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**Two Alvirne High School Students Selected to Participate
in Youth Leadership Experience at Special Olympics USA Games**

Manchester, NH—6/18/2018--As a part of Team New Hampshire, two youth leaders and one mentor have been selected to engage in the Youth Leadership Experience at the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games in Seattle, Washington. Hannah Loverdi and Kelsey Richards, from Alvirne High School, were chosen as youth leaders to represent New Hampshire and will be accompanied by their mentor, Joanne Curry, at this year's Youth Leadership Experience. The Youth Leadership Experience will bring together high school students from across the country where they will participate in a week of volunteering and training on how to be representatives of change within their schools, communities, and state. This experience works with the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program which engages schools to create climates of inclusion, acceptance, respect, and human dignity for all students with and without intellectual disabilities.

Hannah Loverdi is a freshman at Alvirne High School and participates in soccer, Unified basketball, Unified track and field, and Unified theater. When asked about what does attending this event mean to you, she responded by saying, "It will give me a chance to meet other student leaders and share ideas that I can bring back to New Hampshire. I cannot wait to be a part of it and I look forward to all the of life long memories that will be formed."

Kelsey Richards participates in Unified basketball, Unified volleyball, Unified cheer, Unified theater, Unified music, and Unified art at Alvirne High School. She believes that, "Unified sports and leadership has impacted my life in so many ways. I have more confidence, I enjoy helping others, and it makes me feel stronger." She is most looking forward to meeting new people from across the country and learning about what other attendees are doing at their schools.

Both students are also highly involved in Alvirne High School's W.A.T.S (We're All The Same) Club which focuses on "making a friend and being friend". It is a social leadership club which holds monthly socials and organizes several "all school engagement" activities that happen throughout the school year. Some of these activities include Unified Celebration Week, 12 Days of Caring, Disability Awareness Day and many more events.

The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games will be held in Seattle, Washington July 1-6, 2018. More than 4,000 participants representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia, along with the support of tens of thousands of volunteers and spectators, will compete in 14 Olympic-type team and individual sports. The USA Games will showcase the abilities of athletes with intellectual disabilities and the impact of Special Olympics through world-class competition, inspirational experiences, and modeling inclusion for all. In addition to the Youth Leadership Experience participants, Team New Hampshire will be comprised of 36 athletes and 14 coaches and will compete in seven sports. These sports include athletics, aquatics, basketball, bocce, bowling, golf, and powerlifting. Team New Hampshire will be taking off to Seattle on June 29th!

ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS

Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools (UCS) builds on Special Olympics' values, principles, practices, experiences, and impacts to shape a generation of inclusion. The UCS approach integrates Special Olympics sports, leadership and related activities that inspire youth to be agents of change in their communities.

ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS NEW HAMPSHIRE

Special Olympics New Hampshire (SONH) is an accredited program of Special Olympics International (SOI) and is part of an international global movement that changes lives by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. To learn more, visit www.sonh.org.