



Press Release

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Local Law Enforcement Officer Selected to Carry the Flame of Hope as part of the 2022 Special Olympics World Games

Flame serves as beacon of inspiration to thousands during a Final Leg run to Kazan, Russia.



Photograph of Officer Steven McGhee alongside his niece, brother who is a Special Olympic Athlete, and sister who is also a police officer. A family united in support of the Law Enforcement Torch Run®.

Town of Paradise Valley, Arizona, April 5th, 2021 – Special Olympics Arizona is proud to announce that Officer Steven McGhee of the Town of Paradise Valley, Arizona has been selected to serve as part of the Final Leg team, serving as a Guardian of the Flame® as he runs with the Flame of Hope throughout Russia in January 2022 leading up to the start of the 2022 Special Olympics World Games in Kazan.

The Final Leg team will embark on different routes, running the Flame of Hope throughout cities and communities across Russia at various events, honoring the spirit of the Special Olympics global

movement and delivering a message of hope to communities where people with intellectual disabilities continue to fight for acceptance and inclusion. The Final Leg Team will safely deliver the Flame of Hope to the 2022 Special Olympics World Games Kazan Opening Ceremony on January 22, 2022.

“This is for the Athletes without a voice who want this moment to last all year long but need your help. My brother could never ask alone because of how difficult it is to convey how important Special



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Olympics is to him and his friends. It transforms their lives by teaching them social skills for employment, provides physical education, health screenings, and sporting activities that connect them closer with their families. I do this to keep these opportunities available for other families across Arizona and the Athletes too afraid to ask for your support” said Officer Steven McGhee who has family members that have been Athletes with Special Olympics.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® Final Leg for the 2022 World Games will take place from 9 January – 22 January 2022. A team of 120 team members which includes 96 law enforcement officer runners, 10 Special Olympics athletes, and logistics personnel – will serve as Guardians of the Flame as they run the Flame of Hope throughout Russia.

The Final Leg event and community visits will raise excitement for the World Games throughout the country.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics (LETR) is Special Olympics’ largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle in the world. Nearly 110,000 law enforcement members in all 50 U.S. States, 12 Canadian provinces/territories, and 44 countries contribute to LETR efforts annually as Guardians of the Flame®, ensuring the delivery of the Special Olympics Flame of Hope to the Opening Ceremony of local Special Olympics competitions, state/provincial Games, and national/regional Games.

Officer Steven McGhee aims to represent Arizona with distinguished honors as the highest fundraising individual for the 2022 World Games during his Blue Lake Leap on January 22, 2022 in Kazan, Russia. For each donation received in the amount of \$20, supporters will receive an entry into a community raffle for grand prizes. Sponsors, speaking engagements, and fundraising partner opportunities are requested.

Special Olympics is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 charity. About 95% of donations received support programs and services for the Athletes. To consider a donation and support Officer Steven McGhee’s Final Leg, please email him at smcghee@paradisevalleyaz.gov, visit his fundraising page for the 2022 World Games at www.paradisevalleyaz.gov/WorldGames or text LEAP79 to 71777. Message and data rates may apply.



Photograph of local Athlete walking a red carpet to enter a community carnival celebration to benefit Special Olympics.



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About Special Olympics

Founded in 1968, Special Olympics is a global movement to end discrimination against people with intellectual disabilities. We foster acceptance of all people through the power of sport and programming in education, health, and leadership. With more than six million athletes and Unified Sports partners in over 190 countries and territories and more than one million coaches and volunteers, Special Olympics delivers more than 30 Olympic-type sports and over 100,000 games and competitions every year. Engage with us on: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn and our blog on Medium. Learn more at www.SpecialOlympics.org.

About the 2022 Kazan Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg

The Final Leg tradition is for law enforcement officers, representing their country, state and Torch Run Program, to act as Guardians of the Flame and carry the Special Olympics Torch and the Flame of Hope to the Opening Ceremony of the Special Olympics World Games. This Torch Run event is called the Final Leg because it represents the culmination of Torch Run events that have occurred previously throughout the world. The Torch Run Final Leg is not only a salute to the athletes from around the world who will compete in the Special Olympics World Games, but also an honor for the participating law enforcement officers who comprise the Torch Run Final Leg Team. The Special Olympics Flame of Hope, in the entrusted care of the law enforcement community, symbolizes the courage and celebration of diversity that the Special Olympics movement represents. The 2022 Final Leg will precede the Special Olympics World Games held in Kazan, Russia.

The mission of the Final Leg is to create awareness and excitement for Special Olympics, support and attendance of the World Games, and involve, inspire and motivate runners to increase their level of commitment to Special Olympics when they return home. The Final Leg Team (120 members strong) is comprised of law enforcement runners, Special Olympics athletes, and Logistics Team members from 46 states and 25 countries around the world representing 44 Torch Run programs. Final Leg runners were chosen for their dedication and commitment to the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics by their respective Torch Run Programs throughout the world. For more information on the Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg for the 2022 World Games, please contact Final Leg Committee Chairman and Team Captain, John Newnan at final.leg@gmail.com

About the Special Olympics World Games Kazan, Russia 2022

The Special Olympics World Winter Games are among the world's most prestigious sporting events and are focused on advancing a truly inclusive world for people with intellectual disabilities. The World Games also provide a prominent platform for the movement's work in health, education, and leadership for athletes. For more information: <https://sokazan2022.com>



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About the Host

Kazan is Russia's capital of sports, a city with a thousand-year history, one of the country's largest economic, scientific, and cultural centres, a melting pot of diverse cultures, ethnicities and traditions, and an exciting new destination for Special Olympics.

The Special Olympics World Winter Games 2022 will mark the first time the organization has brought a global competition to Russia. No stranger to major sports events, Kazan has played host an array of top sports competitions, including the 2013 Summer Universiade, 2015 FINA World Championships and the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

About Special Olympics Russia

Special Olympics Russia has been active for more than two decades and has 128,293 athletes taking part in sport and competition across the country. It covers 62 regions and is strongly supported by the Ministry of Sport of Russia.

Its mission is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with an intellectual disability, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

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