



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release:**

**November 10, 2011**

### **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Special Olympics Equestrian Competition**

**Statewide.** On Saturday, November 12, 2011 at 9:00 a.m., Special Olympics Oklahoma will host the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual state-level Equestrian Competition at the Payne County Expo Center in Stillwater, Oklahoma. 120 Special Olympics Oklahoma Athletes, a new record number of athletes, will compete in eight events: Showmanship, Rail Class, Western Riding, Working Trails, Barrel Race, Figure 8 Stake Race, Pole Bending and Unified Relay Race.

Larry Casillas and a crew of volunteers will conduct the competition. Casillas is a past president of the Oklahoma Palomino Exhibitors Association and national youth adviser for the Palomino Horsebreeders of America. He is the event director of the Special Olympics Oklahoma Equestrian program. Others who make this competition possible are Pati Casillas, Assistant Games Director; Dr. Joe Alexander from Oklahoma State University and the on-site Veterinarian for the event; Dr. David Freeman, Oklahoma State University Horseman's Association; and Meriruth Cohenour, competition judge. The announcer for the event is Robert Meyers.

As in any Special Olympics event, there will be an Opening Ceremonies. The Horseman's Association will present the colors and the Special Olympics athletes will recite the Special Olympics Oath, "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

Lunch will be provided by Pat Lewis and the Stillwater Elks Lodge.

Sponsors for the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Special Olympics Oklahoma Equestrian Competition are The Oklahoma Palomino Exhibitor's Association; The Oklahoma Thoroughbred Association; The Oklahoma Quarter Horse Racing Association; The OSU Horsemen's Association; The Thoroughbred Racing Association of Oklahoma; and National Reining Horse Association.

For more information about Special Olympics Oklahoma, visit [www.sook.org](http://www.sook.org) or call 1-800-722-9004.



Garrett Caywood, Special Olympics athlete from McAlester is getting ready to compete for the first time at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Special Olympics Oklahoma Equestrian competition in Stillwater on November 12, 2011. Garrett has been participating in the Young Athletes "Stars of the Future" program for children ages 3 through 7 and now at 8 years old, he is old enough to participate in Special Olympics Oklahoma competitions as an athlete.

**Location and Directions to Payne County Expo Center:**

Payne County Expo Center is located east of Stillwater on Highway 51 (6<sup>th</sup> Street) about 3.5 miles east of Perkins Road on Fairgrounds Road (also called N3370 Road). The Center is on the north side of Highway 51. Take either entrance into the Expo Center and go around to the back until you see the big indoor arena and adjacent stabling area.

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Special Olympics Oklahoma

The Mission of Special Olympics is to provide a year-round program of sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Today 9,500 Special Olympics Oklahoma athletes participate in more than 120 sports competitions and training clinics every year. Competition is offered in 16 official sports. There are thousands of volunteer opportunities available. Visit [www.sook.org](http://www.sook.org) or call 918-481-1234 for more information.