

Special Olympics State Summer Games Underway at Disney

More than 2,000 athletes from all over Florida are competing for coveted gold medals during the two-day event

LAKE BUENA VISTA (May 17, 2019) - Special Olympics Florida kicked off competition at its annual State Summer Games on Friday with an elaborate opening ceremonies production at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort.

The opening ceremonies were highlighted by the final leg of the Law Enforcement Torch Run, a 1,500-mile intrastate run that began in mid-April in Jacksonville and culminated with more than 500 law enforcement vehicles, including police cars and motorcycles from across the state, escorting the *Flame of Hope* to Champion Stadium at Disney. The opening ceremonies also included a host of guest speakers, singers and culminated with a dazzling fireworks show.

The Special Olympics State Summer Games showcase more than 2,000 athletes from across the state who have advanced through County and Area Games after a minimum of 10 weeks of training in their selected sport including athletics (track and field), bocce, cheerleading, cycling, soccer and volleyball.

The event, open to the public, is one of three events hosted annually at Walt Disney World Resort. Special Olympics Florida holds the Special Olympics Florida State Golf Championships at the Palm and Oak Trail Golf Courses (Sept. 6-7) and the Special Olympics Florida Fall Classic (Nov. 15-16) at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex where athletes will compete in six sports including powerlifting, softball, unified flag football, gymnastics, cheerleading, and track and field. These events are part of the more than 100 entertainment and sporting events that take place each year at the sports complex.