



Various West Chester Locations to Host Training Camp for Special Olympics PA Athletes - April 7 - 8

More Than 60 Athletes & Coaches to Train in Preparation for the Special Olympics USA Games in Seattle

(Norristown, PA, April 3, 2018) – Special Olympics Pennsylvania is proud to announce various West Chester, PA YMCA locations as the host of its 2018 Special Olympics USA Games team training camp. Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) will send its more than 60 member delegation to represent “Team PA” at the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games from July 1 – 6 in Seattle. The training camp will be held from April 7 – 8, 2018 and will provide team practice in the USA Games sports of basketball, bocce, bowling, golf, gymnastics, powerlifting, soccer, swimming, tennis, and track & field.

The Oscar Lasko YMCA and Childcare Center, located at 1 E. Chestnut Street, will serve as the team’s main hub. It is where athletes will have their uniforms fitted, team photos taken, eat lunch, and train in basketball and gymnastics. Several area venues will also be used for training and special events, including the following YMCA of Greater Brandywine branches/sporting venues: Lionville: Swimming, Brandywine: Soccer, West Chester: Powerlifting, and Upper Main Line: Tennis.

In addition to the designated Y locations, West Chester Country Club will host golf, Palace Bowling & Entertainment Center will provide a venue for bowling, and track & field, tennis and bocce will take place at West Chester Henderson High School.

The highlight of the weekend will be the team dinner taking place on Saturday, April 7th at 6pm at the Calvary Lutheran Church located at 730 S New Street. Speakers and special invited guests include West Chester Mayor Dianne Herrin, Former Olympian Steve Holman, YMCA CEO Denise Day, WCASD Superintendent Dr. Jim Scanlon, and Henderson High School Principal Dr. Jason P. Sherlock.

YMCA of Greater Brandywine is one of three local Y organizations with which Special Olympics Pennsylvania has established a partnership to help alleviate its struggle to find suitable locations to train athletes and host local competitions. Athletes in Special Olympics Programs have access to the Y facilities where they can train for competitive meets, improve fitness levels and build conditioning skills needed to meet the physical challenges of sports training. Athletes can also train for Olympic-type sports year round as opposed to their current 8-week sessions.

In addition to creating a positive economic impact for Chester County’s Brandywine Valley through hotel room nights, tourism and some direct spending to produce the camp, event organizers hope the camp will leave a legacy of increased awareness of and support for Special Olympics Pennsylvania.

Team PA will be part of more than 4,000 Special Olympics athletes, coaches and state delegates from across the U.S., and tens of thousands of volunteers and spectators that will gather in Seattle for six days of competition in 14 individual and team sports. The Games will celebrate the Special Olympics movement, promote the ideals of acceptance and inclusion through sport and showcase athletes from throughout the U.S. and the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities. The 2018 USA Games will also highlight Special Olympics’ work in sport, education, health and community-building. To learn more about Team PA and the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games visit, <http://www.specialolympicspa.org/sports-competitions/competitions/usa-games>.

About Special Olympics Pennsylvania

Special Olympics Pennsylvania provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to nearly 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities. For more information about how you can help *Reveal the Champion Inside* thousands of Special Olympics athletes, visit our web site at www.specialolympicspa.org.

About the YMCA of Greater Brandywine

The YMCA of Greater Brandywine is an association of eight YMCAs that offer life-changing programs for children, families and adults throughout Chester County. Our Y is a diverse association of individuals joined together by a shared commitment to nurture the potential of kids, promote healthy living and foster a sense of social responsibility. With more than 80,000 members annually, each YMCA in the association feature unique facilities and programs that best reflect the needs and interest of their communities.

To ensure that everyone has access to quality programming, financial assistance and subsidized programming is available. In 2017 alone, the YMCA of Greater Brandywine provided more than 3.5 million dollars in financial assistance to support 11,915 families with access to childcare, summer camp, programs and memberships. To learn more about the YMCA of Greater Brandywine, visit www.ymcagbw.org or contact info@ymcagbw.org.

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