Special Olympics
New Zealand

13 May 2015 For immediate release

Media release
World Summer Games athletes set to gather in Wellington

The ten Special Olympics New Zealand athletes competing in basketball at the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015 in Los Angeles in July, will gather in Wellington this weekend for two days of training.

Thirty-six New Zealand athletes have been named to compete alongside 7000 athletes in Los Angeles, California, USA in July.

The Special Olympics World Summer Games 2015, known as "LA2015", will see athletes from 170 countries compete at the event being held from 25 July 2015 to 2 August 2015.

The New Zealand delegation includes 34 athletes with intellectual disabilities, two 'Unified Partners' (athletes without an intellectual disability), and 17 coaches, managers and support staff. The athletes will compete in aquatics, athletics, basketball, bocce, equestrian, golf, powerlifting, and tenpin bowling.

The basketball team consists of ten athletes – Bradley Garner (Canterbury), Ethan Rangi (North Harbour), Huitahi Stockman (Mangere), Joseph Davis (Rosehill School), Nathan Abraham (Manawatu), Roger Bublitz (North Taranaki), Sean Tremlett (Nelson), Steven Bishop (Mana) , Tremaine Hoeft (Waikato)and Zachary Wicht (Manukau). The training camp which is being held on Saturday at Mana College, Porirua and on Sunday at the ASB Centre, Kilbirnie will be led by Head Coach Al Robson and Assistant Coaches Helen Brookes and Ian Mischefski.

"The focus of the camp will be getting the team into game mode," says Head Coach Al Robson . "The camps we have had to date and the individual training the athetes have been doing has so far focused on their individual skills and fitness, so its about evolving that and bringing it all together.

"We're also going to visit a local marae for dinner and to learn the haka the team will be performing in LA!"

These sport specific camps enable coaches to spend valuable time with their athletes and focus on training and team building.

The LA2015 coaches are collaborating with local coaches to ensure each athlete is on track and programmes are adjusted, as necessary.

Special Olympics New Zealand launched its 'Sponsor an Athlete' campaign in 2014 to help raise funds for the team's trip. Donations can be made online via credit card or directly from the donor's bank account at www.specialolympics.org.nz.

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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation. Authorised and accredited by Special Olympics, Inc for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Donations can also be made to support the 17 volunteers attending the Games, at https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/support4volunteers

Notes for editors:

Special Olympics New Zealand Basketball Training Camp - Wellington

- Saturday 16 May 2015: Mana College, 1 Awarua Street, Elsdon, Porirua, 10am to 4.30pm
- Sunday 17 May 2015: ASB Sports Centre, 72 Kemp Street, Kilbirnie, 9.30am to 2.30pm

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Special Olympics World Summer Games: www.la2015.org

Words Matter—Special Olympics Language Guidelines for media