

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

SPECIAL OLYMPICS FESTIVAL **\$544,000 FOR QUÉBEC'S SPECIAL ATHLETES**

Montréal, May 29, 2009 – The 12th presentation of the Special Olympics Québec Festival, held last night at the Palais des congrès de Montréal, succeeded in raising \$544,000. This enormous sum was collected during this unique event thanks to the generosity of the 800 guests in attendance from the business world and the professional and amateur sports communities.

The benefit event, under the honorary chairmanship of Mr. Eric R. La Flèche, President and CEO of Metro Inc., is the principal source of financing for Special Olympics Québec. It brought together hundreds of business people, and 30 current and former professional and amateur athletes, including **Alexandre Bilodeau, Lucian Bute, Patrick Carpentier, Steve Charbonneau, Isabelle Charest, Henri Richard, Joannie Rochette**, members of the **Canadiens Alumni** and players from the Montréal **Impact**, 20 special athletes and **Annie Pelletier**, patron of the SOQ movement for 12 years.

“We are touched, particularly in this difficult economic period, by the generosity of all of the people who made this 12 edition of the Festival a financial success,” said Daniel Granger, Chairman of the Board of Special Olympics Québec. “Thanks to the support of companies and individuals who showed their generosity last night, we will be able to continue this year to provide training programs and a competition league for athletes who are living with intellectual disabilities across Québec, and to offer our sports programs to the greatest possible number of special athletes.”

Annie Pelletier, patron of the SOQ movement, was delighted by the financial success of the evening. “Special athletes are real champions,” she declared. “Their determination and enthusiasm are a source of constant inspiration for me. I hope to remain their patron for a long time to come, and I hope that others like me continue to believe in them. Special Olympics Québec encourages the personal as well as the physical development of these athletes. This is an essential need for people with intellectual challenges. Thank you for believing in them.”

Over the course of the evening, in addition to the 250 items bid in a silent auction, there was a spectacular open-cry auction. Among the 13 exclusives items put on the block: a ultimate fighter jet flying experience in a Russian MiG-15 and a package for four people to attend the 2010 Super Bowl, both of which were sold at high prices.

The Special Olympics Québec Festival owes its success to the generous support of several financial partners, including **Metro Inc., Cadillac Fairview, Forzani Group Ltd., Hydro-Québec, and Loto-Québec.**

Special Olympics Québec

Special Olympics Québec is recognized by Sports-Québec as a multi-sport federation for athletes living with an intellectual disability. More than 90% of its funding comes from generous corporate and private citizens. Thanks to their support, Special Olympics Québec provides special athletes throughout Québec with training programs and a competition network the whole year round. These sports programs are designed to improve their physical fitness and self-esteem and foster their integration into society.

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