Alhambra welcomes German Special Olympians

Alhambra, Monterey Park and Lincoln Heights were Host Towns on July 22-24 for Team Germany, which participated in the 2015 Special Olympics that opened Saturday, July 25, in Los Angeles. Nearly 200 members of all ages, who have been training for months, if not years, were hosted by the three communities to help the German delegates get acclimated and provide a memorable and quick immersion into American life and culture. 100 delegates were placed under the stewardship of the City of Alhambra in anticipation of the day\'s activities.

The Ratkovich Co. raises money for Special Olympics

The Special Olympics World Games 2015, which opened on July 25 in Los Angeles, was featured at The Ratkovich Company\'s Broker Luncheon on May 19. The luncheon is an annual event to showcase The Alhambra, the 45-acre office campus on Fremont and Mission. A philanthropic element is always part of the event, and the Special Olympics was chosen this year because Alhambra is a Host Town.

The speakers were Wayne Ratkovich, president and CEO of The Ratkovich Company and owner of The Alhambra; Patrick McClenahan, president and CEO of Special Olympics World Games 2015; Peter Hudnut, employee of The Ratkovich Company, 2008 Olympic Silver Medalist, and board member for Special Olympics World Games; Dustin Plunkett, Global Messenger for Special Olympics; and Keynote Speaker Rafer Johnson, the 1960 Olympic Gold Medalist in the Decathlon and founder of Special Olympics of California.

Decathlon Gold Medalist Rafer Johnson was the keynote speaker. He is the founder of Special Olympics of California.

The Ratkovich Company challenged all brokers to match $50 that was provided to them in a gift bag, or to donate more. \"We had a successful event and helped raise money for a fabulous organization,\" said Mr. Ratkovich.

Members of the soccer teams, otherwise known as football in Europe.
Alhambra Educational Foundation selected for Citadel Outlet’s 10th Annual Shopping Extravaganza Oct. 3

Tickets on sale now at www.citadeloutlets.com to support charities at L.A.’s favorite shop-for-a-cause event

Citadel Outlets — L.A.’s Choice for Outlet Shopping — invites its friends, families, and supporters of Alhambra Educational Foundation behind the Aerysian Wall for a day of fun, shopping, and fundraising at the Center’s 10th Annual Shopping Extravaganza from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 5. As a participating charity, Alhambra Educational Foundation will receive a portion of funds from the more than 4,500 Angelenos expected to attend one of the best shopping days of the year.

“This is our first year participating in Citadel Outlets’ Shopping Extravaganza, and we’re thrilled to be a part of the fun,” said AEF President Steve Perry. Money raised will help fund elementary music programs for all students and college counseling in Alhambra School District high schools.

For many organizations, including AEF, Citadel Outlet’s Shopping Extravaganza is the largest single fundraising event of the year. The day of fun-filled shopping includes access to exclusive deals on top of Citadel Outlets’ daily savings of 30-70% off retail prices.

Attendees can enjoy:

• Added discounts of more than 90 luxury fashion brands.
• Private, catered lunch.
• Live entertainment.
• Complimentary tasting by Stella Rosa of San Antonio Winery for guests ages 21 and over.
• The chance at $90,000 in prizes, including grand prize packs and gift cards to Michael Kors, Nike, Steve Madden, Kate Spade, Dsworld Outlet, and more.

Tickets are $55 per person and can be purchased online at www.citadeloutlets.com. Please select Alhambra Educational Foundation from the dropdown menu when purchasing at Citadel Outlets. Donates $25 of each ticket directly to the purchaser’s charity of choice. A full list of participating organizations can be found here.

“We’re thrilled to reach a decade of hosting this unique shop-for-a-cause event and we’re excited to see our community get involved in this year’s event,” said Taci Markel, marketing director at Citadel Outlets. It’s been so successful that in 2016 they raised over $94,000 for the community.

One hundred delegates were placed under the stewardship of the City of Alhambra in anticipation of the day’s activities, which would begin with a quick box lunch provided by Subway before making a private, privatized tour of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, one of the nation’s greatest assets — the leading U.S. center for robotic exploration of the solar system with 19 spacecraft and 10 instruments carrying out planetary, Earth science and space-based astronomy missions. After their visit, the delegates returned to Cal State L.A. where they were greeted by volunteers and representatives of Alhambra’s own Frosty’s Ice Cream, who agreed to provide scoops of America’s best ice cream.

With an educational experience behind them, it was now time for more entertainment and a closing reception with a chance to mingle with residents. It was time for some real diplomacy at Alhambra’s “Party in the Park” Celebration. Without a diehard Park, the delegates got off the bus and were greeted not only by a crew of residents from Alhambra and other local communities, but the likes of an American-style country fair with American Super Heroes such as Captain America, Batman, Spiderman, and Wonder Woman. The American heroes were eager to pose for snapshots with the German heroes and others. There was also a petting zoo, mostly for youngsters but enjoyed by all, and game booths to test one’s luck and win small prizes manned by Special Olympics volunteers.

The tasty arena of food was immediately discernable upon entering the park, filling the air and inviting people to line up at the food trucks, which included the Berlin Bruck, Slummin Sieters, Hang 10 Tacos, and Paradise Fine Cookies & Ice Cream. A picnic area with tables and chairs was set up especially for the delegates.

The ‘80s cover band, “Past Action Heroes,” was warming up on stage at the Band Shell, a crowd started to gather in the seats and others laid out blankets and chairs on the lawn. Then came a quiet and powerful set of colorful “Fireworks stringers” shot high in the air. After a repetitive set of songs by the band, Councilmember Gary Yamashita came to the stage and announced the award and offered them good luck at the Games. He also thanked the community for raising nearly $100,000 in support for the Host Town program and the many volunteers who helped make the program a success.

Councilmember Yamashita’s remarks were followed by performances by Jaycee Dance and the Pop Rock Academy. Youngsters from Jaycee Dance performed first to a classic rock song and then to the American hit, Upwarp. The Pop Rock Academy wowed the audience with vocal performances from other popular American pop rock hits. The Action Part Heroes returned to the stage with a phenomenal dance. And then it happened — Germans and Americans joining together on the dance stage. The more the band started to pump up the intensity, the more people started to dance. There was mutual understanding on this everyone was having a great time.

Day Two of the Host Town program was assigned to the City of Montebello Park and included a special dinner for the delegates co-hosted by Luminaris Restaurant and the Consul General of Germany. Day three brought together all three communities for an American-style Pop Rally at Cal State L.A. as a final way to acknowledge the new-found friendship with the German Team and to wish them well in the Games. After three days it was obvious to everyone — cultural diplomacy really works!

On July 25, Los Angeles will welcome more than 7,000 Special Olympics athletes from 170 countries to compete in 35-plus Olympic-type sports, including aquatics, gymnastics, track and field, basketball, football (soccer). It’s a world stage for the athletes to demonstrate on the playing field their courage, determination, and spirit of sportsmanship. Olympic games are at USC and UCLA.

Special Olympics is from a backyard summer camp for people with intellectual disabilities to a global movement. Special Olympics has been changing lives and attitudes for more than 47 years. Special Olympics is the world’s largest sports organization for people with intellectual disabilities, with more than 4.5 million athletes in 170 countries and millions more volunteers and supporters.