



ERSKINE AMBASSADORS



Special Olympics Indiana is proud to announce the formation of the **ERSKINE AMBASSADORS**.

Starting immediately, SOIN is accepting nominations of Special Olympics Indiana athletes to become the official spokespeople of the Carl Erskine Project 17. In this role selected athletes will be asked to make a brief scripted speech before each of the Premiere showings of the Ted Green film documentary – *The Best We've Got: The Carl Erskine Story*.

As you may already know, Carl Erskine is a very important figure in the history of Special Olympics Indiana. A native of Anderson, Carl enjoyed a successful Major League Baseball career with the Brooklyn and Los Angeles Dodgers between 1948 and 1959. He pitched in five World Series, winning one in 1955. He also pitched two no-hitters and set a World Series single-game strikeout record.

As a teammate and friend of Jackie Robinson, Carl witnessed how the silent perseverance of one man changed society. These lessons learned became part of Carl's legacy when his son Jimmy was born with Down Syndrome in 1960 and started participating in Special Olympics in 1970. As Carl used his life to promote acceptance and inclusion, inviting people to actively support good causes.

To nominate an athlete for Erskine Ambassador, send an email to mfurnish@soindiana.org **no later than June 15, 2022**. Include the name of the nominee, their County Program, and one sentence on why they'd like to be an Erskine Ambassador. During the week of June 20 each nominee will be asked to give the attached speech during a scheduled Zoom meeting. There are no age or training requirements, though athletes who have attended Athlete Leadership University will be given extra consideration. The speech does not have to be memorized, but it is preferred that it is.

The five athletes who are selected will be given additional training, special Erskine Ambassador apparel, and the opportunity to appear at a variety of events that promote the Erskine documentary film and associated EPIC school curriculum. The Ambassadors will be announced on July 1, 2022 and invited to attend the film's World Premiere in Anderson on August 11. The assignment will involve Erskine events that take place between August 2022 and December 2023.

For more information contact: mfurnish@soindiana.org

ERSKINE SPEECH FOR VIDEO

Hello! My name is _____ and I'm from Special Olympics _____ County. It is my pleasure to introduce award winning filmmaker Ted Green, the creator of a new documentary film about Carl Erskine. It's called **The Best We've Got**.

This new film is exciting for Special Olympics because Carl Erskine is a most important person in our history. He is important to us because in 1960 (before Special Olympics existed) Carl and his wife Betty had their 4th child named Jimmy. Jimmy had Down Syndrome. When Jimmy turned 10 years old Carl signed him up for Special Olympics, and was his # 1 cheerleader for the next 50 years.

Carl was asked by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder of Special Olympics, to become a spokesperson since Carl had been a famous professional baseball player. He pitched for the Brooklyn Dodgers, and became close friends with the first black player in the major leagues – Jackie Robinson.

We love Carl because he made a decision to become Jackie's friend at a time when blacks were excluded. We love Carl because he and Betty made a decision to take Jimmy home when babies with disabilities were often institutionalized. We love Carl because he always says "YES" to Special Olympics – and look what we've become!

Ladies and gentlemen, please show your appreciation to Ted Green who is helping to make sure Carl is never forgotten.