never closes! All participants will be able to register online until the start of the race by visiting www.StadiumRun.org. Members of the public can also [sponsor a participant](#) or make a [general donation](#).

Special Olympics PA (SOPA) is happy to announce that any individual raising **\$500** or more in support of their Beaver Stadium Run participation will become a 'member' of "**The Champions Club**" and receive one ticket to the VIP Reception and Silent Auction on **Saturday, April 21 from 6:30-8:30 pm** at the **Bryce Jordan Center Founder's Lounge** (reach the \$750 level and receive a second ticket) with Franco Harris, numerous Penn State Football alums and the Paterno Family. VIP reception attendees are welcome to join SOPA as it honors the Sheetz family with the Sixth Annual Community Hero Award, given to members of the Penn State Family who have shown support and generosity to Special Olympics and/or the community as a whole. Sheetz has been involved with Special Olympics for 24 incredible years. That partnership led to Sheetz becoming the Presenting Sponsor of the Paterno Family Beaver Stadium Run beginning in 2011. As the presenting sponsor, Sheetz has

Special Olympics Pennsylvania

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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities

donated \$100,000 each year and has activated hundreds of Sheetz employees as runners, walkers and volunteers at the event.

Race day registration opens at 7:30 a.m. at Medlar Field (701 Porter Rd, University Park, PA); and, the Run will begin at approximately 11 a.m. Access to the field will be for participants only. Spectators will enter the stadium through Gate B at 11 a.m. for available 50 yard line seating.

Last year more than 3,000 runners and walkers took part in the annual event, raising over \$400,000. Proceeds from the Run will help underwrite the cost of participation for more than 2,000 athletes at the 2018 SOPA Summer Games held at Penn State in June.

In addition to the Sheetz and the Paterno families, the 2018 Beaver Stadium Run major event sponsors include: The Starfish Fund/ Suzanne and Al Lord; The Misitano Family and Post Acute Medical; Beneficial Savings Bank; Dan and Debbie McGinn; The Lubrano Companies; Harmelin Media; iHeartMedia; Intersection; Lamar; More FM; NBC Universal; PSECU; Beasley Broadcast Group, Inc.; The Apartment Store and Keystone Real Estate Group; The Meder Family; Frank Pellegrino; Aspire Wealth; Wick and Maggie Sollers; and WPVI – TV.

Sign Up To Volunteer Today! - Those interested in volunteering for the 2018 Beaver Stadium Run can complete our online [Volunteer Form](#).

Visit www.StadiumRun.org for more information. To learn more about volunteerism and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Demika Poole at dpoole@specialolympicspa.org or 610-630-9450, ext. 226.

About Special Olympics Pennsylvania

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to nearly 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For more information about how you can be a fan, visit our website at www.specialolympicspa.org.

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