



SPECIAL OLYMPICS
WORLD WINTER GAMES
AUSTRIA 2017
Graz | Schladming | Ramsau | Styria

Heartbeat for the world



Media Communiqué 7

March 16th

Second Lady Karen Pence to Lead Presidential Delegation to the Special Olympics World Winter Games

On Friday, March 17, 2017, Second Lady Karen Pence will lead a Presidential Delegation to the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Graz, Schladming, and Ramsau, Austria. Mrs. Pence and the Presidential Delegation will join approximately 2,700 Special Olympics athletes from 107 nations and their family members, along with thousands of coaches, volunteers, and sports fans. The athletes will ski, skate, snowboard, snowshoe, and engage in other winter sports with the goal of taking home a medal. In 1993, Austria hosted the first Special Olympics World Winter Games ever held outside the United States.

The Presidential Delegation will participate in several events, including the Snowboarding Division Competition and Special Olympics Opening Ceremony on Saturday, March 18. The Presidential Delegation will return to the United States on Sunday, March 19.

The Presidential Delegation will include:

- Mr. Eugene Young, United States Charge d'Affaires a.i. to Austria
- The Honorable Charles Glazer, Special Advisor to Transition, U.S. Department of State
- The Honorable Katherine Henderson, Special Assistant to the President for Presidential Personnel
- Mrs. Crissy Haslam, First Lady of Tennessee
- Ms. Loretta Claiborne, Chief Inspiration Officer, Vice Chair of the Special Olympics International Board of Directors and Special Olympics Athlete

Special Olympics and AIPS Offer Young Reporters Program for the First Time

Thanks to the support of the European Union, the International Sports Press Association (AIPS) and Special Olympics are collaborating on a Young Reporters Program where 14 young European journalists have been given the opportunity to cover the Special Olympics World Winter Games.

The journalists, aged 18-26, will be joined by seasoned AIPS mentors, who will provide daily training on the coverage of an international, multi-sport event within the spheres of writing, interviewing, photography, video and social media. AIPS has been a Global Impact Partner for Special Olympics for the last three years, bringing awareness to the organization and its focus on inclusion in sports and health. To read more about the Program at the Games and meet the young reporters participating, click here:

<http://www.aipsmedia.com/index.php?page=news&cod=20491>



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Where to find 2017 World Games Video

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS:

Every day during the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games, ESPN will create a 5-minute video news release (VNR) featuring highlights from the day's competitions. Up to two minutes of this footage may be used, free of charge, by broadcasters worldwide.

This footage will be available for download at approximately 7 p.m. ET/12:00 a.m. CET each night starting Saturday, March 18, through Friday, March 24, via this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xlx02a6qxg9d4gx/AABMSvftawdfZljr2W319s2Ra?dl=0>

NOTE: A shot log will accompany each day's VNRs.

OPENING CEREMONY PARADE OF ATHLETES

After the conclusion of Opening Ceremony on March 18, ESPN producers will make available clips of each delegation that took part in the Parade of Athletes. These video clips will be available -- starting at approx. 4 p.m. ET/9 p.m. CET -- via this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/v86c787s1qeor67/AAANEMqMfBTyUYqiF2X8faqma?dl=0>

FOR ALL OTHER VIDEO, CHECK OUT OUR YOUTUBE CHANNELS:

AUSTRIA 2017 World Games:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCINUn5XSkiATCsKj0ejZMUg>

Special Olympics:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIHbm7j-AXsVBNxBfN81bFtm20ldf_67

GOT VIDEOS ?!

If you have World Games videos or video clips that you would like to share to increase awareness about Special Olympics and our athletes, please use this link to upload footage:

<https://www.hightail.com/u/SpecialOlympics-KMcKenna>

Questions? Contact kmckenna@specialolympics.org

Where to find 2017 World Games photos

Austria GOC photos are posted to Flickr here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sowwg2017/albums>

Austria GOC photos from Host Towns are posted to Flickr here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/hosttownprogramm>



SOI photos are posted to Flickr here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/soi-photo-stream/albums>

LETR/Final Leg photos are posted here:

<http://letrphotos.smugmug.com/>

Figure skaters start competition on Friday

Today, athletes participating in all sports except Stick Shooting started their training in Graz, Schladming and Ramsau. Tomorrow, competitions begin with divisionings, inspections and assessments. The figure skaters start with their competition in the Ice Stadium Graz (1:30 p.m., Level 1, Compulsory).

Click below for links to the nine sports (Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, Nordic Skiing, Snowshoeing, Speed Skating, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Floorball, Stick Shooting) and the demonstration sports Dancing and MATP:

<http://www.austria2017.org/de/games-2017/die-spiele/sportarten>

Divisioning – background and how it works

Special Olympics sports competitions are based on the idea that athletes of all abilities should be given an equal chance of succeeding, whether their goal is a new personal best or a gold medal.

