



## For Immediate Release

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## **SOPA ATHLETE TRAVELS TO CAPITOL HILL TO DISCUSS IMPORTANCE OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS WITH PA REPS**

*TREVOR GOES TO WASHINGTON!*

**[NORRISTOWN, PA, FEB. 23, 2007]** – On Tuesday, February 27, local Special Olympics athlete Trevor Chester of State College, PA will travel to Washington, DC to meet with Pennsylvania representatives on Capitol Hill to discuss the impact of Special Olympics and request continued and additional support for much-needed programming for the largest disability population in the world – people with intellectual disabilities.

“For many years people with intellectual disabilities have been kept in the shadows, but Special Olympics is helping to open the doors of opportunity for our athletes to be true leaders, not only in their communities, but throughout the world,” said Timothy P. Shriver, chairman and CEO of Special Olympics. “With federal support for education, health and worldwide expansion through Special Olympics, we will be able to empower more athletes around the world to become leaders in our efforts to change attitudes from ignorance to acceptance.”

In November 2004, President George Bush signed into law the Sport & Empowerment Act, which authorizes \$15 million a year in federal funding for Special Olympics in the areas of education, health and worldwide expansion. In the past year, Special Olympics, for the first time ever, successfully hosted national games in each of its seven regions providing additional competition opportunities for its athletes. Additionally, Special Olympics completed its most ambitious growth campaign in its history targeting new athletes and supporters to join the worldwide organization. At the conclusion of the campaign, more than \$130 million was contributed to the global Special Olympics movement and over 1.25 million new athletes, doubling the organization’s size, were introduced to the joy of sports participation.

In October, Shanghai, China will welcome more than 7,000 Special Olympics athletes representing 169 countries to its city when it hosts the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games creating a global stage to showcase some of the world’s most inspiring athletes. **Special Olympics Pennsylvania will be sending 16 of its athletes to compete on this world stage.** With sports at the core, Special Olympics is uniting the world through a message of acceptance and inclusion that is bridging racial, ethnic, economic, religious and political divides.

### **About Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

Special Olympics Pennsylvania provides year-round training and competition in 23 Olympic-type sports to more than 18,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For more information about how SOPA inspires greatness, visit [www.specialolympicspa.org](http://www.specialolympicspa.org).

### **About Special Olympics**

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives by promoting understanding, acceptance and inclusion between people with and without intellectual disabilities. Through year-round sports training and athletic competition and other related programming for 2.25 million children and adults with intellectual disabilities in more than 160 countries, Special Olympics has created a model community that celebrates people’s diverse gifts. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship. Visit Special Olympics at [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org).

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