

From: Al Brandel <Al.Brandel@lionsclubs.org>

date: Wed, Mar 18, 2009 at 2:49 PM

subject: Lions Clubs International Support For Special Olympics

Dear Lion,

Lions Clubs International has had a long-lasting, and very rewarding partnership with the Special Olympics organization. The Special Olympics organization is engaging in a new campaign, launching March 31, called "Spread The Word to End The Word." It is a national day of awareness for America to stop and think about their use of the R-word. That R-word is not "recession," but something more hurtful and painful – "retard."

Our partnership began with the Opening Eyes program. The Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program is supported by Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF). The partnership program began in 2001 and has provided vision care to more than 100,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities. Together our two organizations are dedicated to serving those in need; the combined effort helps a population whose needs are so often overlooked.

Our partnership has been further solidified with recent initiatives, including new special interest Lions clubs popping up all over the United States, whose main focus is working with Special Olympics athletes. I also had the pleasure of attending the Special Olympics Winter Games in Boise, ID in February, and can tell you first hand these athletes carry themselves with dignity, and deserve nothing less than our admiration and respect.

Support of this campaign is easy, and will just take a moment of your time. Click on the link provided below to sign the pledge to stop using the R-word. Declare your support for more respectful and inclusive language, specifically that referring to those with intellectual disabilities. [www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org)

Spread the word Lions!!

Sincerely,

Al Brandel