

Eunice Kennedy Shriver founder Of Special Olympics

by Eric Vasquez

Special Olympics is an event where everyone is included and respected. Not one person is treated unequal or doubted. Disabled individuals with athletic potential have a chance to show that they are just as capable as anyone else. They show that their disabilities don't hold them back from anything they put their mind to.

Special Olympic sports is like a getaway for these courageous athletes consisting of, "Acceptance, empowerment, competence, and joy" for the individual. "People with intellectual disabilities can and will succeed if given the opportunity", as stated in their site www.Specialolympics.org.

Eunice Shriver Founder of the Special Olympics exposed a closely guarded secret; their sister Rosemary had an intellectual disability. She wrote an article for the Saturday Evening Post, the article exposed their family secret and it explained how people with disabilities suffered. Not only did they suffer but the parents suffered with them as well.

There are several/different types of disabilities, from learning disabilities to physical disabilities. "Parents often don't expect this but all children are a gift. Surprises are found in these gifted kids, but the problems they face become family affairs" as stated in the article "How Learning Disabilities Affect Family Dynamics" by Betty Osman, Ph.D. "Just because they are disabled does not mean that they are not capable," states Jamie Torney, sophomore.

The pressure from emotional, medical, to educational and even financial. It is challenging but being disabled doesn't mean you have to be left out from certain activities. Disabled individuals are as capable

as anyone else, events such as the Special Olympics gives us an idea of just how capable a disabled individual can be. When they get the chance to prove to themselves and show that they are as capable,

they take it and go out there to try their best.

Eunice started the Special Olympics in 1958. Eunice started off with several camps for the disabled to spend time.

After her first camp she realized that they can play sports, and it was a possible way to get to the kids. They could play sports and benefit from them. Many parents denied their kids from attending the summer camps. So Eunice started a camp in her back yard, "Camp Shiver. Eunice was inspired to create many more camps and help the kids succeed. By 1968, Eunice had opened about 40 more camps all across the

United States.

At the opening of the Special Olympics world games in Chicago 1968, Mayor Daley told Eunice "Eunice, the world will

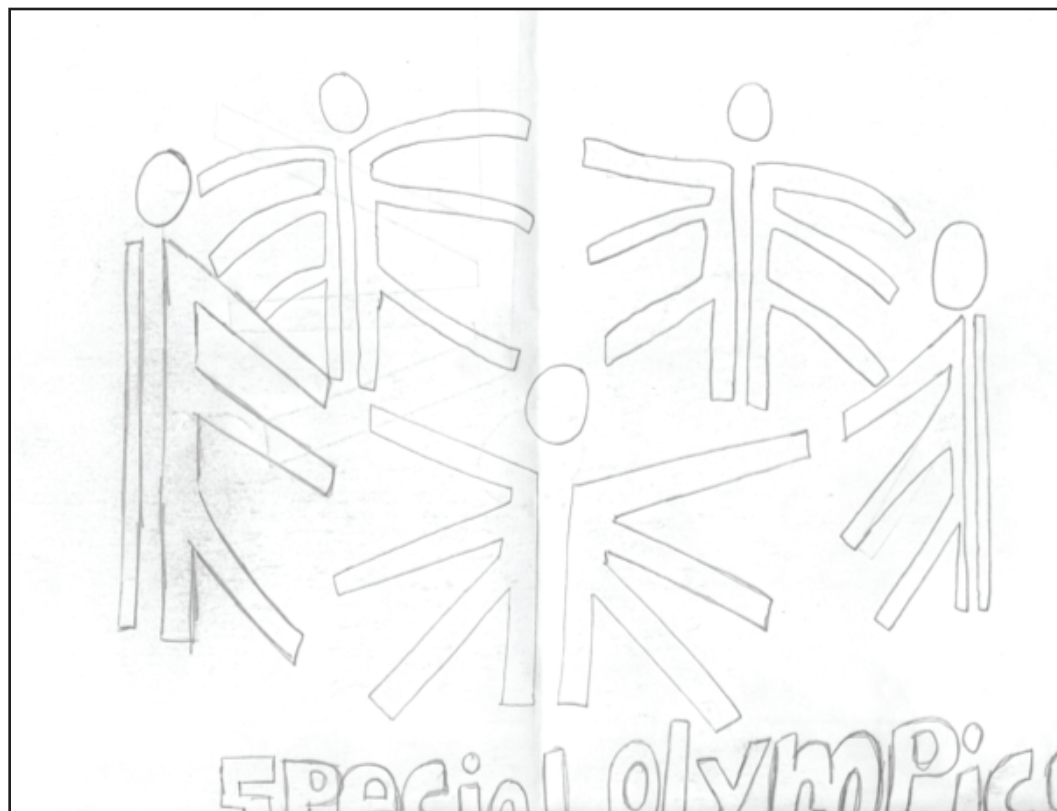
be able as a regular person," states Johanna Hasting, freshman.

Today the Special Olympics sporting events consist of 192 countries across the world, with over 30

Olympic style sports, and much more. The Special Olympics is also one of the largest public health organizations serving the disabled population. It serves about 200 countries worldwide. All thanks to the work of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, "the founder and a leader in the eyes of many". "When doors were closed, she opened them," as stated in the website specialolympics.org.

Today the Special Olympics are a non-profit organization and have many leaders, volunteers, and sponsors. It's supported by many leaders in the field of

sports, businesses, education, government and disability advocacy. All serve as the International Board of Directors, were they give financial support, political and act as spokesmen to help build awareness. They also help build connections with other organizations and governments for support. "Eunice Kennedy Shriver is indeed a leader in my eyes," Kristopher Parente, sophomore.



Murderball in the Paralympics:

Being physically challenged doesn't mean weakness

by Brianna Hungerford

"Murderball" lets the world know that even quadriplegic persons can accomplish as much as you or me.

"Murderball" (A.K.A. Wheelchair Rugby), is a sport for both male and female who have a disability with using both their arms and their legs. Most of the injuries were caused by spinal cord injuries, polio, amputations, dysmelia and others. All of these causes result in both full or partial paralysis of the legs and partial paralysis in the arms.

The sport contains elements of Basketball, Rugby and Ice Hockey because the object of the game is to carry the ball across the opposing team's line while still having a full, firm control of the ball. In order for

the player to score the two points that you receive for each crossing of the goal line, both wheels must completely cross the goal line.

Many of the players begin with using wheelchairs that were adapted from wheelchair basketball, but they are later put into manual wheelchairs which were designed for safety and full performance.

The ball that is used is similar to a volleyball in all aspects and there are also cones or markers to mark the opposing team's goal line.

The sport is played indoors on a court about the size of a basketball court which allows for better movement and play, but can also be played on any surface ac-

cessible to persons in wheelchairs.

Mark Zupan, a rather famous wheelchair rugby player who plays for the United States and starred in a documentary made in 2005 called "Murderball" says that breaking his neck was the best thing that has happened to him.

"I have an Olympic medal. I've been to so many countries I would never have been, met so many people I would never have met. I've done more in the chair than a whole hell of a lot of people who aren't in chairs."

Zupan goes to schools and other hospitals/clinics where there are people in wheelchairs just to explain about what he does

for a living and give them some hope that you still can do a lot although you're in a wheelchair.

"I am essentially who I am. I'm in a chair; you like me or you don't like me. I'm... a normal person. Here it is. There's no hidden message. It's up close, personal and in your face. That's what's fun about it."

Wheelchair Rugby allows for players with disabilities to compete around the globe in competitions and championships. The sport is co-ed so both males and females can enjoy it and be able to set an example for other paraplegics who are hoping to do something with their new life in a wheelchair.