



## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Warren County law enforcement shines light on Special Olympics Ohio with Torch Run**

(Lebanon, OH) –On June 16, 2021, Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities (WCBDD) united with members of the community to cheer on Warren County Law Enforcement as they participated in an informal Torch Run in honor of Special Olympics Ohio. Special Olympics Ohio is part of a global inclusion movement that uses sports, health education, and leadership programs to empower people with intellectual disabilities.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) partners Special Olympics Ohio with law enforcement agencies across the state and invites them to bike, run, and walk in an effort to raise awareness and funds for Special Olympics. Traditionally, the torch, also known as “The Flame of Hope”, is carried through Ohio, until it reaches The Ohio State University for the Opening Ceremonies of the State Summer Games.

Reprising his role as last year’s coordinator of the Torch Run, was Chief Deputy Barry Riley of the Warren County Sheriff’s Office. An avid supporter of the LETR mission and emboldened by a good challenge, Chief Deputy Riley recruited his participants with a hearty, “Let’s destroy the fundraising goal!”, a challenge that would later come to fruition.

“I am very thankful for the ongoing support of law enforcement in Warren County,” said Megan Manuel, Superintendent of WCBDD. Manuel, who also serves as the Vice Chairperson of the Special Olympics Ohio Board of Directors added, “Every year they step up to participate in the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, and they did so again this year. Even though this event was a little different due to the pandemic, Warren County law enforcement exceeded their fundraising goal. We are so appreciative of all they do to support Special Olympics athletes in Warren County and throughout the state of Ohio!”

The Special Olympics State Summer Games event was canceled this year, and instead, evolved into “Summer Games Reimagined”, a month-long celebration that provides Special Olympics athletes the opportunity to participate in virtual and in-person events in their communities. Offerings in Warren County included virtual Olympic Bingo, softball, floor hockey, and tennis. Athletes were also offered “Art in the Park”, an event hosted by WCBDD in Harmon Park that invited athletes to paint their own full-sized birdhouse, participate in a dance class, and enjoy a delicious Olympic-themed treat.

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