



For Immediate Release
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100 DAYS AND COUNTING UNTIL OKLAHOMA ATHLETES LEAVE FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD SUMMER GAMES ATHENS 2011

*Special Olympics Team USA Athletes, Coaches Head to San Diego, Calif., for Training Camp
March 27-31 as They Prepare For Competition on the World's Stage*

Tulsa, Oklahoma – As Special Olympics athletes around the world prepare for the largest and most inspiring sporting event of 2011, in just 100 days, four Oklahoma athletes will be making the trip to Athens, Greece, for Special Olympics World Summer Games ATHENS 2011. The Oklahoma athletes are Barry Hemphill, Tulsa; James Holder, Jenks; Katy Lew, Tulsa; and Alan Holmes, Poteau. In order to prepare for global competition, the four Oklahoma athletes and the rest of Special Olympics Team USA are heading to San Diego State University and nearby venues for a training camp March 27-31.

Barry Hemphill

Athlete • Tulsa, Oklahoma • Bowling

Barry Hemphill will compete in bowling at the 2011 World Games in Greece. He has participated in Special Olympics for 17 years, competing in athletics, basketball and bowling. Barry is employed at Pizza Hut where he works as a cook and server. He is proud of being a high school graduate, becoming a true athlete, and developing better social skills.

"World Games mean EVERYTHING to me! It will be the highlight of my life so far. I can't wait to meet people from other countries," said Hemphill. Special Olympics has given Hemphill the chance to travel and make many new friends.

James Holder

Athlete • Jenks, Oklahoma • Athletics/Track & Field

James Holder will compete in athletics at the 2011 World Games in Greece. He has participated in Special Olympics for 7 years, competing in athletics, bocce, bowling and softball. Holder is employed at St. John's Hospital as a nurse assistant.

He is proud of participating in the Tulsa Run, the St. Patrick's 5K Run, the Route 66 1/4 marathon, winning first place in his age group in the Jenks 5K run, participating in

Project Search with St. John's Hospital, receiving the Spirit Award for Jenks Varsity Track team and completing the Certified Nurse Assistant course.

Being involved with Special Olympics has helped Holder to meet many new friends, try new sports and gain self-confidence. "Being selected for World Games makes me feel important to be chosen, and I want to do my best for Team USA and my teammates!" said Holder.

Katy Lew

Athlete • Tulsa, Oklahoma • Bocce

Katy Lew will compete in bocce at the 2011 World Games in Greece. She has participated in Special Olympics for 11 years, competing in athletics, bocce, bowling, snowshoeing and softball. Katy is employed at St. Francis Hospital as a housekeeper in surgery.

She is proud of being a Special Olympics Global Messenger, receiving sports awards, being a community volunteer and a church volunteer, and receiving awards at her work for her positive attitude.

"The games mean the world to me! I'm excited to be part of Team USA and to represent our great country. As a Global Messenger, I'll tell all about it!" said Katy.

Alan Holmes

Athlete • Poteau, Oklahoma • Bocce

Alan Holmes will compete in bocce at the 2011 World Games in Greece. He has participated in Special Olympics for 14 years, competing in athletics, bocce, basketball, bowling and softball.

Holmes is proud of winning the first ever QB Club award that was given to him by the Quarterback Club for his hard work, determination and spirit while he was a member of the football team at Poteau High School. He is also proud of being named Athlete of the Year in his area for Special Olympics in 2009.

"It's an honor to compete for Team USA in Athens. I love the USA! I'm excited to meet people from other states and countries," said Holmes.

Oklahoma delegates and coaches representing Special Olympics Team USA are:

Adrian DeWendt

Management Team • Tulsa

Adrian DeWendt has been involved with Special Olympics for 30 years and currently is Executive Director of Special Olympics Oklahoma. He was a Management Team member for the 1999, 2001, 2003 and 2007 World Games.

“Our organization continues to grow in numbers in every category including revenue, annual budget, number of athletes, family members, volunteers, events, sponsors and special events,” said DeWendt.

Meg Corn

Assistant Sport Manager • Oklahoma City • Aquatics (swimming)

Meg Corn will be assistant sport manager for aquatics at the 2011 World Summer Games. She has been involved in Special Olympics for 33 years and has taught Special Education for 27 years. She attended the 1995, 1999 and 2003 World Games as head aquatics coach, and the 2007 World Games as an aquatics coach. She also coaches athletics and powerlifting and has coached high school cheer for 24 years.

