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Local Special Olympic athletes compete at School Championship

Written By **Brian Lockhart**

Local students will be participating in the Special Olympics School Championships Games 2024 in Chatham-Kent from June 10 to 12, and taking part in several sports.

This is the first time since 1997 that any Special Olympic Games have been held in Chatham-Kent.

Athletes will compete in track and field, bocce, basketball, floorball, and soccer.

Basketball and bocce competitions will be held at the University of Guelph's Ridgetown Campus, with soccer and floorball taking place at Chatham Thames Campus.

Track and field events will take place at Chatham-Kent Secondary School.

Yasmine Wilson-Daponte, 20, a Shelburne resident and student at Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School, is the only student-athlete representing her school at the games.

Yasmine has been an athlete with the Special Olympics for more than 10 years and has competed in basketball, Bocce, curling, soccer, and swimming.

Yasmine said she appreciates the donors and supporters of Special Olympics ?which has allowed her to grow and thrive as an athlete.?

Along with Yasmine, five Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) students are going to the event.

?As a coach, I'm really happy to support and inspire them to co-operate, be team players, and show positive sportsmanship as they represent our school and the Town of Shelburne,? said Devin Hentsch, LRC-10 teacher and coach at CDDHS. ?They are all super excited to be playing basketball and participating in ceremonies and social events for the three days we will be there.?

The Centre Dufferin team has five athletes who are the basketball team representing their school and the Town.

The students, Robby Stone, Justin Rate, Brevin Wheeler-Koesen, Jay Samuel-Steivenart, and Jesiah Grant are practicing their skills to get ready for the event.

The CDDHS basketball team will be up against other teams from across Ontario during the championships.

These athletes train hard to get ready for these championship games and deserve the support of fellow students and residents of Shelburne as they vie for a medal in the provincial competition.