

Press Release

Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau

CONTACT: Mandi Steward, Special Olympics PR Coordinator, 573.635.1660, steward@somo.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 16, 2011

2011 State Summer Games Leave a Mark

The Special Olympics Missouri State Summer Games will bring more than 1,200 athletes from across the state to Springfield. This state-level event takes place May 25-27, on the Missouri State University and Drury University campuses.

The State Summer Games kick off on Wednesday, May 25, with Opening Ceremonies at Plaster Stadium at 7:30 p.m. Opening Ceremonies will feature the Parade of Athletes, the culmination of the statewide Law Enforcement Torch Run®, the lighting of the Flame of Hope, the traditional declaration, "Let the games begin!" and special beachy performances by the Olde Mann Jamm, a local rock group. The public is encouraged to attend this free and fun event.

Competition events will take place at four venues: Plaster Stadium, Plaster Student Union, the Practice Band Field and Drury University's Breech Pool. Four summer sports are featured: Athletics (track and field), Aquatics, Powerlifting and Bocce. Competition begins Thursday, May 26, at 7:15 am and runs through 1 pm Friday, May 27. Please visit www.somo.org/summergames to make a donation, register to volunteer, and for more information. The public is encouraged to attend all events. We're on a mission to put "fans in the stands" to cheer for our athletes. Venues and times are as follows:

Athletics (Track & Field) – Plaster Sports Complex - Thursday, May 26 – 7:15 am

Bocce – Plaster Sports Complex - Thursday, May 26 – 8 am

Aquatics – Drury University Breech Pool - Thursday, May 26 – 8 am

Powerlifting – Plaster Student Union - Thursday, May 26 – 8:30 am

Athletics – Plaster Sports Complex - Friday, May 27 – 7:15 am

Low Motor / Wheelchair Events – Plaster Sports Complex - Friday, May 27 – 8:15 am

Special Olympics is dedicated to improving the overall health and fitness of our athletes, not only through organized sports training and competition but by also providing free health screenings through the Healthy Athletes program. All of these screenings are provided for SOMO athletes free of charge. The Healthy Athlete Park will be May 26 from 11 am – 3 pm in the Plaster Student Union and will include: Healthy Hearing, Health Promotion, FunFitness, Special Smiles and Opening Eyes – extended hours 9:00am to 3:00pm.

Athletes will spend some down time Thursday afternoon with crafts, small stage performances, games and races.. Thursday evening the athletes will celebrate their victories at the dance and spend time with friends at bingo.

The State Summer Games would not be possible without the generous contributions of our sponsors. Thank you to our year-round partners Knights of Columbus and Shop 'n Save. Our presenting sponsors are CoxHealth, Southwest Dairy Farmers, Springfield News-Leader, KSPR, Clear Channel Radio, Walmart and News-Leader. Our silver level sponsors are The Whitlock Company and Fabick Power Systems. Our bronze level sponsors are the Springfield Sports Commission, the Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau, SRC Holdings, Great Southern Bank and Associated Electric Cooperative Inc.

For more information about the 2011 State Summer Games, please contact Mandi Steward at 573.635.1660 or email steward@somo.org. Visit the Special Olympics Missouri website at www.somo.org.

Special Olympics Missouri is a year-round program of sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. More than 15,600 athletes participate in 21 Olympic-type sports throughout the state. Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to develop fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy as they participate in the sharing of gifts and friendship with other athletes, their families and the community. Visit our website at www.somo.org.

###