



**SPECIAL OLYMPICS PA AND VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY CELEBRATE  
30TH ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL, NOV. 2ND – 4TH**

*Weekend Features Torch Run, Coach Jay Wright, Unified Basketball Exhibition with the Villanova Wildcats,  
and Special Appearance by ESPN's Michele Steele*

**WHAT:** Special Olympics Pennsylvania's 30th Annual [Fall Festival](#) is the largest student-run Special Olympics event in the world and will host approximately 1,200 coaches, athletes and Unified Partners representing 40 Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) programs. More than 3,000 volunteers will be onsite throughout the weekend. Festivities will kick off with the 8th Annual [Unified Fall Festival Torch Run](#), a 26-mile non-competitive run consisting of 18 legs from XFINITY Live! Philadelphia to Villanova. The Games will later commence at Villanova University with Opening Ceremonies in the new William B. Finneran Pavilion with special guests Villanova Basketball Coach Jay Wright, the Villanova Wildcats, and ESPN anchor Michele Steele.

**WHERE/WHEN:**

**UNIFIED FALL FEST TORCH RUN**

Approximately 13 miles from XFINITY Live! Philadelphia to the Steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum at 2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, then 13 miles from the Philadelphia Art Museum to Villanova University. [Click here](#) for Unified Torch Run legs and times.

**FRIDAY:**

- **9:00 am** – Official kick-off from XFINITY Live! Philadelphia as members of the Philadelphia Police Department, SOPA athletes, dignitaries and other members of law enforcement begin the long and inspiring journey after a brief ceremony.

**GUESTS SLATED TO ATTEND INCLUDE:**

- Dave Shratwieser - Fox 29 Reporter/Emcee
- Matt Aaron – SOPA President and CEO
- Josh Shapiro – Attorney General
- Chief Dave Mettin – Slate Belt Regional
- Chief Dave Duffy – Upper Gwynedd
- Deputy Commissioner – Philadelphia Police Department
- **9:30 am** – The first leg begins at XFINITY Live! Philadelphia and continues throughout the day before concluding at Villanova University at approx. 3 pm
- **1:15 pm** – Afternoon route of the Unified Fall Festival Torch Run begins from the bottom apron of the Philadelphia Art Museum steps.
- **3:00 pm – 3:45 pm** – Members of the Unified Torch Run arrive at Villanova University and travel through The Quad on campus, cheered on by students and the University band.

**FALL FESTIVAL**

**VENUE LOCATIONS:**

- Villanova University, 800 Lancaster Avenue in Villanova, PA (most events)
- Marple Sports Arena, 611 South Park Way in Broomall, PA (roller skating only)
- The Shipley School Upper Fields, 814 Yarrow St., Bryn Mawr, PA (soccer 5v5 and volleyball)

**FRIDAY:**

While preliminary competitions take place Friday afternoon, the official start to the weekend is **Opening Ceremonies at 7:30 pm Friday evening at the Finneran Pavilion**. A complete competition schedule can be found [here](#).

**MEDIA ALERT**  
11/2/18 – 11/4/18

**Special Olympics**  
Pennsylvania



**HIGHLIGHTS, IN ADDITION TO SPORTING COMPETITIONS, INCLUDE:**

- **10:00 am – 6:00 pm – Healthy Athletes** activities will be available to Fall Festival participants in the Connelly Center Tent, offering free health screenings and education in three disciplines: Special Smiles, Fit Feet, and FUNfitness.
- **6:00 pm – 7:00 pm – President’s Welcome Reception** @ Villanova Club, Finneran Pavilion – A reception for SOPA donors, Board Members and friends w/recognition Festival sponsor TD Bank.
- **7:30 pm – Opening Ceremonies** @ William B. Finneran Pavilion

**GUESTS SLATED TO ATTEND INCLUDE:**

- Co-Emcees: Blair Co. Athlete, Mike Stephens and Area M Co. Athlete, Tip Hansen
- Jay Wright – Villanova Men’s Basketball Head Coach
- Michele Steele – ESPN Reporter
- Julie Berger – 2018 Fall Festival Director
- Loretta Claiborne – SOPA Athlete & Vice Chair For SOI Board Of Directors
- Matt Aaron – SOPA President & CEO
- Jim Wenner – SOPA Chairman Of The Board
- 20-minute Unified Exhibition between the Villanova Wildcats & SOPA basketball athletes
- Performances by the Villanova Cheerleaders
- Uniformed Officers arrive outside of the Pavilion. Team Captains for the Torch Run will include police brass from the Philadelphia, Radnor, Lower Merion, Upper Merion, Upper Gwynedd Township, and Slat Belt Regional Police Departments; PA Board of Probation and Parole; Villanova Dept. of Public Safety; PA State Police; and many more.

**SATURDAY:**

- **9:30 am – 2:30 pm – Young Athletes** is a unique sport and play program for children with intellectual disabilities ages 2-7 in the Bartley Exchange.
- **10:00 am – 6:00 pm – Healthy Athletes** activities will be available to Fall Festival participants on the second floor of Driscoll Hall, offering free health screenings and education in six disciplines: Special Smiles, Fit Feet, Healthy Hearing, Opening Eyes, Health Promotions and FUNfitness.
- **10:00 am – 5:00 pm – Olympic Town** @ The Quad (between Sheehan & Sullivan Halls) – Olympic Town will offer athletes a variety of fun activities to keep them busy in between competitions. Villanova student clubs will set up booths and crafts tables, and area businesses will participate.
- **11:00 am – 4:00 pm – Healthy Habits** interactive stations on the 1st floor of Driscoll Hall.
- **7:15 pm – 7:25 pm – Fireworks** @ The Oreo – A 10-minute fireworks display in honor of the 30th Anniversary of Fall Festival.
- **7:30 pm – 9:30 pm – Victory Dance** @ Finneran Pavilion – The Victory Dance is truly a highlight for Special Olympics athletes. The Philadelphia Insurance Award of Valor will be given to one athlete in honor of his/her spirit to overcome challenges.

**SUNDAY:**

- **9:00 am-12:00 pm –**
  - **Olympic Town** @ The Quad (between Sheehan & Sullivan Halls)
  - **Healthy Habits** interactive education stations at Various Locations on campus.
- **1:00 pm – 1:45 pm – Closing Ceremonies @ Jake Nevin Building** – Guest appearance by Villanova University Peter Donahue and a video tribute to the Pennsylvania athletes attending the [2019 Abu Dhabi Special Olympics World Summer Games](#).

**MEDIA OPPORTUNITY** – Media are welcomed to attend any portion of the event. Contact the below for more information or to arrange interviews.

- Wenona Sutton, SOPA Comm. Manager ([wsutton@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:wsutton@specialolympicspa.org)) at 347-659-8591
- Nicole Jones, SOPA Comm. Director ([njones@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:njones@specialolympicspa.org)) at 267-779-3131, or
- Hilary Korsen, Villanova Committee ([media@villanovaspo.com](mailto:media@villanovaspo.com)) at 860-462-2727