



**For Immediate Release
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Eunice Kennedy Shriver to be inducted into Washington Sports Hall of Champions
Founder and Honorary Chairperson of Special Olympics forever improved the lives of millions

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Greater Washington Sports Alliance is proud to announce that it will posthumously induct Eunice Kennedy Shriver into the Greater Washington Sports Hall of Champions during SneakerBall VI presented by MTM Builder/ Developer, Inc. on September 15, 2009 at the National Building Museum. Devoting her life to improving the welfare of persons with intellectual disabilities, Mrs. Shriver founded the Special Olympics in 1968 to showcase their abilities. Today, Special Olympics is the world’s largest year-round sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities with over 2.5 million athletes in 180 countries taking part in competitions each year. On a local level, Special Olympics District of Columbia is home to over 2,000 Special Olympics athletes.

“We are pleased to honor the legacy of this extraordinary human being,” said **Robert Sweeney**, President of the Greater Washington Sports Alliance. “Mrs. Shriver forever improved the lives of millions by leading a human rights movement to bring dignity, respect, opportunity and hope to people with intellectual disabilities throughout the world. I can think of no better person to receive this honor.”

“Eunice Kennedy Shriver’s lifelong work embodies what we attempt to do with our Greater Washington Sports Alliance Foundation which is to provide young people leadership skills to live happier and more productive lives through sports fitness,” said **Fernando Murias**, Chairman of the Greater Washington Sports Alliance.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who passed away in August at the age of 88, becomes the first Hall of Champion honoree to be inducted posthumously. Accepting the award on her behalf will be Frank Stephens, Special Olympics Athlete and Global Messenger Speaker.

For more on Eunice Kennedy Shriver, visit www.eunicekennedyshriver.org

For more information on SneakerBall VI presented by MTM Builder /Developer, Inc. including Former Hall of Champions honorees please visit www.gwsportsalliance.com/sneakerball

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About SneakerBall:

SneakerBall is an annual fall gala that celebrates the best of sports in the region and it is organized to benefit the Greater Washington Sports Alliance Foundation. The Foundation, which is made up of six local charities, creates avenues for sports-oriented corporate philanthropy to enhance the region's youth sports programs and facilities. The Greater Washington Sports Alliance Foundation, a 501(c) 3, supports youth investment initiatives that provide young people from Greater Washington the leadership skills to live healthier, happier and more productive lives through sports and fitness.

SneakerBall began as a small fundraiser with about 400 people on the floor of the then MCI center in 2004. Today it is one of Washington D.C.'s signature gala held at the National Building Museum with over 1,000 attendees. More than 50 professional athletes & Olympians, the Greater Washington's sports franchise ownership groups, the leaders of the region's business community and the Sports Alliance charitable partners now gather every September for the only formal celebration that honors the region's sports pioneers & their accomplishments.

About Greater Washington Sports Alliance:

Established in 2003, The Greater Washington Sports Alliance (GWSA) is a regional non-profit sports commission created to foster economic development and civic pride through the power of sports. GWSA's mission encompasses the attraction of sporting events to the region, the promotion of the regional professional, collegiate and amateur franchises, the support of youth investment organizations and the branding of Washington, D.C. as a world class sports destination. The Greater Washington Sports Alliance Internet address is <http://www.gwsportsalliance.com>. For more information on GWSA, visit [gwsportsalliance.com](http://www.gwsportsalliance.com).

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