



# Law Enforcement Officers Run For Special Olympics

By Thomas Capps

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MARION, IL — Corrections officers in Marion, Illinois, are setting out with other law enforcement agencies on a run of more than 200 miles for Special Olympics Illinois.

This year is the Special Olympics' 50th anniversary. Over those decades, law enforcement officers have played a vital role in supporting and promoting the organization.

Officers in Marion with the Illinois Department of Corrections are showing their support by carrying the Special Olympics torch of hope to the opening of the Illinois Special Olympics on Friday.

“This will be the longest continuous torch run across the Illinois,” said Chuck Mattmiller, who helped organized the Law Enforcement Torch Run.

Correction officers gathered on Monday to begin their week-long journey. Their hope is to promote and raise money for the Special Olympics.

“The torch run is going to be great,” said Special Olympics athlete John Henley.

If you talk to Henley for a minuet, you can see just how active he is. “In Special Olympics, I do nine sports and nine activities,” said Henley.

Athletes like Henley are the reason most officers run.

“I’ve done other events before, but this one is important,” said runner Bernie Jerolds.

Before the runners took off Monday, they got a few words of encouragement.

“For the 23,000 Special Olympic athletes of Illinois, you are our heroes,” Henley told the runners.

The Marion corrections officers are running one of 23 routes of the Law Enforcement Torch Run. Officers representing every branch of law enforcement across the state — from local police officers to FBI agents — make up those units. All units will meet up in Bloomington, Illinois, for the opening ceremony of the state Special Olympic Games on Friday.

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