



Special Olympics
Delaware



RECEIVED

07 01 20 05

June 30, 2005

Chairman Anthony J. Principi
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street; Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi,

As Special Olympics Delaware embarks on its 15th Anniversary in partnership with the Delaware Air National Guard, I thought it fitting to review what the past 14 years have meant to our organization and our athletes.

The cornerstone of the Delaware Air National Guard's involvement has been the over 150 volunteers who each year have supported our signature competition – Summer Games. Summer Games is a two-day sports festival featuring 1,200 athletes in six sports and is supported by a network of 1,500 volunteers. Members of the DANG serve on our Games Steering Committee and lend their expertise to all facets of our operations. With their feedback and insights each year, the event becomes more organized and we are better able to manage last-minute changes – ensuring that our athletes, coaches, families and volunteers experience the best our Games can offer.

And to the 150+ volunteers who work quietly behind the scenes managing event logistics (many who have been with us for 14 years and know the Games better than we do!) -- their insights and professionalism help ensure our event is well managed and run safely. No doubt the success of this event can be attributed to the many DANG employees who volunteer their time, talent and energy to making the event magical for all who attend and life enriching for our athletes and their families.

The DANG has also been instrumental in helping Special Olympics increase community visibility and, in turn, raise funds to fuel our growth. For nine years the *Delaware National Guard Plane Pull* has raised needed financial support as well as community awareness and understanding of the capabilities of persons with special needs.

We look forward to our continuing partnership with the Delaware Air National Guard. *Together* we make a difference in the lives of persons with intellectual disabilities - by raising the community's awareness of the capabilities of all persons and sharing in the unlimited potential of the human spirit.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Gruhert
Executive Director