This competition-level matching is called “divisioning.” It’s a fundamental rule at Special Olympics that athletes in competitions are matched up with others of the same gender, about the same age, and most importantly, of about the same competitive ability.

Evening out by skill level and matching for age and gender makes Special Olympics events more exciting and meaningful for the athletes and the fans watching.

Divisioning is a two-step process. Before each competition, a time, score or skill assessment is submitted for each athlete or team. For judged or other events that are not timed or measured -- such as Floor Hockey or Floorball - there is a series of short games between athletes or teams. There can also be an assessment of each athlete or team’s ability by a committee.

The divisions are then set up based on the information on each athlete’s skill level so that each set of competitors is closely matched.

Check out this short video that explains Divisioning:

<http://www.specialolympics.org/divisioning/>



Photo session with President Alexander van der Bellen

Austria's Federal President, who will open the SOWWG 2017 in the evening, will attend some of the competitions as well. While in the Stadium Ramsau watching the cross-country skiers, there will be a **photo session on Saturday, March 18th at 12:30 p. m.**

Special Olympics Global Youth Leadership Summit: Social Impact for a Unified Generation: Leadership and Project Management

You are invited to attend the Special Olympics Global Youth Leadership Summit! Young people will develop leadership skills that empower them as leaders in the Special Olympics Movement and drivers of inclusion throughout the world. The 2017 Youth Leadership Summit will welcome 44 youth participants, most of whom are coming as Unified Pairs of youth with and without intellectual disability.. All 7 Special Olympics regions will be represented and participants are coming from 18 countries and 7 US states. The Summit will include sessions on inclusive leadership skills, helping the youth to identify their own leadership style, and how to work with and influence others. All participants applied with project proposals of how they want to expand or promote Special Olympics programming and make an impact for social inclusion in their home school or community. At the conclusion of the Summit, each project will be given a small grant from Special Olympics to fund implementation of the project, under the guidance of the Mentor and local Special Olympics Program. **The Unified Pairs are from Philippines, Bharat, Pakistan, Indonesia, Italy, Great Britain, Peru, Mauritius, Swaziland, Egypt, Oman, Macau, China, Vermont, Colorado, Kansas, New York, Minnesota, Utah and Kentucky.** We invite you to attend and interview the youth and learn about their projects! Best time to catch them in action is on **Monday, March 20th** at the Messe, Room 1A in Graz at these times:

9-10:00 a.m – Panel representatives from **Microsoft, SourceAmerica and Ray Lane** will discuss what leadership means to them

2:30 – 3:00 p.m. – **Special Olympics Chairman Timothy Shriver** will discuss the art of storytelling and provide tips for being a better storyteller.

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.– Youth will work on their projects

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.- Cultural Night



Special Olympics Unified Talks Presented by Bank of America

These Unified Talks are a game-changing opportunity for media to see a series of meaningful, thought provoking, and action-oriented conversations with a mission to generate solutions on how we as a global society can come together to create a more inclusive world. This four-part series will feature moderated discussions and presentations with athletes, youth leaders, business leaders, celebrities, and academic experts on one stage.

See below for a full schedule of the talks:

Unified Talk #1: Unified Generations: An Inclusive Call to Action

Saturday, March 18th: 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Schladming Congress in the Rohrmoos Room

The Forum will call on the audience to amplify their voices and state how we as a unified society can build an inclusive world through sport, education, government, media, and technology.

Featuring members of the Global Youth Leadership Summit and moderated by Michelle Kwan (Olympic Figure Skating Champion and Special Olympics Board Member) and **Brightfield Shadi** (Special Olympics International Global Messenger from Botswana).

Unified Talk #2: Sport: A Foundation for Workplace Inclusion

Monday, March 20th: 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. at the Sporthotel Royer, Stoder-Grimming Room in Schladming

Sport and employment provide a voice and pathways to a more inclusive society for people with intellectual disabilities (ID). Join an action forward discussion with top corporations and individuals who are changing the game of inclusion and diversity in the workplace. The impactful discussion will highlight how sport better prepares athletes to break down barriers and make meaningful contributions in the workplace and their communities. **Featuring Wilfried Kainz (Head of Research on Innovative Practices, Essl Foundation), Kelly Fredrickson (Senior Vice President, Bank of America), John Kelly (Vice President, Government Affairs & Public Policy, SourceAmerica) and Ian Harper (Athlete Leader, Special Olympics Great Britain). Moderated by Chris Hull (Special Olympics Great Britain Communications Advisor) and Brightfield Shadi (Special Olympics International Global Messenger from Botswana).**

Unified Talk #3: Be Your Best: Maximizing Athlete Health and Performance

Monday, March 20th: 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Messe Graz, Festival Stage in Graz

