

News Release

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Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics Celebrates 20th Anniversary

More than 7,500 Youth Expected to Compete in Annual Summer Games

June 8, 2006 – August 4, 2006

HOUSTON (May 24, 2006) — Let the Summer Games begin! Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics Founder Commissioner El Franco Lee and the Street Olympics Board will kick-off the 20th Annual Summer Games on Thursday, June 8, 2006, at 11:00 a.m. at the George “Mickey” Leland Memorial Park.

“For twenty years, Street Olympics proudly and effectively has empowered and bolstered self-esteem in our youth while teaching them the life-long value of setting, working toward and reaching positive goals,” said Yvette Chargois, Street Olympics Board Chair.

The Street Olympics, created by Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee in 1986, provides recreational, social service, health, educational and vocational programs for the youth of Harris County. The Street Olympics program began with the Summer Games and humbly served only 200 kids. Today, the nonprofit is in its 20th successful year and offers multiple year-round and summer-only programs, directly and indirectly serving more than 7,500 Harris County youth.

The Summer Games program aims to provide structured athletic activity centered on games that young people traditionally play in the streets. The Olympic-style competitions are divided into four age divisions ranging from 6 to 15 years. Each game helps teach adolescents leadership, discipline and teamwork. Competitive areas include Frisbee throw, basketball, kickball kick, jump rope marathon, shuttle relay, jacks, softball throw, long and short distance running competitions and hula-hoop medley. After eight weeks of organized summer street fun, event finalists will face-off in a final championship competition at the Reliant Center on Friday, August 4, 2006.

“The success of Street Olympics today has by far exceeded our vision in 1986,” said Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee. “The achievements of the children—some now adults—who have gone through the programs, are commendable and bring me a sense of tremendous pride. I look forward to the continued success of this important program under the direction of its innovative and committed Board.”

Children can participate in the pre-qualifying rounds of the Summer Games by registering through more than 40 participating neighborhood agencies, including the City

of Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Neighborhood Centers, YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, and more. Finalists determined from each competition and division will have the chance to represent their home agency and compete at the Summer Games final event. Approximately 2,500 kids are expected to participate in this year's finals.

At the final event, participants also will have the opportunity to experience the **Bright Futures Fair** between competitions and medal ceremonies. The fair will feature more than 40 booths with beneficial information on health, educational opportunities, careers, life skills and more.

Other no-cost summer offerings from Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics include the acclaimed Harris County Aquatics Program with its Learn-to-Swim, Developmental and Competitive Aquatics Program, and a 3-On-3 Basketball tournament for youth ages 7 to 17. Each program is designed to introduce participation, competition and success in sports to young people who are positively receptive to and influenced by the organization's healthy, safe and fun summer activities.

Since its inception, Street Olympics has grown from a summer-only recreational program — the **Summer Games** — to include three year-round components: the **Northeast Adolescent Program**, which seeks to address health and social issues for area youth through education, prevention and intervention; the year-round **Harris County Aquatics Program**, which includes the 3-level Learn-to-Swim program and an award-winning competitive swim team, The Mighty Dolphins; and the **Discovery Camp Nature Program**, which provides children with hands-on education and orientation to the nature and the environment.

2006 Street Olympics Schedule of Events:

- Kick-off Press Conference and Torch Lighting Ceremony – June 8, 11:00 a.m. at Mickey Leland Memorial Park, 3701 Cavalcade
- 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament – July 13 & 14 at Fonde Recreation Center, 110 Sabine
- County Aquatics Splashdown – Friday, July 28 at Kashmere High School Natatorium, 6900 Wileyvale
- Summers Games Final Competition – Friday, August 4 at Reliant Center, One Reliant Park

Calling All Past Olympians:

To commemorate their 20th anniversary, the Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics would like to locate and honor previous medal winners at the Summer Games' final competition in August. If you are a past Street Olympics' medal winner and over 18-years-old, or if you are interested in finding out more about Street Olympics, please contact (713) 741-0851 or (713) 675-0004.

About Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics

Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics, Inc., a non-profit organization, is funded by public and private agencies including the Harris County Community and Economic Development Department. All donations are tax-deductible. For more information regarding the Street Olympics or to donate, please call (713) 741-0851 or (713) 675-0004.