

Special Spectators Continues to Build Partnership with General Mills Tailgate Nation, Launches its 2021 LIVE Season

September 18th Season opener at The Ohio State University brings the kids of Special Spectators back to the stadium, with new special touches and more to come

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES, September 21, 2021 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- As fans get back to stadiums and college football returns in force, [Special Spectators](#) is

back at it on any given Saturday, bringing the joy of Game Day to seriously ill children nationwide. Today, the organization announces the launch of its 2021 season, following its season opener this past weekend at The Ohio State University on September 18, hosting five kids battling serious illnesses and their families from local communities. Continuing in partnership for the entire season with General Mills, a corporation also driven by purpose, the organization is planning eight events now through November.

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Susan Pitt, Director, Brand Experience, General Mills

what has often been described as the greatest day of their often challenging and stressful, and sometimes short, lives.

"Coming out of a year and a half that's been particularly hard on families already impacted by serious illness for their children, we are thrilled to return with Special Spectators to make what we did together in 2020 even more powerful for these incredible children and young football fans," said Susan Pitt, Director, Brand Experience, General Mills. "Given our commitment to



purpose and local communities, it's already meant so much to partner with Special Spectators to reimagine VIP Game Days during the all-virtual 2020 season. Now, we are expanding the experience for these kids and families, to incorporate the live experience and all kinds of surprises. The Ohio State event was just the start of our next season together. This partnership continues to evolve and we are honored to serve these children, collaborating with our friends at Special Spectators."

Together with their partners at General Mills, along with LEARFIELD, Special Spectators returns for the 2021 season with more of their action-packed signature all-access football game days, which typically include behind-the-scenes stadium and sideline field tours, an exclusive hospitality area prior to the game, and an array of special touches over the course of a full-day event.

This season, due to CDC and covid regulations, some limitations will remain. But the partners have developed creative hybrid events to encompass as much experience inside the stadium and behind the scenes as possible. Tailgate care packages showcasing select General Mills brands and their Tailgate Nation recipes, gift packages supplied by the athletic departments and Special Spectators will be shipped to families in advance. And, as always, there will be an invitation for fans to text encouraging notes of support to the children and their families, via social media and



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Brutus visits with Special Spectators at VIP tailgate at Ohio State vs. Tulsa

within the stadium, working closely with facilities staff.

The 2021 Special Spectators Season with General Mills

Ohio State - Sept 18

Penn State - Sept 25

Michigan - Oct 23

Arkansas - Nov 6

Alabama - Nov 13

Iowa - Nov 13

Texas - Nov 26

Florida - Nov 27

"The 2020 season for our Special Spectators, working in partnership with General Mills, was a reflection of all that we are about -- coming together to create unforgettable experiences that allow these kids to feel like true insiders, part of the team. And doing whatever it takes to make that happen. They become VIPs for the day, often a day that we've been told puts a permanent pep back in their step," said Special Spectators Founder and Executive Director, Blake Rockwell. "And now here we are, as things open back up in 2021. Even though challenges remain, we are back at it with General Mills, creating memories -- and we are thrilled that this will once again include in-person experiences. We're also getting a slightly earlier start this year -- so keep an eye on us and the incredible children we serve."

"Having the opportunity to work closely with General Mills and Special Spectators to ensure that we keep bringing memorable experiences to these children and their families is something we are very passionate about at LEARFIELD, and our school partners have stayed the course," said Bill Hirsh, Vice President, National Sales for LEARFIELD, the athletics multimedia rightsholder for the eight schools engaged this fall. "It's fantastic to have even more options for the 2021 season, to deliver even fuller experiences for these special guests."

About General Mills

General Mills is a leading global food company whose purpose is to make food the world loves. Its brands include Cheerios, Annie's, Yoplait, Nature Valley, Häagen-Dazs, Betty Crocker, Pillsbury, Old El Paso, Wanchai Ferry, Yoki, BLUE and more. Headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, General Mills generated fiscal 2020 net sales of U.S. \$17.6 billion. In addition, General Mills' share of non-consolidated joint venture net sales totaled U.S. \$1.0 billion.

About Special Spectators

Special Spectators partners with athletic departments, coaching staffs, athletes, local hospitals, student volunteers, network broadcasters, and corporate sponsors to serve these children and families nationwide. The organization is entirely volunteer-based, with no paid staff and relies heavily on donations and in-kind support to fuel its calendar of events each year. Read more of Founder Blake Rockwell's story on CNN Heroes website, their Facebook or Twitter pages. To donate and help give even more seriously ill children a magical VIP game day, please visit the

website. There you can also find out more about what your donations cover -- everything from food, to tents and chairs, and transportation.

About LEARFIELD

LEARFIELD is a leading media and technology services company in intercollegiate athletics. The company unlocks the value of college sports for brands and fans through an omnichannel platform with innovative content and commerce solutions. LEARFIELD services includes licensing and multimedia sponsorship management; publishing, audio, digital and social media; data analytics; ticketing, ticket sales and professional concessions expertise; branding; campus-wide business and sponsorship development; and venue technology systems. Since 2008, it has served as title sponsor for the acclaimed LEARFIELD Directors' Cup, supporting athletic departments across all divisions.

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