



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 7, 2019

2021 Special Olympics BC Summer Games set to be held in Surrey

In July 2021, Special Olympics athletes from all over B.C. and the Yukon will come together in Surrey to compete and inspire in the 2021 Special Olympics BC Summer Games. The 2021 SOBC Summer Games will star more than 1,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities competing with pride in 10 sports.

The 2021 Special Olympics BC Summer Games will feature competition in the 10 SOBC summer sports: 10-pin bowling, athletics, basketball, bocce, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming. The participating athletes will be supported by approximately 300 volunteer coaches and mission staff. The 2021 SOBC Games host community was announced at Surrey City Hall, in an event with remarks from SOBC President & CEO Dan Howe, City of Surrey Mayor Doug McCallum, School District No. 36 Board of Education Chair Laurie Larsen, and SOBC – Surrey athlete Ryan Canuel.

The Surrey area is already home to outstanding Special Olympics athletes, volunteers, and programs, as Special Olympics BC – Surrey offers high-quality year-round sport, youth, and fitness programs. But this will be the first time that Special Olympics BC Provincial Games have been hosted in Surrey.

Provincial Games are exciting and empowering experiences for Special Olympics athletes. For many, these Games offer their first opportunity to have the joy of travelling and being part of a team. The dedicated competitors will be shooting for personal-best performances, and they will also be chasing the opportunity to advance to national and international levels of competition. Top performers in Surrey will qualify for spots on Team BC for the 2022 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games in Medicine Hat, Alta., which will be the qualifier for the 2023 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Berlin, Germany.

“In Special Olympics BC Games, the competitors showcase their talents and the true power and joy of sport, and they open hearts and minds to the abilities of individuals with intellectual disabilities, changing the way the world sees this population that is still too often forgotten or excluded. We know that Surrey is home to outstanding venues and volunteers that will give our athletes the high-quality competitive experience they deserve,” Howe said at the November 7 announcement.

Canuel said, “These Games are not just a marker of how far you make it in a competitive environment. Special Olympics Games teach people to persevere and get through strenuous periods. They give individuals the chance to make long lasting friendships, and have a means of networking to face whatever challenges may arise and overcome them together rather than alone. They break stigmas and give



individuals with intellectual disabilities the knowledge to advance life skills.”

“The City of Surrey is honoured to host the 2021 Special Olympics BC Summer Games,” said Mayor Doug McCallum. “This event will be a memorable experience for both the athletes, fans and community as a whole. I would like to thank Special Olympics BC and their organizing committee for bringing this very special event to Surrey. Council and I look forward to cheering on all the exceptional athletes as they compete in the Summer Games.”

“Surrey Schools is so pleased to be able to contribute to this event, by opening our schools to athletes and coaches and providing comfortable places they can not only relax and sleep, but also where they’ll be able to gear up for their competition,” said Surrey Board of Education Chair Laurie Larsen. “Our schools are filled with an abundance of excitement during the school year, so we hope that energy and drive is felt by Summer Games competitors!”

In 2021, the SOBC Games Opening Ceremony will be held on July 8, followed by competition throughout July 9 and 10. A Closing Ceremony open only to Games competitors will be held on July 10, followed by a volunteer recognition breakfast on July 11.

The vital support of up to 1,100 community volunteers will be needed to run this empowering event. Volunteer registration details and Games venues will be announced in the weeks to come. Learn more at www.specialolympics.bc.ca and find SOBC on Facebook and Instagram @specialolympicsbc and Twitter @sobcsociety.

About Special Olympics BC

Special Olympics BC is dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities through sport. In 55 communities around the province, we provide year-round training and competitive opportunities in 18 different sports to more than 5,200 athletes of all ages and a wide range of abilities, thanks to the dedicated efforts of over 4,300 volunteers. For more information, please visit www.specialolympics.bc.ca and find us on Facebook and Instagram @specialolympicsbc and Twitter @sobcsociety. To learn more about SOBC – Surrey, visit www.sobcsurrey.ca.

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