



## **Team Canada roster announced for the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games**

**TORONTO, ON**, May 17, 2012 – Special Olympics Canada announced today the names of the 141 athletes, coaches and mission staff who will represent Canada at the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games. Billed as the world’s largest sporting event in 2013, these winter games will be held in PyeongChang, South Korea, also host of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games, from January 29 to February 5, 2013.

The full roster can be found online at [www.specialolympics.ca](http://www.specialolympics.ca) (PDF format)

The eight-day competition will bring together nearly 3,300 athletes from as many as 120 countries to this mountain resort with world-class competition venues.

“It doesn’t get any bigger than this within the Special Olympics community, and the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games are an incredible opportunity for our Canadian athletes,” said Sharon Bollenbach, vice-president of sport with Special Olympics Canada. “These world games are also important because they bring attention to the talents and capabilities of people with an intellectual disability, helping to change attitudes and to break down barriers that can exclude them from full participation in their communities.”

Athletes on the national team are a mix of veterans and others who will compete at the international level for the very first time. Each has moved through successive levels of competition to qualify; first provincials, and then nationals. Final qualification for the 2013 national team was based on performance at the 2012 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games, held earlier this year in St. Albert and Jasper, Alberta.

Those selected to the national team will compete in six of the seven sports, including alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, figure skating, snowshoeing, speed skating and floor hockey. Canadians have contested in this latter sport since the very first Special Olympics international competition was held in 1968 in Chicago, Illinois.

“These athletes are among the top of their field, and we know that they will make our country very proud,” said Jennifer Campbell, chef de mission. Campbell, from Winnipeg, Manitoba, returns as the team’s chef de mission for a second time.

With their selection, Team Canada athletes will be supported by a strong national training program. Launched in 1998, the training program gives athletes a formalized approach to training and preparing for world games. It is a model for Special Olympics programs across North and South America.

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Athletes commit to an enhanced weekly training regimen and take part in all aspects of the conditioning and training program: physical and mental training; committing to a healthy lifestyle; attending all team functions, including multi-day sport-specific training camps and staging; and being role models for other Special Olympics athletes, both on and off the field of play.

They are also supported by a tremendous network of resources leading up to and during the competition, including mission and coaching staff, a team physician, mental trainer, fitness instructors, nutritionists, and motivational speakers.

The Canadian delegation also enjoys considerable year-round support from its 21 national sponsors and partners, including the Government of Canada.

### **About Special Olympics Canada**

Established in 1969, the Canadian chapter of this international movement is dedicated to enriching the lives of Canadians with an intellectual disability through sport. Operating in all Canadian provinces and territories except Nunavut, this grassroots movement reaches beyond the sphere of sport to empower individuals, change attitudes, and build communities. From two-year olds to mature adults, there are more than 35,000 children, youth, and adults with an intellectual disability registered in Special Olympics year-round sport programs across Canada. They are supported by more than 17,100 volunteers, including more than 13,500 trained coaches. For more information, connect with us on Facebook and Twitter (handle: SpecialOCanada).

### **About the Special Olympics World Winter Games**

The 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games will be held from January 29 to February 6 in PyeongChang, South Korea, the hub of winter sports. It's expected to be the largest Special Olympics World Winter Games, featuring seven categories of sports including alpine skiing, cross country skiing, snow boarding, snowshoeing, speed skating, figure skating, and floor hockey. The Games will demonstrate the unity that comes with overcoming barriers of race, religion, ethnicity and economic and education level. More information is available at <http://www.2013sopoc.org>.

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