



Special Olympics
Illinois



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CHICAGOLAND RESIDENTS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN
11TH ANNUAL PLANE PULL AT O’HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
TO BENEFIT SPECIAL OLYMPICS ILLINOIS**

United Airlines presents ‘tug-of-war’ competition with a 90-ton plane

CHICAGO, III. – 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. 28, hosted by the Chicago Department of Aviation, United Airlines and UPS.

Teams of 20 will attempt to pull either a United Airlines or UPS aircraft weighing nearly 90 tons a distance of 12 feet 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, and teams of friends and family.

The top finisher from each division will face 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 Opening Ceremony is at 8:30 a.m. Last year’s Plane Pull saw 80 teams and raised more than \$160,000 for Special Olympics Illinois.

“The opportunities created by Special Olympics Illinois elevates the human spirit through the transformative power and joy of sport, every day around the world.” Said CDA Commissioner Jamie L. Rhee. “We could not be more excited to again host this incredible and heart-warming event.”

Registration is now open online at www.illinoisplanepull.com. Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m.

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.

“The O’Hare Plane Pull is an exciting event which is unique in and by itself. Individuals from the Chicagoland area will bring their respective team of 20 to pull a 150 ton airplane; all in support of the nearly 22,000 Special Olympic athletes within the State of Illinois. We have tremendous partners, sponsors and donors who rally around this day to whom we are truly grateful. The Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run is the second largest fund raising program in the world, and combined with Special Olympics Illinois the two able to provide 100% of the funding necessary for the athletes in Illinois to compete. Events, such as the O’Hare Plane Pull, run by the Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run help keep it that way,” states Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run Director Steven Stelter.

Special Olympics Illinois

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



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, 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 lastly the Hotel Division.

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

United Airlines is the Presenting Sponsor of the 2019 Law Enforcement Torch Run Plane Pull. Other sponsors include Platinum Sponsors: UPS and Jewel-Osco; Gold Sponsors: Chicago Department of Aviation, City of Chicago, HMS Host Chicago Department of Aviation, Durham and Sonoma Underground; Silver Sponsors: 104.3 Jams, Republic Airways and Aeroterm; Bronze Sponsors: Jimmy John's. Because Special Olympics athletes compete free of charge, all money raised by the Plane Pull will directly assist in their training and competition.

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 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 to gain awareness for the athletes who participate in Special Olympics Illinois. The Law Enforcement Torch Run® has raised more than \$52 million over 33 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 over 17,000 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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