



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Special Olympics PA Adds “Fun” to This Year’s 12th Annual Paterno Family Virtual Beaver Stadium Run

**NORRISTOWN, PA (March 30, 2021)** – Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) is excited to announce that the 12th Annual [Paterno Family Beaver Stadium Run](#), presented by the Sheetz family, will be a virtual event held this year from Sunday, April 18th to Sunday, May 9th. The event will offer a [Virtual Run](#) (5K run or 2 mile walk) and a new [Virtual Fun](#) component that will allow participants to choose their favorite exercise or activity to engage in for 30 minutes. Whether individuals choose to Run or engage in a little Fun, all proceeds benefit thousands of individuals with intellectual disabilities through the transformative power of sport.

The Run and Fun event will enable individuals to participate at the distance of their choice (5K run or 2 mile walk) or engage in a fun exercise or activity at any location, time or pace. Participants can walk, jog, use the treadmill, dance, do yoga, cycle, swim or participate in any other fashion.

This year’s event theme is “We Are... A Light at the End of the Tunnel” because all of the Beaver Stadium Virtual Run & Fun participants will be a light at the end of what has been a very difficult year of virtual training for Special Olympics athletes. Proceeds from the Run over the past 11 years have made a huge impact on SOPA’s ability to serve 16,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities statewide, and has helped to transform countless lives. Last year more than 2,000 runners and walkers took part in the first virtual format of this annual event and raised over \$300,000.

“We’ve all been through so much this past year and are still unable to be together to run through the Beaver Stadium tunnel; but, we know that there is a light at the end of the figurative tunnel for all of us. This year’s event theme serves as a reminder of the hope inside of each and every one of us,” said Andrew Cader, Director of Strategic Fundraising Events & Corporate Stewardship. “We are so grateful for the support this event receives each and every year – especially during the most recent years where people have truly embraced this virtual format. The funds raised from this event will help us continue to provide our sports, health and leadership programming.”

On the morning of Sunday, April 18th, participants can tune into SOPA’s Facebook and YouTube pages at 11 a.m. for the livestream kickoff of the 12th Annual Paterno Family Beaver Stadium Run. The live stream will feature SOPA athletes and celebrity guests like Sue Paterno and Hall of Fame Steelers Running Back, Franco Harris.

### Special Olympics Pennsylvania

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

Participants are asked to share their Run & Fun activities via social media, using the hashtag **#VirtualBSR**, from April 18th through May 9th. On Monday, May 10th at 7 p.m. a virtual celebration will be held to recognize all of the participants and commend them for running, walking or exercising to support SOPA athletes.

All registrants will receive an official Beaver Stadium Run & Fun t-shirt and commemorative medal. Additionally, participants can 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 May 9th by visiting [www.StadiumRun.org](http://www.StadiumRun.org). Members of the public can also [sponsor a participant](#) or make a [general donation](#).

The Paterno Family Beaver Stadium Virtual Run & Fun event is presented by the Sheetz and Paterno families. Additional 2021 major event sponsors include: PSECU, Dan and Debby McGinn, WPVI, Harmelin Media, The Meder Family, Lamar, iHeart Media, NBC 10/Telemundo/NBC Universal, EffectTV, Richard and Susan Sokolov, Seven Mountains Media, Abundance Wealth, WTXF Fox 29, Viamedia, Intersection, J&J Digital Video Solutions, LLC and WFMZ.

Visit [www.StadiumRun.org](http://www.StadiumRun.org) for more information. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Andrew Cader at [acader@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:acader@specialolympicspa.org).

### **About the Original Beaver Stadium Run**

The Paterno Family Beaver Stadium Run for Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA), presented by the Sheetz family, is typically held at Penn State during Blue-White Weekend, where more than 3,500 runners and walkers of all ages and abilities participate in a 5K run or 2-mile family fun walk. The Run normally begins in the vicinity of the Bryce Jordan Center on Curtin Road and moves through Penn State's scenic campus, and concludes with runners racing through the Beaver Stadium Tunnel and onto the Nittany Lions' home turf to "finish at the fifty!"

### **About Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

Special Olympics Pennsylvania provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to 16,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For more information about how you can join "The Inclusion Revolution," visit [www.specialolympicspa.org](http://www.specialolympicspa.org).

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