Meg is most proud of being named National Coach of the Year by the National Coaches Association.

"My life has been enriched by all the experiences I have been given by being involved with Special Olympics," said Corn. "No matter what one has to overcome, life is always worth reaching for the best you can do."

Teri Hockett

Sport Manager • Tulsa • Athletics/Track & Field

Teri Hockett will begin her 22nd year with Special Olympics in November of 2010. She will be a sport manager for athletics at the 2011 World Summer Games. Hockett's previous World and National Games experience includes 1991 Minneapolis, head of delegation; 1995 Connecticut athletics head coach; 1999 North Carolina, head of delegation; 2001 Alaska, head alpine coach; 2003 Ireland, head of delegation for SC Region; 2006 Iowa National Games, assistant head of delegation; and 2010 Nebraska, assistant head of delegation.

Hockett is the program director for Special Olympics Oklahoma. She leads sports training for nearly all sports, and she is currently the volleyball sport director for Oklahoma.

For Hockett, working for Special Olympics was a goal from the age of 12, when she attended the first-ever Special Olympics event in Oklahoma in 1969. "It's an honor to go to work every day knowing that I can make a positive difference in the lives of the amazing Special Olympics athletes," Hockett said.

Janelle Whitt

Management Team • Tulsa

Janelle has been involved in Special Olympics for 11 years and currently works for Oklahoma University-Tulsa Physicians-Community Health. This will be her first World Games experience.

She is proud of the work she does on a daily basis, especially those underserved/underinsured patients. "I am especially proud of recent acknowledgement by local and national entities for my work," Whitt says.

“Special Olympics reminds me to be grateful and to try and do things with a happy heart as the athletes have been dealt a much more difficult lot and always have a smile on their faces,” Whitt said.

For Special Olympics Team USA, consisting of 317 athletes and 126 coaches, including management team members, this training camp is the first time many of the Special Olympics athletes will unite with their Special Olympics World Summer Games coach and other athletes from all over the nation who will be joining them on their trip to Athens. The camp will offer a variety of coaches meetings and sport-specific training for athletes in athletics, aquatics, basketball, bocce, bowling, bicycling, equestrian, golf, gymnastics, kayaking, powerlifting, sailing, soccer, softball, tennis and volleyball.

Special Olympics athletes and coaches will participate in a variety of unifying and team-building activities during their time in San Diego. Featured events for the camp include an Opening Ceremony featuring Olympic decathlete and founder of Special Olympics Southern California Rafer Johnson and Closing Ceremony/Greek Night featuring Olympic softball player Amanda Freed. Also during camp, athletes from Special Olympics Team USA will be fitted for their uniforms and have sport-specific photos taken.

Special thanks go to Champion, the official performance apparel supplier of Special Olympics Team USA. Other sponsors are P&G, the American Federation of Teachers and MTM Recognition. Loudmouth is a product supplier of Special Olympics Team USA’s golf team.

This is the 13th Special Olympics World Summer Games, uniting **7,000 Special Olympics athletes from 180** nations to compete in **22** Olympic-type sports June 25-July 4. The 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games will be the milestone event of a long-lasting movement, founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, to create a world that is not dominated by those who are excluded but by those who are included. In Athens, the birthplace of modern sport, where the true values of competition were born, the talents and skills of Special Olympics athletes will remind us what the World Games are really about, where all participants are winners in their struggle for respect, inclusion and unity.

Every two years, thousands of Special Olympics athletes worldwide come together to showcase their athletic skills and celebrate the spirit of Special Olympics. Alternating between Summer Games and Winter Games, Special Olympics World Games bring public attention to the talents and capabilities of people with intellectual disabilities, helping to change attitudes and break down barriers that excluded them from the mainstream of the community.

For more information on Special Olympics Team USA, visit <http://www.specialolympicsteamusa.org> or find additional information at the Special Olympics World Summer Games official website: <http://www.athens2011.org/en/index.asp>.

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For more information on your local athlete heading to San Diego, Calif., contact Teri Hockett, 918-418-1234 or teri@sook.org.