Special Olympics Health programs are supporting athletes to be fit and healthy and perform their best on and off the field through health education, fitness programs and opportunities for health checkups and treatment. In this high-energy conversation, learn tips from Special Olympics' all-





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star community on how to be your best in sport and life. **Featuring Jillian Michaels (Celebrity Fitness Expert, Nutritionist & Life Coach), Louis van Amstel (Champion Ballroom Dancer, Choreographer and Fitness Expert), Lize Weerdenburg (Special Olympics International Global Messenger from Netherlands), Dr. Matthew Holder (Special Olympics Global Medical Advisor), and more. Moderated by Kirsten Seckler (Special Olympics Chief of Marketing and Communications) and Jason Gieschen (Special Olympics International Global Messenger from the USA).**

Unified Talk #4: The Next Generation of Game Changers

Tuesday, March 21st: 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. at the Messe Graz, Festival Stage in Graz

Join Global Youth Leadership Summit participants, Austrian students, and games attendees for fun and thought provoking presentations that exchange ideas on what WE as entrepreneurs and change agents can do to create a more inclusive global society. Speakers for this interactive talk will provide first-hand stories of entrepreneurial success. Straight from the source, these game changers will inspire the audience to in turn take action to change the game. **A prominent Austrian celebrity or high level official will be featured in this talk to engage local Austrian students in attendance. Featuring Meredith Foster (YouTube star), Members of the Global Youth Leadership Summit, and moderated by Apolo Ohno (Olympic Speed Skating Champion and Special Olympics Global Ambassador) and Parth Agrawal (Special Olympics Youth Leader from Bharat (India)).**

Opening Ceremony Highlights! Saturday, March 18th

Start 7:00 p.m., sequence of programs:

- Skishow
- Musical performances by Helene Fischer, Jason Mraz and Grace VanderWaal
- Tribute to Hermann Kröll
- Special Olympics Chairman Timothy Shriver addresses the crowd
- Arrival of the Torch
- Parade of Athletes

Important notes:

- Filming is not allowed during the Opening Ceremony
- Only photographers with valid tickets (handed out at accreditation) are allowed to be in the Media Stand
- All other media representatives are asked to use the Snow Stand (restricted view); entrance with SOWWG 2017-credentials, see Communiqué 2
- Clips of each delegation that takes part in the Parade of Athletes will be available starting at approx. 4 p.m. ET/9 p.m. CET via this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/v86c787s1qeor67/AAANEMgMfBTyUYqiF2X8faqma?dl=0>



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(see first point of this Communiqué)

□ International broadcaster ESPN, host broadcaster ORF, SOI, GOC, GEPA photographers and international rights holders will be wearing green bibs and will have access on the ground.

„Flame of Hope“ two more days on the road

The Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) started on March 9th in Bregenz, after the Flame of Hope arrived from Greece into Austria. The Final Leg Team carrying the Flame of Hope, embarked on two different routes, running the „Flame of Hope“ throughout 50 cities, towns and communities across Austria.

Today, March 16th, it arrived in Klagenfurt/Carinthia, tomorrow, on Friday, it will arrive in Graz at 10:00 a.m. in the Town Square. On Saturday, March 18th, the Torch Run Final Leg Ceremony will kick off in Ramsau at 8:30 a.m. and in Schladming at 10:30 a.m.

To know where it could be seen during the last eight days click to:

<http://www.austria2017.org/en/sei-dabei/torch-run>

Photos of LETR:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sowwg2017/albums/with/72157679067564401>

Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/letr.org/?ref=bookmarks>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LETRforSO>

Photos of the Final Leg can be found on

<http://letrphotos.smugmug.com/2017-Austria/n-z8JrXq>

Weather forecast for Friday, March 17th

Graz: bright all day with temperatures between 3 and 19 degrees centigrade

Schladming: bright in the morning and afternoon, temperatures between 1 and 11 degrees centigrade, in the evening high rain probability

Ramsau: bright in the morning and afternoon, temperatures between -1 and 8 degrees centigrade, in the evening high rain probability



Female Empowerment at the Games! Youngest athlete is eight, oldest 68 years old, more female athletes than ever before at World Winter Games

The Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria 2017 has the MOST female athletes participating EVER for a World Winter Games, with a total of 806 females participating, vs. The 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games which had 630 athletes. Alina Gismatullina, a figure skater from Uzbekistan, is the youngest athlete participating in the Games, not even eight and a half years old. The oldest athlete competing at Games is 68-year old Special Olympics Austria athlete Eugenie Ruhalter, competing in Stick Shooting.

Let's Change the Game: Ending Exclusion for People with Intellectual Disabilities Featuring the Golisano Health Leadership Awards

On Sunday, March 19th from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Rohrmoos Room, Congress Hall, in Schladming, key influencers will gather to celebrate successes, share challenges and make commitments to inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities (ID) through sport and health.

