



Special Olympics
Montana

For Immediate Release

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FRENCHTOWN STUDENT WRITES SONG CELEBRATING SPECIAL OLYMPICS WINS TRIP TO GREECE

(Great Falls, MT, 2/14/11) Frenchtown high school student Morissa Trunzo is the winner of a statewide song-writing contest for Special Olympics Montana's Project UNIFY. The song-writing contest was conceived as a way of encouraging high school and middle school musicians to use music in spreading the Project UNIFY message. Project UNIFY is about creating environments of inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities by educating, motivating and school aged children.

Morissa's song *Just Believe* was judged best at representing Project UNIFY's goals of acceptance, respect and inclusion for people of all abilities. As part of her Grand Prize, Morissa will travel to Athens, Greece this June to attend the Special Olympics World Summer Games. She will also have *Just Believe* produced and recorded at Basecamp Recording in Bozeman, Montana by award winning singer/songwriter Chris Cunningham of the national touring duo Storyhill.

A panel of musicians and Special Olympics athletes from Bozeman reviewed the song entries, and selected 3 finalists, who performed at Special Olympics Montana's Youth Activation Summit in Bozeman, February 4. Delegates to the Summit also had a chance to vote on which of the songs they liked best.

Renee Westlake, Bozeman Public Schools Supervisor of Music, who directed the judging, praised Morissa's composition for its musical complexity, as well as its message. The lyrics say, in part:

**If you can dream, then you can try
and if you can soar, then you can fly
We're reaching out a hand to say we'll never leave
and to say...just believe. © 2011 Morissa Trunzo**

About the prize, Morissa said "I think going to Greece will be incredible, but what's more important to me is that the people from Special Olympics think they can use my song to help them achieve their goals. And I love that I'll be able to record it so we can send it out to other people who don't even know about it yet. I first started writing songs to express not just what I feel, but other people's feelings and dreams, too. If my little song can go out into the world and help somebody, or make somebody feel better because they identify with it – well, that's what it's all about, isn't it?"

Morissa Trunzo is a junior at Frenchtown High School, and takes afternoon classes at the University of Montana, Missoula as part of the Pilot Program. Last Fall she was a featured performer and the only high school student in the University's production of *Hair*, the musical. She studies piano and music composition with Anne Bashor, and voice with Angela Andersen. Under the supervision of Frenchtown music teacher, Troy Bashor, Morissa used the high school's Sibelius™ music notation software to create sheet music for *Just Believe*.

1st runner-up in the song competition was Emily Johnson of Bozeman; 2nd runner-up was Maesyne Lamey of Shelby.

To watch Morissa perform the song visit, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjufNLHWAz0>

For more information or to schedule an interview with Morissa Trunzo contact: Janet Rose, 406-880-0683, jrt@montana.com. For more information on Project UNIFY contact: Tammy Peterson, VP Field Service, Special Olympics Montana, 406-216-5327, tpeterson@somt.org.

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