



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Special Olympics' Celebrity Winterfest® to Bring Fun, Competition
and Good Cause to North Lake Tahoe March 5-7**

COMMUNITY INVITED TO BE A PART OF EVENT

INCLINE VILLAGE, Nev. --Hollywood celebrities and US Olympians will join forces with business leaders and Special Olympics athletes for Special Olympics' Celebrity Winterfest® in a day of alpine racing March 6 at Diamond Peak Ski Resort and a weekend of community activities at Incline Village. Proceeds from the weekend's events will provide much-needed funding for more than 17,000 developmentally disabled athletes across Nevada and Northern California who rely on donations to receive free sports training and competition throughout the year.

"It's so important for kids and adults with special needs to have opportunities to train and compete – this is what the weekend is all about," said Melissa Dimino, a former US Olympian speed skier who is looking forward to the event and will race on the California Police Youth Charities Team. As the first woman in the world to reach and break the 200 kilometers an hour (124.2 mph) on skis, Melissa knows all about the hard work, competition and the rewards that come with it.

Special Olympics athletes are, in fact, "athletes", and sports are so necessary for them, Dimino explained. "Sports are an important part of life for so many of us. This population is no different – it gives them the opportunity to engage with others, compete, make friends and experience camaraderie."

Those skiing at Diamond Peak during the Celebrity Winterfest® are welcome to stop by and watch the competition beginning at 10:30 a.m., Saturday, March 6. It will feature 10 corporate teams paired with a Special Olympics athlete and a celebrity skier. Results from the day will be announced at an awards dinner with categories that include Best-Dressed Team, Fastest Skier, Best Spill, and the top three winning teams.

While the centerpiece of Celebrity Winterfest® is the corporate ski competition at Diamond Peak, this year a number of Celebrity Winterfest® festivities are open to the Lake Tahoe community. The public is invited to reserve tickets for the Welcome Celebration and Dinner at 7 p.m, or play in the Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament at 9 p.m. Friday, March 5 at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe Resort. Members of the

community also may purchase tickets to the Awards Dinner and Live Auction, held at 7 p.m., Saturday, March 6, also held at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe.

Participating celebrities include: Tim Abell (Buttermilk Sky, Soldier of God); Michael Buie (Mystery Alaska); Scott Michael Campbell (Brokeback Mountain); Melinda Clarke (The Vampire Diaries, O.C.); Melissa Dimino (US Olympian, speed skiing); Kevin Durand (Lost, X-Men Origins:Wolverine); Juliette Goodrich (anchor, Bay Area CBS 5); Thyme Lewis (Days of Our Lives); Tony Lopez (3x World Champion Boxer); Justin Melvey (Dancing with the Stars, Australia, General Hospital); Debbie Meyer (3x Olympic Gold Medalist- swimming); Rick Ravanello (Trial by Fire; Fatal Kiss); John Sasaki (Bay Area reporter, FOX KTVU 2); Nicole Sullivan (Rita Rocks, 17 Again, Kim Possible).

The 2010 Celebrity Winterfest® is presented by Blazent, a global IT-outsourcing company and co-sponsored by the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe Resort and Casino and Diamond Peak Ski Resort. Media sponsors include the Bay Area News Group and KPIX-CBS Channel 5. The weekend's events are supported by Ericsson, Continental Airlines, Pacific Color Graphics, Ogden-Costa Creative Design, Hertz and The Bodhi Tree.

About Special Olympics Northern California & Nevada

Special Olympics Northern California & Nevada is a free year-round sports training and competition program for children and adults with developmental disabilities. More than 17,000 athletes compete in 178 competitions throughout the region in 12 sports. This requires the extraordinary support and time of 12,700 volunteers and more than 4,600 volunteer coaches. Programs are free to all eligible athletes. Financial support comes almost exclusively from individuals, organizations, corporations, and foundations. For more information on Special Olympics Northern California, visit www.SONC.org. or www.SONV.org for Nevada.

About Diamond Peak Ski Resort

Diamond Peak Ski Resort is located in Incline Village, Nevada on the scenic north shore of Lake Tahoe, offering amazing views of the lake. Kids and beginners love it here. There is an 1840 foot vertical drop with 30 runs offering beginner to advanced terrain. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Flickr and YouTube, visit www.diamondpeak.com or call (775) 832-1177 and make Diamond Peak your Tahoe place to ski or snowboard this winter!

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