

**CHOOSE TO INCLUDE**

50th Anniversary Chicago Celebration

As the birthplace of the Special Olympics, there is no city more fitting than Chicago to serve as the global stage for our climactic 50th Anniversary. Synonymous with vibrancy and diversity, Chicago will capture the hearts and minds of hundreds of millions of followers witnessing this spotlight on the acceptance for all people.

A series of high-profile, weeklong events will quickly build global awareness of unified inclusion, highlighting Chicago’s leading role in the worldwide movement. We will tap into the more than 300 million social media followers of participating professional sports teams and musical acts, our ESPN media partner and on-site audiences. Beyond the press and weeklong events, the 50th Anniversary celebration will establish Chicago as a model for inclusion in the city, education and parks for the years to come.

UNIFIED CUP

Soccer is the world’s favorite sport, played by more than 240 million adults and children across the world. The universality of soccer makes it a common denominator for all people. Soccer requires little in the way of specialized equipment and is organized using simple, intuitive rules. It's so fundamental to the future of Special Olympics' growth plans that it is the focus of our Global Soccer initiative.

The Special Olympics Unified Cup is the only international tournament that features teams from around the world comprised of people with and without intellectual disabilities. Unified Sports was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together in a quick path to friendship and understanding.

In July of 2018, 16 men’s and 8 women’s teams will travel to Chicago, Illinois to compete in a series of tournament play culminating in what is certain to be a historic final three matches played on July 21st at Toyota Park.

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ETERNAL FLAME OF HOPE

The Flame of Hope dates back to the 1960s, when the future for people with intellectual disabilities was anything but bright. This was still an age of routine institutionalization, when education was seen as mostly needless for people with intellectual disabilities – a time when stigma associated with this diagnosis was extreme, as it had been for many years. The Flame of Hope symbolizes the Special Olympics goal: shining a light on the talents and abilities of people with intellectual disabilities.

Situated in one of Chicago’s most pristine parkland areas, the Eternal Flame of Hope will pay tribute to the 50-year history of Special Olympics and the spirit and grit of the athletes as well as light the path to an inclusive world. The recognition wall will feature the names of leaders who are united in our effort to reimagine a world safe for difference.

CELEBRATION CONCERT (TBD)

Special Olympics Celebration Concert is an innovative, awareness driving music experience taking place at the iconic United Center. The concert will feature live performances by A-List entertainers and will aim to raise the consciousness of a generation to make change inevitable.

This once in a lifetime event will be used to drive engagement through a platform that transcends language, culture and ability. Through potential digital and broadcast opportunities, the concert will reach well beyond United Center and into the hearts and minds of people throughout the world. Together, we will roar and a clear and compelling message to commit to ending discrimination against people with intellectual disabilities will be heard throughout the world.

CHANGE THE GAME DAY

On Sunday, July 22, Special Olympics will recreate the “Spirit of 1968” at Soldier Field. The general public will have the opportunity to learn and experience the history of Special Olympics through visual and experiential programs. Original athletes from the 1968 Games will be present to recount their experiences at the ground-breaking event, while attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a tour of historic Soldier Field, play “Unified” and compete on the sport with the Special Olympics athletes of today. Approximately 10,000 guests will get to experience the Special Olympics health program through performance stations and Healthy Athlete screenings. Cultural elements such as musical entertainment as well as opportunities to meet and greet Special Olympics Chairman Tim Shriver and longtime Special Olympics advocate and campaigner, Justice Anne Burke.

**CELEBRATION**

**FUNDING**