Additionally, seven will be honored for their global health work with the first-ever Golisano Global Health Leadership Awards! Interview opportunities will be possible with the Golisano Global Health Leadership Award Honorees, the Golisano Foundation Executive Editor, Ann Costello and Special Olympics leadership. You are invited to attend this event! Attendance is booking up fast. If you are interested in attending, please send your RSVP by Friday March 17th to media@specialolympics.org

Graz: Conference of ministers on the occasion of SOWWG

On the occasion of SOWWG 2017 on Friday, March 17th and Saturday, March 18th a conference about „Inclusion“ will be held in Graz. Ministers from 28 countries, invited by Hans Peter Doskozil, Austrian Minister of Defense and Sports and Alois Stöger, Austrian Minister of Social Affairs will participate.

On Saturday the ministers will attend some of the competitions in Messe Graz. If you want to join the group walk please be at Coca-Cola lounge, ground floor of Stadthalle Graz at 09.30 a.m. No registration necessary, just bring your accreditation along.

We want to inform you that this will be the only chance to talk to the ministers during their stay in Graz. A list of ministers participating has been communicated in a previous communiqué.



Important addresses

- Homepage: www.austria2017.org (Special Olympics World Winter Games 2017)
www.specialolympics.at (Special Olympics Austria)
www.specialolympics.org (Special Olympics International)
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/austria2017
www.facebook.com/specialolympics (Special Olympics International)
www.facebook.com/soeuropeeurasia (Special Olympics Europe)
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/sowwg2017 & www.twitter.com/2017austria
www.twitter.com/specialolympics (Special Olympics International)
www.twitter.com/SpecOlympicsEU (Special Olympics Europe)
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/austria2017
www.instagram.com/specialolympics (Special Olympics International)
www.instagram.com/special_olympics_eu (Special Olympics Europe)
- Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/sowwg2017/ & www.flickr.com/photos/hosttownprogramm
www.flickr.com/photos/soi-photo-stream/albums (Special Olympics International)
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/SpecialOlympicsWorldWinterGames2017
www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIHbm7j-AXsVBNxBfN81bFtm20Idf_67 (SOI)

Important hashtags

- #HeartbeatForTheWorld
- #Austria2017
- #SpecialOlympics
- #ChangeTheGame
- #PlayUnified

Calendar

March, 16th Delegation arrivals in Graz, Schladming and Ramsau am Dachstein



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- Ankunft der Delegationen in Graz, Schladming und Ramsau am Dachstein
- March, 17th First day of Divisioning
Erste sportliche Bewerbe (Divisionings = Einteilungen in Leistungsstufen)
- March 17th Torch Run Arrival in Graz (10:00 Uhr)
Ankunft der „Flamme der Hoffnung“ auf dem Grazer Hauptplatz
- March 18th Torch Run Final Leg Ceremony: Ramsau (08:30 Uhr), Schladming (10:30 Uhr)
Fackellauf, Ankunftsfeier
- March 18th Global Forum on Inclusion in Social Affairs and Sport in Graz (9:30 – 1:00 pm)
Welt-Inklusionsforum in Graz (09:30 Uhr)
- March 18th Unified Talk: Unified Generations – An Inclusive Call to Action (1:30 – 3:30 pm) in
Congress Schladming in Rohrmoos Hall (2nd Floor)
- March 18th Opening Ceremony Press Conference (3:00 – 3:30 pm), congress Schladming,
Media Center (2nd Floor)
Eröffnungspressekonferenz (15:00 – 15:30 Uhr), congress Schladming, Media
Center (2. Stock)
- March, 18th Opening Ceremony in Schladming, Planai Stadium (7:00 p.m.)
Eröffnungsfeier Schladming, Planaistadion (19:00 Uhr)
- March, 18th – 24th Sports competitions, Award Ceremonies and Non-Sports Events
Sportwettkämpfe, Siegerehrungen und Rahmenprogramm
- March 19th Healthy Athletes Screenings begin at Messe Graz (12:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)
Beginn der Untersuchungen der Athleten im Rahmen des „Healthy Athletes
Program“, Messe Graz (12:00 – 19:00 Uhr)
- March 19th Let’s Change the Game Forum – Exclusion for People with Intellectual Disabilities
Featuring the Golisano Health Leadership Awards (10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.) in
congress, Schladming, Rohrmoos Room
- March 19th First Awards of the Games, Alpine Skiing, Giant Slalom, (Ramsau, 5:00 p.m.)
Erste Siegerehrungen, Ski Alpin, Riesentorlauf (Ramsau, 17:00 Uhr)
- March 20th Healthy Athletes Ribbon Cutting at Messe Graz (11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)
- March, 24th Closing Ceremony in Graz (7:00 p.m.)
Schlussfeier in Graz (19:00 Uhr)
- March, 25th Delegation departures
Abreise der Delegationen

