



FOR RELEASE
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Special Olympics athletes develop and display skills in Haines Junction

WHITEHORSE—Special Olympics athletes from across Yukon gathered in Haines Junction on August 8 to participate in the eighth annual Northwestel Development Games.

"The Development Games are an opportunity for Special Olympics athletes to discover new sports and showcase their skills in front of a local audience," Minister of Community Services Currie Dixon said. "The games are all about participation and celebrating the true spirit of sport."

More than 30 athletes participated in events including athletics, basketball, and bocce with support from 12 coaches and several volunteers. The Development Games, inspired by a concept developed by Special Olympics Saskatchewan, have been held in Yukon every year since 2008, alternating between summer and winter sports.

"We were very pleased to host the games in Haines Junction," Kluane MLA Wade Istchenko said. "Events like these promote healthy lifestyles and community spirit, with the added bonus of drawing visitors to this beautiful region we call home."

For the third straight year, the Development Games also featured the Healthy Athletes initiative, which offers free health screenings to athletes.

"We were very happy to take the 2015 Northwestel Development Games to Haines Junction," Special Olympics Yukon executive director Serge Michaud said. "Our athletes had a great time showcasing their athletic abilities in another region of Yukon."

The Government of Yukon provided \$5,000 through the Moving to Inclusion Fund to support this year's games.

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