

# SPECIAL OLYMPICS MILESTONES



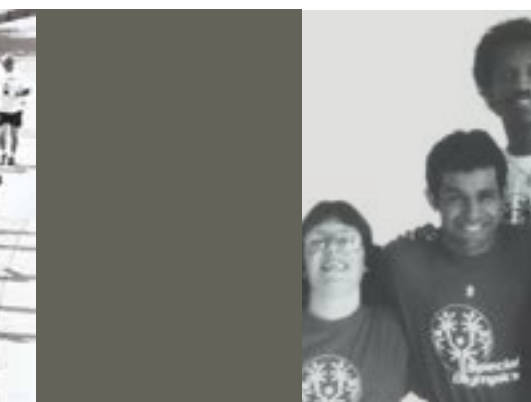
**'62** **June 1962**  
Eunice Kennedy Shriver begins a summer day camp, "Camp Shriver", at her home in Maryland for young people with intellectual disabilities to realize their capabilities in sports and physical activities.



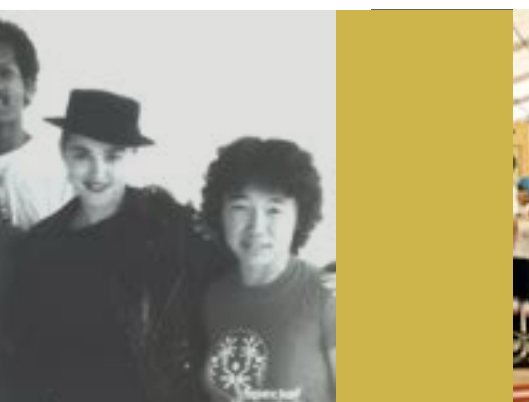
**'71** **December 1971**  
The U.S. Olympic Committee gives Special Olympics official approval to use the name "Olympics" in the United States.



**'81** **June 1981**  
The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics (LETR) is launched in Wichita, Kansas, USA, after Police Chief Richard LaMunyon saw an urgent need to raise awareness for Special Olympics. LETR is now Special Olympics' largest grassroots fundraiser, raising more than \$56 million annually.



**'87** **October 1987**  
"A Very Special Christmas," a benefit album featuring holiday music by top rock & roll performers, is released worldwide. All proceeds benefit Special Olympics. This would become the most successful benefit series in music history.



**'93** **March 1993**  
The 5th Special Olympics World Winter Games are hosted in Austria. These are the first World Games held outside the US.



**'95** **July 1995**  
A number of new Special Olympics initiatives make their debut at the 9th Special Olympics World Summer Games in New Haven, Connecticut, including the Host Town Program, Healthy Athletes® and Research and Policy Symposia. For the first time, individuals with intellectual disabilities serve as certified sports officials. The U.S. Mint made an unprecedented Silver Dollar Coin featuring Eunice Kennedy Shriver. It was the first time a living woman was honored with a commemorative U.S. coin and it was for Shriver's work in founding Special Olympics.



**'97** **January 1997**  
Official launch of Healthy Athletes, providing healthcare services to athletes worldwide. The program includes free vision, hearing and dental screening, injury prevention clinics, and nutrition education.



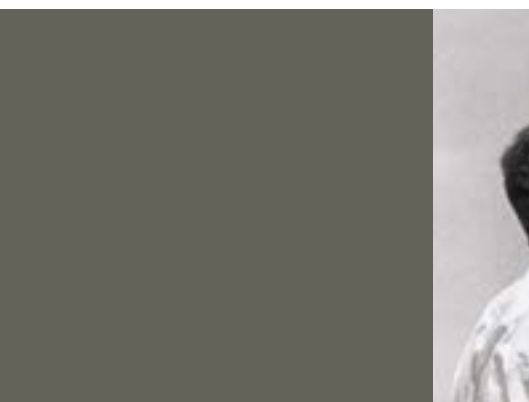
**'98** **December 1998**  
U.S. President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton host "A Very Special Christmas from Washington D.C."—marking the first time that the White House hosts a Special Olympics gala and the first time that artists from the "A Very Special Christmas" album series gather together to perform. In 2000, President and Mrs. Clinton host "A Very Special Christmas" for the second time.



**'00** **May 2000**  
As part of the "Campaign for Special Olympics," the Special Olympics China Millennium March is launched, the Movement's most ambitious growth campaign in history. China pledges to increase its current number of athletes from 50,000 to 500,000 by 2005. Today they are our largest Program with more than 1 million athletes.



**'02** **May 2002**  
Special Olympics develops and distributes free SO Get Into It™ kits to schools and teachers worldwide. The kit teaches young people with and without intellectual disabilities how to "be the difference" by learning values of inclusion, acceptance and respect.



