

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT:** Kristin Craven, 610-630-9450 ext. 252, [kcraven@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:kcraven@specialolympicspa.org)**SPECIAL OLYMPICS PA AND THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA TO PARTNER FOR  
4TH ANNUAL UNIFIED SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP***9 Philadelphia High Schools gather to celebrate inclusion through sports*

**(Philadelphia, PA, May 24, 2016)** – On Tuesday, June 7th, Special Olympics Pennsylvania’s Philadelphia Program (SOPA Philly) will continue its strong partnership with the School District of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools to present the fourth annual Unified Soccer Championship held at Abraham Lincoln High School, located at 3201 Ryan Avenue in Philadelphia. Opening Ceremonies for the Unified Soccer Championship will kick-off at 10:00am with event emcee and 93.3 WMMR DJ Matt Cord, followed by the Championship game at approximately 12:30pm.

The Championship matches will feature teams from 9 Philadelphia high schools from across the city including: Abraham Lincoln, Universal Audenried Charter, Frankford, Furness, George Washington, High School of the Future, Martin Luther King, Sayre, and Thomas Edison. Approximately 100 athletes will culminate months of preparation for these Unified Games and display the “best of the best” during this year’s competition. An Olympics Town will provide fun and entertainment for all guests with activities by Dave and Busters, Philadelphia Union, and Sambulance. In addition, students from four middle and elementary schools will be in attendance to cheer on the inspiring sportsmanship of the athletes in action. Those schools include: Clara Barton Elementary School, Solis-Cohen Elementary School, Tilden Middle School, and Universal Daroff Elementary School.

Special Olympics Unified Sports® is an inclusive sports program that puts athletes with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. This Unified Soccer elective course, developed in partnership between the School District of Philadelphia and Special Olympics Pennsylvania, includes curriculum with youth leadership components, anti-bullying elements and soccer training and competition. The course provides greater access to sports for all students, with and without disabilities. Additionally, a partnership with the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) helps to provide officials for Unified events.

Spectators are welcome to cheer-on the athletes and partners as they compete for the championship trophy. There is no charge to attend Special Olympics PA competitions for athletes, volunteers or spectators.

***About Special Olympics Pennsylvania***

Special Olympics Pennsylvania provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to nearly 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For more information about how you can help “Reveal the Champion Inside” thousands of Special Olympics athletes, visit [www.specialolympicspa.org](http://www.specialolympicspa.org).

***About IUS/Project Unify***

Special Olympics Pennsylvania Interscholastic Unified Sports (IUS) is a fully-inclusive co-ed high school sports program which successfully facilitates social inclusion by bringing together a proportional number of students with and without intellectual disabilities on teams for training and competition.

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