



Special Olympics
Illinois



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Alexandra McMillin – 312-502-7954 | amcmillin@soill.org

Chicago Department of Aviation – 773-686-3700 | cdamedia@cityofchicago.org

CHICAGOLAND RESIDENTS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN 10th ANNUAL PLANE PULL AT O’HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO BENEFIT SPECIAL OLYMPICS ILLINOIS

United Airlines and UPS present ‘tug-of-war’ competition with a 90-ton plane

CHICAGO, Ill. – Teams of local law enforcement agencies, hotels, fitness clubs and the general public will participate in a larger than life tug-of-war challenge at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 22, hosted by the Chicago Department of Aviation, United Airlines and UPS. They will face off with either a United Airlines or UPS aircraft weighing nearly 90 tons at O’Hare International Airport for the benefit of Special Olympics Illinois. The Law Enforcement Torch Run Plane Pull includes teams from law enforcement agencies, fire departments, private companies, fitness groups, high schools, colleges, fraternal groups and teams of friends and family. The Opening Ceremony is at 8:30 a.m. Last year’s Plane Pull saw 85 teams and raised more than \$140,000 for Special Olympics Illinois.

“The Plane Pull is a unique and fun opportunity for groups to test their strength on the tarmac of O’Hare while also doing good in the community,” said Chief Steve Stelter, Law Enforcement Torch Run Director. “In addition to those participating in the event, we hope family members and friends will pull for Special Olympics programs, too, by making a donation.”

Registration is now open online at www.illinoisplanepull.com. Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 22, when team captains can turn in donations and pick up their teams t-shirts and other materials. New teams can still sign up that morning.

The event will be held on the tarmac next to the United Airlines Cargo Facility located on the south airfield of O’Hare International Airport. The area is located in between two East-West parallel runways-- offering a unique perspective of planes arriving and taking off on one of the world’s busiest airfields.

Each team will include a Special Olympics Illinois athlete in honor of the #InclusionRevolution.

Teams will be divided into four different divisions – Open Division is ideal for companies, school teams, church groups, clubs, friends and families; Public Safety Division is for law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMTs, DNR, DOC and military personnel; Fitness Division is for gyms, fitness clubs or CrossFit teams and the Hotel Division. Each team of 20 will attempt to pull the plane a distance of 12 feet, with the top finisher from each division facing off for one final pull to determine the Grand Champion. To participate, each team is asked to raise a minimum of \$1,000 (\$50 per person for a team of 20) for Special Olympics Illinois. Teams raising more will be eligible for incentive prizes at the \$2,500, \$4,000 and \$6,000 levels.

The Plane Pull is free to the public. Festivities include live music by the Cover Story Band, food tent provided by HMS Host, Dunkin’ Donut Sampling Van, WTTW Kids BIG IDEA Traveling Lab, games and photo booth provided by United Airlines and a public safety display by Chicago Police and Fire.

Special Olympics Illinois

605 E. Willow St., Normal, IL 61761

Tel 309-888-2551 Fax 309-888-2570

www.soill.org

Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities



United Airlines and UPS are Presenting Sponsors of the 2018 Law Enforcement Torch Run Plane Pull . Other sponsors include Gold Sponsors: Chicago Department of Aviation, City of Chicago, HMS Host; Silver Sponsors: TD Ameritrade, Sonoma Underground and Durham; Bronze Sponsors: Britelift & 104.3 Jams FM. Because Special Olympics athletes compete free of charge, all money raised by the Plane Pull will directly assist in their training and competition.

“The Chicago Department of Aviation is honored and proud to once again partner with Special Olympics Illinois, UPS and United Airlines to host this unique and exciting community event at Chicago’s global gateway, O’Hare International Airport,” said Jamie L. Rhee, Commissioner, Chicago Department of Aviation. “I want to congratulate Special Olympics on its 10th year of bringing Plane Pull to O’Hare and I also thank our airline partners and all of the volunteers and participants who come out to support this event and help raise funds for Special Olympics.”

All media must RSVP in advance by contacting the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) by phone at 773-686-3700 or by email via cdamedia@cityofchicago.org.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run: The Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run® is the single largest year-round fundraising vehicle benefiting Special Olympics Illinois. The annual intrastate relay and its various fundraising projects have two goals: to raise money and gain public awareness for the athletes who participate in Special Olympics Illinois. The Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run® has raised more than \$47 million over 32 years while increasing awareness of Special Olympics Illinois athletes and their accomplishments.

About Special Olympics Illinois: Special Olympics Illinois is a not-for-profit organization offering year-round training and competition in 18 sports for more than 23,000 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. Follow Special Olympics Illinois on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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