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**Special Olympics**

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## Special Olympics Ranked Number One For People With Disabilities By Philanthropedia

Washington, D.C. – 25 August 2011 – Special Olympics has [earned the number one spot](#) on a newly released national list of high-impact non-profit organizations serving people with disabilities. [Philanthropedia](#), a subsidiary of industry non-profit data leader [Guidestar](#), evaluates nonprofit effectiveness by surveying industry experts to identify high-impact non-profits.

Ranked first of 11 leading non-profit organizations serving people with disabilities, Special Olympics was awarded this top distinction by a Philanthropedia group of 79 experts, including foundation professionals, nonprofit senior staff, academics, and researchers. These experts, with an average of 20 years of work experience in the field, recommended organizations based on their impact in the field of disability and included organizations that support people with intellectual, physical and mental disabilities. Experts [evaluated](#) organizations' strengths in leadership and organizational reach, which resulted in Special Olympics' ranking as the organization with the greatest impact on the intellectual disability community.

“On behalf of our entire Special Olympics movement worldwide, we are honored to be given this prestigious ranking from Philanthropedia,” said **Dr. Timothy P. Shriver, Chairman and CEO of Special Olympics**. “This recognition reflects the hard work of all our athletes, coaches, volunteers and leadership to show the world the power of sport to create acceptance and inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities.”

Accordingly to Philanthropedia, approximately 54 million individuals (20% of U.S. population) in the United States live with at least one disability. Special Olympics works to impact communities within the United States and around the world, as an estimated 200 million people worldwide have intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics strives to build communities of acceptance by challenging society to change its perceptions of the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities and is one of the world's most powerful social movements:

- Nearly four million athletes
- Nearly 50,000 competitions around the world each year
- More than 136 competitions hosted each day
- More than one million coaches and volunteers
- 32 Olympic-type summer and winter sports
- Special Olympics Accredited Programs in more than 170 countries
- Seven Regional Offices: China, Egypt, Ireland, Panama, Singapore, South Africa and the United States

### About Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives through the power of sport by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown from a few hundred athletes to more than 3.7 million athletes in over 170 countries in all regions of the world, providing year-round sports training, athletic competition and other related programs. Special Olympics now takes place every day, changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities all over the world and in the community playgrounds and ball fields in every small neighborhood's backyard. Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy and friendship. Visit Special Olympics at [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org). Engage with us on: [Twitter @specialolympics](#); [fb.com/specialolympics](https://fb.com/specialolympics); [youtube.com/specialolympicshq](https://youtube.com/specialolympicshq), and [specialolympicsblog.wordpress.com](http://specialolympicsblog.wordpress.com).