

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Special Olympics Wyoming Mourns the Loss of Eunice Kennedy Shriver**

**CASPER, WY** - Eunice Kennedy Shriver died early yesterday morning at Cape Cod Hospital in Hyannis, Massachusetts, surrounded by her family. She was 88 years old.

The younger sister of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Shriver was the founder and honorary chairperson of Special Olympics, and executive vice president of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation. She has been a leader in the worldwide movement to improve and to enhance the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities for more than six decades. Born in Brookline, Massachusetts on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1921, she was the fifth of nine children of Joseph P. and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Stanford University along with numerous other honors and awards. In 2006, Pope Benedict XVI bestowed upon her the title of Dame of the papal Order of St. Gregory the Great.

Priscilla Dowse, CEO of Special Olympics Wyoming and Susan Thomas, widow of the late Senator Craig Thomas and founder of the Craig and Susan Thomas foundation joined in offering the condolences to the Shriver Family while celebrating the remarkable achievements of the Special Olympics movement. "Special Olympics was near and dear to Craig's heart not only for the impact it had on his oldest son but for the many athletes with intellectual disabilities in Wyoming whose lives were positively impacted" said Thomas.

"Mrs. Shriver was truly a remarkable woman and I am deeply honored to be a part of the movement she dedicated her life and passion to," said Special Olympics President and CEO Priscilla Dowse. "As an organization we celebrate her life, we feel an enormous loss, but are dedicated to continuing the work to bring her powerful vision to life to change the lives of those with intellectual disabilities, their families and communities, using sports as the catalyst for respect, acceptance and inclusion."

Shriver is survived by her husband of 56 years Robert Sargent Shriver Jr.; her children and her grandchildren, ranging in age from two months to twenty-two years. Out of respect for the privacy of the family, no interviews are being granted at this time.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to Special Olympics [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org). Condolence cards may be sent to Special Olympics headquarters: 1133 19<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington DC, 20036. Please visit [www.eunicekennedyshriver.org](http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org) to share a tribute online.

Tribute areas are also being set up at Special Olympics Headquarters in Washington D.C., The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum in Boston and the JFK Museum in Hyannis, Massachusetts.

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

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