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SPECIAL OLYMPICS MONTANA
CELEBRATING **40** YEARS

Special Olympics Montana
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Special Olympics Montana **Stacey Johnston Named Athlete of the Year**

(Great Falls, MT; 5 October, 2010) – Special Olympics Montana named Stacey Johnston of Chester, Montana its 2010-2011 Athlete of the Year during the organization's recent 40th Anniversary Gala September 25, 2010 in Great Falls. The award is given to a Special Olympics Montana athlete who epitomizes the spirit of a true winner by a willingness to help others and give his or her very best while displaying outstanding courage and sportsmanship.

Stacey Johnston is recognized as an accomplished athlete and leader in both Special Olympics and in her community. A veteran of Special Olympics for 26 years, Johnston trains and competes with the Chester Cheetahs. She counts among many accomplishments her election to the Special Olympics International Board of Directors, and experience as one of the organization's original Global Messengers who train as public speakers to present the message of Special Olympics from an athlete's perspective.



Johnston has competed in many state, regional and international competition events including the 2007 Special Olympics World Games in Shanghai, China; and the 2010 Special Olympics USA National Games in Lincoln, Nebraska. She is an outstanding athlete whose favored sport is golf. At the National Games, she earned a silver medal in the sport. Johnston represented Montana in 2008 and 2009 at the Special Olympics National Invitational Golf Tournament. She has also received the Special Olympics Inc. Spirit Award.

In addition to her athletic achievements, Johnston is honored for her team-building and leadership abilities. According to Special Olympics Montana President/CEO Bob Norbie:

"Stacey's accomplishments are many but you won't learn about them easily. It is in our lives – not our words – that we say the most. Stacey lives a life that speaks volumes about kindness, about gentleness. We are drawn to her because we come away feeling good about ourselves.

"Stacey is not, however, a bland personality. She is strong and resolute, a stickler for the rules and willing to point out mistakes, especially when it's for the good of the team. Always out of fairness, not criticism. Always because it will make us better to do our very best. "

Over the course of her Special Olympics career, Johnston has participated in 17 different sports and earned many medals. She also contributes her time as a swim coach and official.

(For a complete transcript of Special Olympics Montana President/CEO Bob Norbie's remarks in making the award or for other inquiries, please contact us at info@somt.org, 406-216-5327 or 800-242-6876.)