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DRAGON CON MAKES SPECIAL OLYMPICS GEORGIA ITS 2017 OFFICIAL CHARITY  

The Convention Doubles the Dollar-for-Dollar Match to $100,000 and Challenges Fans to Support the Official Charity  

Dragon Con Superheroes Wrap Up a Great Community Service Year  

ATLANTA – June 13, 2017 – Dragon Con, Atlanta’s internationally known pop culture, sci fi, fantasy, and gaming convention, has selected Special Olympics Georgia as its official charity for 2017.  

And the Dragon Con Superheroes wrapped up their slate of 2017 community service projects. This program, now in its fourth year, has contributed more than 2,400 hours in community service to Atlanta-based non-profits.  

Since 2013, the convention has consistently raised more than $100,000 for each of its annual official charities, including a $50,000 match from the convention. Funds are raised through convention-based auctions, special merchandise sales, special events, and the dollar-for-dollar match. This year, the convention announced that it will increase its dollar-for-dollar match to up to $100,000.  

Pat Henry, president of Dragon Con, Inc., the parent company of the Dragon Con convention, said the increase is a challenge to Dragon Con fans.  

“Over the past four years, we have raised some $500,000 for our official charities, including the convention match, which is a terrific record and something I’m very proud of,” said Pat Henry, president of Dragon Con, Inc. “We’re raising the match this year to see if we can do even better. I want to write a really big check for Special Olympics Georgia, but I need your help to do it.”  

Special Olympics Georgia provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community. Through this program, Special Olympics Georgia demonstrates that every person counts and that every person can be something good when we work together.  

Since 1970, Special Olympics Georgia has supported over 27,000 athletes in 25 sports and more than 500 annual competitions. For more information about Special Olympics Georgia, please visit www.specialolympicsga.org.
Dragon Con also recognized its Superheroes community service project volunteers for 2017. Dragon Con members and fans in the Atlanta area are invited to participate in a series of projects reaching different aspects of the metro area’s non-profit community.

“We had a great time this year, getting together as fans and volunteers, to do something good and make a difference in our community,” convention co-chair Rachel Reeves said. “Donations are always important, but there are plenty of organizations that also need volunteers to carry out their mission.”

The first project was a Clean Up Day at Piedmont Park, working with the Piedmont Park Conservancy. Over 55 volunteers came out to spread three truckloads of mulch and picked up over 10 bags of trash. Since 1989, the Piedmont Park Conservancy has been tasked with preserving historic Piedmont Park, restoring historic portions, expanding the greenspace, and maintaining and beautifying the park property. Their work has successfully transformed the once dilapidated park into the most visited greenspace in Atlanta. For more information on the Piedmont Park Conservancy, please visit www.piedmontpark.org.

The second project is an ongoing toy drive for Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. Although spending time in the hospital can be difficult for children and their families, special toys and activities can make their hospital experience less stressful. While many organizations donate toys and games, most of those donations are given around the holidays. When July comes around, their closet runs bare. This is especially true for adolescents and young adults, aged 13 to 18. So far, Dragon Con volunteers have filled more than a dozen bins with craft kits and materials, age appropriate coloring books, Lego sets, board games, movies, and similar items. For more information about Children’s Healthcare, please visit www.choa.org.

Some 42 Superheroes assembled for the third project, The Walk to End Lupus Now, where Dragon Con fielded a fundraising team and staffed the water station at the walk’s end. The Dragon Con Superheroes team was the event’s top fundraiser, raising more than $15,000 for the fight against lupus. The Lupus Foundation of America is the only national force devoted to solving the mystery of lupus while giving caring support to those who suffer from its brutal impact. Lupus is an unpredictable and potentially fatal autoimmune disease that affects 55,000 Georgians, mostly women aged 18-45, but also men, children, and women of all ages. For more information about The Lupus Foundation of America, please visit www.lupus.org/georgia.

For the fourth and final project, 35 Superheroes turned out to participate in the Special Olympics Georgia’s Olympic Village at the state Summer Games. Special Olympians from across the state met at Emory University to compete in traditional summer games, and in between games visited the Olympic Village to relax. At the Dragon Con Superheroes’ booth, Olympians were able to get a photo with one of more than a dozen costumed cosplayers. They could also make a mask of their own as a craft project.

About Dragon Con

Dragon Con is the internationally known pop culture convention held each Labor Day in Atlanta (Sept. 1-4, 2017). Organized for fans, Dragon Con features more than 3,000 hours of comics, film, television, costuming, art, music and gaming over four days. For more information, please visit www.dragoncon.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.