



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Special Olympics Pennsylvania – Lehigh County to Host 44th Annual Track & Field Experience at Parkland High School on Friday May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

**(Norristown, PA, January 16, 2020)** – Special Olympics Pennsylvania – Lehigh County has announced that it will be hosting its 44th annual Track & Field Experience at Parkland High School on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.

“We are grateful to Parkland High School for hosting this year’s Track & Field Experience,” said Harry Schwartz, Special Olympics - Leigh County Manager. “This amazing event not only allows us to introduce local students with and without disabilities to our Special Olympics Pennsylvania – Lehigh County program, but also shows them how they can get involved and be a part of an inclusion movement.”

The Track & Field Experience buses in more than 800 students from school districts all over Lehigh County, including Parkland, Whitehall-Coplay, Allentown, East Penn, Southern Lehigh, Salisbury, Mercy Special Learning Center, Northern Lehigh, Northwestern Lehigh, and assorted CLIU#21 classrooms in the area. Students with disabilities are invited to compete in a variety of track & field events, such as the shotput, a softball throw, the 50M run and the 100M run.

The event also pairs students with and without disabilities together to create a unified experience and offer support as they participate in the different events. Aside from the various track & field events, students can also visit the Olympic Village, which features games, activities and prizes. There will also be a DJ area, photo booths, face painting and more.

The Track & Field Experience will also include information about Special Olympics – Lehigh County, which provides free year-round sports training and competition to children and adults with intellectual disabilities. The Lehigh County program offers the following 11 Olympic-style sports: bowling, alpine skiing, snowboarding, athletics (track and field), basketball, bocce, gymnastics, soccer, swimming, softball and volleyball. For more information about Special Olympics – Lehigh County and to get involved, visit <http://specialolympicslehighcounty.org/>.

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### ***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](http://www.specialolympicspa.org).

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