



Special Olympics
Massachusetts

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...For Immediate Release

Groundbreaking Ceremony To Be Held for New Special Olympics Headquarters *New Building to be named the Yawkey Sports Training Center*

Marlborough, MA – A monumental event for Special Olympics Massachusetts (SOMA) will ceremoniously occur on the first day of Disabilities Awareness month. SOMA President Robert Johnson, Mayor of Marlborough Nancy Stevens, a representative from the Yawkey Foundation along with Special Olympics athletes, family members and key players will be on hand to turn the first ceremonial shovel of the new SOMA headquarters at a groundbreaking event on **October 1st at 9:00AM** (512 Forest Street, Marlborough).

The 25,000 square foot, state of the art training center in the City of Marlborough will be named the Yawkey Sports Training Center.

SOMA has already raised \$5.8 million for the new center, and a capital campaign is currently underway to raise the remainder of the funds needed to make the project a reality by Fall of 2009. The total cost of the building will be \$10.5 million. Opportunities for supporting the campaign for a new building for Special Olympics are still available.

"We are extremely excited about the Yawkey Sports Training Center, which we believe will significantly increase our ability to serve Special Olympics athletes and train key players of our organization to further our mission," said Johnson.

Centrally located on a five-acre site off Route 495 within a 90-minute drive for 90% of the Commonwealth's population, SOMA's new home will enable the organization to realize greater efficiencies in its field operations, providing higher quality training experiences for a growing number of volunteers, coaches and athletes. Currently SOMA serves more than 10,000 athletes, 11,000 volunteers and 1600 coaches. With this new multi-functional facility, Special Olympics officials hope to expand the program to 20,000 athletes by 2010 and grow the education component for coaches and volunteers by having one central location.

By bringing together people with and without intellectual disabilities at year round Special Olympics programs, longstanding myths are dispelled, negative attitudes changed, and new opportunities are created to embrace and celebrate the giftedness of people with intellectual disabilities. This is accomplished in great part by the thousands of volunteers who give of their time and energy to ensure that our athletes have the best experience possible; and by our very generous corporate and individual partners who provide both vital financial and volunteer resources needed to accomplish our programmatic goals.

DiGiorgio Associates, Inc and Columbia Construction Co. will be the architect and construction manager (respectively) for the Yawkey Sports Training Center.

About Special Olympics Massachusetts

Special Olympics Massachusetts (SOMA) provides year-round sports training, athletic competition and other related programming for 10,708 athletes with intellectual disabilities. SOMA offers over 126 year round sporting competitions. Through the power of sport, our movement transforms the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. It also unites everyone by fostering a sense of community and building a civil society. For more information visit

<http://www.SpecialOlympicsMA.org>.