

## Christie Administration Announces More Than \$900,000 In Grants For Individuals With Disabilities

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**Trenton, NJ** – Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today announced the award of \$915,000 for grants to nonprofit groups and local government entities throughout the state to support recreational and athletic opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The grants were awarded through two competitive programs, the Athletics for Persons with Disabilities and Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities (ROID) programs. The grants are implemented through the Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Division of Housing and Community Resources.

"We recognize the unique needs of every New Jerseyan with a developmental disability," said Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno. "These grants demonstrate our continued support to provide the necessary resources to help them lead richer and fuller lives. Furthermore, we are proud to be supporting the 2014 Special Olympics USA Games, which will be held here in New Jersey."

Four grants through the Athletics for Persons with Disabilities program were awarded to nonprofit groups throughout the state that offer sports training and athletic competition for persons with disabilities living in New Jersey. Athletics for Persons with Disabilities Grants are designed to increase the availability of athletic events for individuals with disabilities through the support of statewide, nonprofit organizations.

The Athletics for Persons with Disabilities program will provide a \$155,000 grant to the 2014 Special Olympics USA Games, which will host the national-level games for Special Olympics. The games, which take place in Princeton and greater Mercer County, New Jersey from June 13 to 21, 2014, will showcase competition among Special Olympics athletes from all 50 states. 270 athletes on Team New Jersey will participate in the 2014 Games. Special Olympics New Jersey (SONJ) will also receive \$125,000 for year-round athletic training and competition in 24 sports for over 24,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities from throughout the state.

"We are pleased to make an investment in programming that helps to develop and maintain programs and services that enhance the lives of adults and children with disabilities in New Jersey," said Assistant Commissioner Ana Montero who oversees DCA's Division of Housing and Community Resources. "These programs, surrounding athletic training, competition and recreation, develop social interaction skills, physical activity and personal growth for each participant."

Two additional awards will go to the Wheelchair Sports Council of New Jersey and the Association of Blind Athletes of New Jersey. The Wheelchair Sports Council of New Jersey will receive \$25,000 to provide sports training and athletic competition for at least 75 wheelchair athletes. The funds will also be used to establish new programs for junior and adult athletes. The Association of Blind Athletes of New Jersey will receive \$25,000 to help the Association of Blind Athletes provide approximately 40 blind and visually impaired individuals with the opportunity to participate in athletic training and competition. The activities will include swimming, track and field, judo, power lifting, beep ball and goal ball.

\$585,000 was also given to 25 municipalities in 7 counties through the Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities (ROID) program. These grants assist local governmental entities to include people with disabilities into their municipal and county recreation and leisure services and to provide the necessary accommodations to ensure their full inclusion.

This round of funding will support recreation, performing arts, and leisure programs that include a fishing derby, after-school programs, team sports and exercise programs, visual arts programs, storytelling, and healthy cooking. These

activities, designed with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, social interaction and community awareness, will be provided to children and adults with disabilities.

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