



For Immediate Release
November 21, 2017
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CHICAGO CUBS PITCHER KYLE AND EMMA HENDRICKS TO SERVE AS AMBASSADOR FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS ILLINOIS

CHICAGO, Ill. -- In the spirit of giving, [Special Olympics Illinois](http://SpecialOlympicsIllinois.org) is proud to announce that Chicago Cubs pitcher Kyle Hendricks and his new wife, Emma, have officially signed on as “Star Champion” Ambassadors for the organization.

Special Olympics Illinois “Star Champions” Ambassadors come from the worlds of sport, music, entertainment, media, philanthropy and government and have all committed their support to Special Olympics Illinois to help raise awareness and resources for the organization. By creating public awareness of the movement, supporting the expansion of sports, health and education programs, and helping to mobilize resources, Special Olympics “Star Champions” demonstrate a clear commitment to making a real difference in today’s world.

Selected by the Rangers in the eighth round of the 2011 First-Year Player Draft out of Dartmouth College, Hendricks was acquired by the Chicago Cubs with infielder Christian Villanueva from the Texas Rangers for pitcher Ryan Dempster on July 31, 2012. Hendricks began the 2013 season with the Tennessee Smokies, and was promoted to the Iowa Cubs of the Class AAA Pacific Coast League during the season. The Cubs named Hendricks their minor league pitcher of the year for 2013. Hendricks began the 2014 season with Iowa, but following the trade of Jeff Samardzija and Jason Hammel to the Oakland Athletics on July 4, Hendricks made his Major League Baseball debut with the Chicago Cubs on July 10, against the Cincinnati Reds at Great American Ballpark. He was named the National League Rookie of the Month of August.

Following an impressive rookie season, Hendricks began the 2015 season as a member of the Cubs' starting rotation. During Game 6 of the NLCS in 2016, Hendricks pitched 7 1/3 innings facing the minimum in the clinching game to send the Cubs to their first World Series since 1945. The Cubs won the 2016 World Series over the Cleveland Indians, with Hendricks as the starting pitcher in Games 3 and 7, giving them their first title in 108 years.

“Kyle and his wife Emma, are dedicated to raising awareness for Special Olympics Illinois as well as the global 50th Anniversary of Special Olympics happening in Chicago this summer. Professional athletes bring a high level of awareness to our athletes, which allows them to advocate for themselves through sport. Kyle and Emma have opened their hearts to our athletes in support of our mission and are we grateful their time, effort, and dedication.” said Dave Breen, CEO of Special Olympics Illinois.

Special Olympics Illinois is thrilled to have Kyle and Emma’s support as it looks to inspire people playing and living Unified on and off the field.



About Special Olympics Illinois

Special Olympics Illinois is a not-for-profit organization offering year-round training and competition in 17 sports for more than 22,500 athletes with intellectual disabilities and nearly 20,000 Young Athletes ages 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics transforms the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, allowing them to realize their full potential in sports and in life. Special Olympics programs enhance physical fitness, motor skills, self-confidence, social skills and encourage family and community support. If you are interested in learning more about Special Olympics Illinois, volunteering or providing financial support to help make Special Olympics programs possible, contact your local Special Olympics agency, call 800-394-0562 or visit our website at www.soill.org.

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