



2006 Special Olympics USA National Games

Fact Sheet

BACKGROUND:

The 2006 Special Olympics USA National Games provides the Special Olympics movement an opportunity to reveal to America a refreshed Special Olympics that is not only energizing, healthy, skillful, welcoming and joyful, but an important part of creating a more accepting, peaceful world.

The National Games provides a stage to showcase the following:

- ❑ Abilities of Special Olympics athletes – both on and off the playing field,
- ❑ Signature initiatives of Special Olympics such as Unified Sports, Healthy Athletes, Athlete Leadership Programs, and Special Olympics school program – “SO Get Into It,” and
- ❑ Life-transforming experiences for volunteers and spectators who participate in the National Games or view them on television.

MISSION:

To provide a first-class sporting event that celebrates the achievements of Special Olympics athletes in an Olympic environment while showcasing their talents, promoting understanding of the qualities and capabilities of persons with intellectual disabilities, and increasing public awareness and acceptance.

WHAT:

Special Olympics will hold its first USA National Games in 2006, which will be an experience that uplifts the spirit and touches the heart of both athlete and spectator.

WHEN:

July 2 – 7, 2006

WHO:

More than 3,000 athletes from all 50 states
2,000 coaches and official delegates
12,000 family members and friends of athletes
8,000 volunteers

WHERE: The National Games will be based around Iowa State University, Ames, IA

SPORTS: More than 3,000 athletes from all 50 states will meet for six days of competition in 12 different sports:

Aquatics (Swimming)	Bowling	Soccer
Athletics (Track & Field)	Golf	Softball
Basketball	Gymnastics	Tennis
Bocce	Powerlifting	Volleyball

Demonstration in Motor Activities Training Program (MATP)

CEREMONIES: Opening Ceremonies will take place in the 15,000 seat Hilton Coliseum and will include star-studded entertainment, the Parade of Athletes and the culmination of the Final Leg of the Law Enforcement Torch Run and lighting of the Special Olympics cauldron.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

June 26 –

July 1 Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg Kick Off, Chicago, Illinois – More than 100 Law Enforcement officers from throughout the United States will serve as *Guardians of the Flame* as they journey to Ames, Iowa to safely deliver the Special Olympics Flame of Hope to the USA National Games. Celebration events will occur along the route to Ames.

July 1 Cessna Airlift, Des Moines International Airport – About 230 Cessna Citations will transport 1,800 athletes and coaches to Iowa to participate in the Games. Planes will land and take off every 60-90 seconds during a 12-hour period.

July 1 National Research Symposium, The Gateway Hotel and Conference Center Ames – Review of groundbreaking studies and key findings in the area of intellectual disabilities, as well as highlights on subjects ranging from health and fitness, attitude change, and the impact of the Special Olympics movement.

July 2 U.S. Congressional Field Hearing led by Sen. Tom Harkin, Benton Auditorium (Scheman Building, Iowa State University) – The Senate Appropriations Committee, and more specifically the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education sub-committee, will examine the status of people with intellectual disabilities and what has to be done to address the health, education and other needs of this population.

July 2 Opening Ceremonies, Hilton Coliseum, Iowa State University – An exciting and entertaining show with pageantry to open the first-ever USA National Games.

July 3 National Youth Forum, 2055 Hoover Hall, Iowa State University – An assembly bringing youth with and without intellectual disabilities together for an inspiring and educational discussion.

July 4 Community Celebration and Spectacular Fireworks Display, Iowa State Center

July 5 Family Forum, Scheman Building (Benton Auditorium, Iowa State University) – An activity tailored for family members of Special Olympics athletes to learn more about the opportunities with Special Olympics and to provide a network of friends and supporters.

- July 7 Closing Ceremonies, Hilton Coliseum, Iowa State University – An event to celebrate the accomplishments of the athletes and officially close the National Games.
- July 2 – 7 Healthy Athletes Screenings – Volunteer medical professionals will provide competing athletes with a variety of free health assessments including vision, dental, audiology and physical therapy at the Scheman Building.
- July 3 – 7 Festival Village, Hilton Coliseum, Iowa State University – An interactive experience for spectators and the community to come together and celebrate Special Olympics and the athletes.

VOLUNTEERS: Volunteers will be a key component to the success of the USA National Games. Approximately 8,000 individuals will be needed to assist in everything from competition to host teams.

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