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Harlingen Police Captain to Represent Texas at the 2007 Special Olympics World Games in China

Torch Run Officer to Run in the Final Leg

AUSTIN – Captain Hector Leal of the Harlingen Police Department will represent Special Olympics Texas (SOTX) and the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) as he travels to the **2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai, the People’s Republic of China** later this month. Captain Leal was named to the Global Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg team, nominated for the prestigious position by SOTX staff and LETR officers.

On Sunday, September 23, Captain Leal will depart Harlingen for Beijing. There he will join with the rest of the Final Leg team, consisting of 92 runners, who will run the torch throughout China and will participate in host town celebrations. Leal will participate in the Host Town program in Hangzhou, before traveling to Shanghai on September 29. In keeping with tradition, the team will carry the “Flame of Hope” into Opening Ceremonies, known as the Final Leg, and hand it over to selected Special Olympics athletes who will light the cauldron, commencing the 2007 Special Olympics Summer World Games on October 2. **Leal will return home to Harlingen on October 4.**

Leal is a 17-year LETR veteran, dedicating countless hours to Special Olympics Texas. In 2006, Leal raised more than \$26,000 for Special Olympics Texas. He assisted the Rio Grande Valley area run to State Games and he is a member of the Rio Grande Valley Torch Run committee.

Captain Leal is in charge of the Harlingen Police Department Criminal Investigation Division, which consists of 28 detectives, and he is the Tactical Commander for the Harlingen SWAT Team.

(MORE)

About the 2007 World Games

The 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games will be held in Shanghai, the People's Republic of China from **October 2-11, 2007**. The event will mark the first time the World Summer Games will be held in Asia, and only the second time they will be held outside the United States. In addition to some 7,000 athletes (**including 61 Texas athletes**), Special Olympics expects the 2007 World Summer Games to draw 40,000 volunteers, 3,500 event officials and thousands of families, volunteers, spectators and journalists from every continent. **Special Olympics Texas will post daily updates about Texas athletes from the Games at www.specialolympicstexas.org.**

About Special Olympics Texas

Special Olympics Texas is a privately funded non-profit organization that provides year-round training and competition for 25,841 children and adults with intellectual disabilities in the Lone Star State. For more information, call 800.876.JOIN or visit our Web site at www.specialolympicstexas.org.

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