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For Immediate Release

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Special Olympics Massachusetts Competitions at home in the Berkshires

A return to the Berkshires for over 300 Winter sports athletes, volunteers and coaches

Pittsfield, Mass. — Special Olympics Massachusetts is proud to announce the second annual two-day Winter Games Assessment Competition in the Berkshires Friday February 9th and Saturday February 10th. This mandatory event for all Special Olympics Winter Games Athletes will be bigger and better than 2006, with over 300 athletes, coaches, and volunteers scheduled to spend the weekend at Eastover and competing in venues throughout the Berkshires. Athletes will be competing in this Winter Games Assessment round in Nordic and Alpine skiing, speed and figure skating, and, new for 2007, floor hockey.

Ski Butternut in Great Barrington will be host to over 100 Alpine skiers, offering a number of complimentary ski lift tickets to the athletes and the many volunteers assisting on the slopes. In addition, Special Olympics Massachusetts is very grateful to the employees of Ski Butternut who are attempting to raise \$1,500 to help underwrite the cost of the alpine competition.

Taconic High School will host a five-team Floor Hockey round-robin competition, and figure skating and speed skating will take place at Williams College. The beautiful grounds of Eastover will be home of the Nordic skiing competition.

The weekend begins with Opening Ceremonies and a dinner dance at Eastover on Friday night. Competition at the venues begins at 9am Saturday morning. If you would like more information about this Special Olympics event, or if you would like to volunteer, contact Peggy Harner in the Special Olympics Massachusetts Berkshires office in Pittsfield at 413-236-6970

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives by promoting understanding, acceptance and inclusion between people with and without intellectual disabilities. Through year-round sports training and athletic competition and other related programming for more than 1.3 million children and adults with intellectual disabilities in more than 150 countries, Special Olympics has created a model community that celebrates people's diverse gifts. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship. There is no cost to participate in Special Olympics. Visit Special Olympics online at <http://www.specialolympicsma.org>.

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