

NM Lions Participate in Special Olympics Opening Eyes Program

On Saturday, 22 November 2008, Special Olympics New Mexico held its Holiday Classic Games at the NMSU campus in Las Cruces. Special Olympians from all over New Mexico participated in bowling, basketball and other events.

Special Olympics has served intellectually challenged individuals for over thirty years through programs of training and competition in Olympic style sports. In the late 1980's, it became evident that intellectually challenged persons experienced not only significant health impairments, but had difficulty obtaining even routine health care services. In response to this need, the Special Olympics Opening Eyes program was created in cooperation with Lions Clubs International. Over ten million dollars has been provided by grants from LCIF over the period. The program is based on a recognition that it is unrealistic to expect any athlete, regardless of their level of ability, to perform optimally, or even safely, if significant defects in vision exist.

In Las Cruces, over one hundred athletes were screened by a team of Lions, organized by Lion Phil Marvel. Lions from clubs throughout the state participated. Medical staffing was provided by Dr. Adrian Tenorio, O.D., Dr. Thomas Paz, O.D. and their staff of technicians. Over fifty prescriptions for new eyeglasses were written by John and Patricia Baldrige of Twin City Optical/ELOA, Albuquerque.

Very special thanks go out to those Lions who give of their time and effort to participate in the Special Olympics screenings in Albuquerque, Farmington and Las Cruces. *Provided by PID Gordon Post*