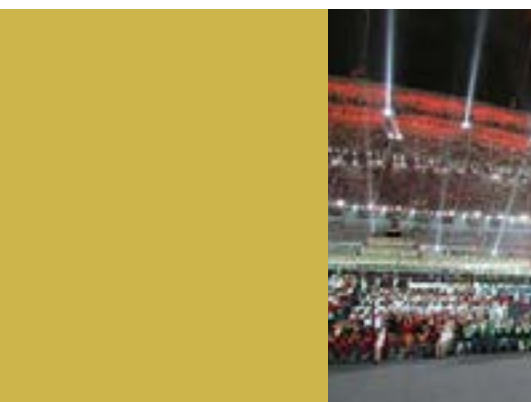
**'04** **October 2004**  
U.S. President George W. Bush signs the "Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act," to fund the growth of Special Olympics and support initiatives that foster greater respect and understanding for people with intellectual disabilities. The signing of the bill marks the first time that Special Olympics secures support through legislation.



**'06** **May 2006**  
Special Olympics surpasses its goal of doubling the number of athletes worldwide to 2.5 million. With sports at the core, the movement stands as a leader in advancing rights and opportunities and policy change in 165 countries worldwide.



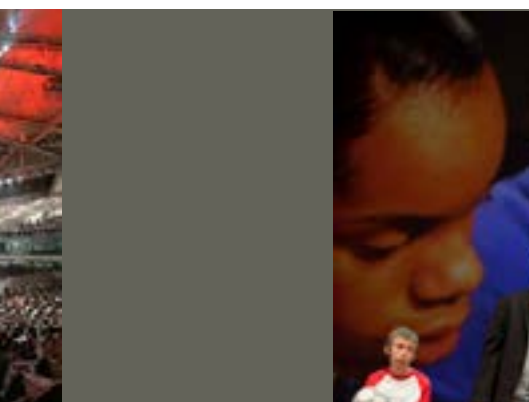
**'07** **October 2007**  
The city of Shanghai, China, hosts the 12th Special Olympics World Summer Games, which are broadcast internationally on an unprecedented scale. These Games, with more than 7,500 athletes from 164 countries participating, are a major milestone in Special Olympics' history.



**'10** **June 2010**  
The Special Olympics Global Congress is held in Marrakech, Morocco, a first-ever gathering of hundreds of movement leaders from countries around the world to draft the Special Olympics Strategic Plan 2011-2015 and set the course for a new global approach to planning for Special Olympics.



**'16** **June 2016**  
Special Olympics exceeds its ambitious goal of getting 1 million athletes and partners involved in Unified Sports, bringing together people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. There are now more than 1.2 million Unified teammates worldwide.



**'18** **July 2018**  
Special Olympics launches global year-long 50th Anniversary celebrations, starting in Chicago and continuing around the world!



**'14** **July 2014**  
U.S. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama host "Celebration for Special Olympics and a Unified Generation" at the White House. Leading social activists, business leaders, sports legends and entertainers attend.



**'05** **December 2005**  
"The Ringer," a Farrelly Brothers film starring Johnny Knoxville, opens in theaters throughout Canada and the United States. The film includes appearances from more than 150 Special Olympics athletes. Its producers collaborated with Special Olympics to challenge destructive stereotypes and negative thinking about people with intellectual disabilities.



**'09** **March 2009**  
Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign is founded by students with and without intellectual disabilities and continues to be led by passionate young people to raise the consciousness of society about the hurtful effects of the R-word.

**'68** **July 1968**  
The first International Special Olympics Summer Games are held at Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois, USA. 1000 individuals with intellectual disabilities from 26 states and Canada compete in track and field, swimming and floor hockey.

**'77** **February 1977**  
Steamboat Springs, Colorado, hosts the 1st International Special Olympics Winter Games with more than 500 athletes competing in skiing and skating events. CBS, ABC and NBC television networks cover the Games.

**'86** **September 1986**  
The United Nations launches the International Year of Special Olympics under the banner "Special Olympics—Uniting the World."

**'88** **February 1988**  
The International Olympic Committee signs a historic agreement with Sargent and Eunice Kennedy Shriver, and officially endorses and recognizes Special Olympics.

**'95** **July 1988**  
Special Olympics Unified Sports® is launched at the Special Olympics Conference in Reno, Nevada, and Lake Tahoe, California. Bowling, volleyball and softball are the first sports to be included.

**'98** **July 2003**  
Ireland hosts the first Special Olympics World Summer Games held outside the United States. With 6,500 athletes participating, it is Ireland's largest sporting event of the year, capturing the hearts and imaginations of an entire nation.

**'01** **July 2001**  
The South African cities of Cape Town, Johannesburg and Sun City host Special Olympics African Hope. President Nelson Mandela returns to Robben Island with Special Olympics athletes to light the "Flame of Hope" and kick off the Law Enforcement Torch Run® through the streets of Cape Town. The event generates awareness of Special Olympics throughout the continent and launches a major growth initiative to reach 100,000 new athletes in Africa by 2005. Today, there are more than 234,000 athletes.

**'03** **June 2003**  
Special Olympics releases "The Multinational Study of Attitudes toward Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities," the most comprehensive report on how people across the world view the roles and capabilities of persons with intellectual disabilities in the workplace, classroom and in daily life.

**'05** **March 2009**  
The U.S. National Portrait Gallery unveils a historic portrait of founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver. This is the first portrait the Gallery ever commissioned of an individual who has not served as a U.S. President or First Lady.

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