

Tulane to host Special Olympics celebration

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The Flame of Hope begins its 46-day journey in Washington, D.C. on May 26. (Photo from Special Olympics)

The [Special Olympics](#) World Games kick off in Los Angeles on July 25, but before the first race can be run in the City of Angels, runners are carrying the Special Olympics torch across the country in a relay that includes a stop on the Tulane University uptown campus for a community celebration.

The first-ever Unified Relay Across America will take the Flame of Hope on a 46-day journey through all 50 states in a hand-to-hand exchange where thousands of participants will run, walk or bike a segment of the route.

The celebration is something that [Gabe Feldman](#), Tulane law professor and the new area management team leader of Special Olympicsâ€”Orleans Parish, says will embody the core message of Special Olympics.

“Special Olympics strives to create a better world by fostering acceptance and inclusion of all people ? that"s a key message that I hope will come through in the celebration,” Feldman says. “I think the event will bring together people from the New Orleans community, from Tulane and the athletes to celebrate this historic event.”

The celebration will highlight a new partnership between Special Olympics and Tulane Athletics. Baseball head coach [David Pierce](#) will speak on behalf of Tulane to commemorate the new relationship and honor the work that Special Olympics does.

The event also will serve as an impromptu relaunch of Special Olympics in New Orleans, which Feldman says largely has been inactive since Hurricane Katrina ? something he hopes will make a big difference in the lives of athletes in the city.

The community celebration, which is free and open to the public, will feature a soccer game, live music and remarks from various people representing Special Olympics and Tulane. It will take place Tuesday (June 16) at 6 p.m. on the Lavin-Bernick Center Quad and will honor the relay participants and Special Olympics. For more information, check out the Special Olympics website or contact [Feldman](#).

“The hope is by reinvigorating Special Olympics in Orleans Parish that we'll be able to send a number of athletes from this area to the next world games.”—Gabe Feldman, Special Olympics, Orleans Parish