

SPECIAL NEEDS NETWORK LAUNCHES LA ACTIVATIONS TO PUT NEURODIVERGENT ANGELENOS AT THE CENTER OF THE WORLD CUP ECONOMY

Public Activations with LA Metro Serve as Public-Facing Engagement Component of SNN's LA Inclusive Initiative

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The World Cup is coming to Los Angeles, and the jobs are coming with it. We intend to make sure neurodivergent Angelenos are hired, trained, and counted in that economy."

Areva Martin, President & CEO of Special Needs Network

(SNN) today announced the launch of a new series of family-friendly community activations in partnership with LA Metro and its FIFA World Cup watch parties across Los Angeles County. The experiential events will debut June 12 at Memorial Park in Pasadena and continue through the FIFA World Cup Final on July 19.

The activations are part of LA Inclusive, SNN's workforce development and economic inclusion initiative designed to connect neurodivergent Angelenos to opportunities created by the FIFA World Cup, Super Bowl LXI, and the LA28 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Together, these

global events are expected to generate more than 100,000 jobs and billions of dollars in economic activity across Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Through LA Inclusive, SNN is working to ensure neurodivergent residents are not merely spectators of that growth, but active participants in it.

With 1 in 36 children in the United States diagnosed with autism, SNN is reframing how the region sees that population. This is not simply a service population. It is a workforce.

Beginning June 12, each activation will feature SNN's new experiential footprint, including modular branded walls, refreshed Special Flavours food truck and ice cream cart fleet, interactive soccer-themed activities, and an on-the-ground team of trained staff and ambassadors.

The Special Flavours Community Kitchen and Special Flavours Food Truck are staffed by

Flavouristas, trainees and graduates of SNN's culinary arts and hospitality training program. They are joined by Activation Specialists serving as brand ambassadors, customer engagement representatives, and workforce trainees at each stop.

The activations also mark the public debut of Sip & Scoop, SNN's new mobile ice cream and beverage cart, premiering June 12 at Memorial Park.

"For too long, autism has been discussed only in the context of services and support," said Areva Martin, President and CEO of Special Needs Network. "We need to start talking about talent, employment, and economic participation. One in 36 children in America is autistic. Those children are becoming adults. The question is whether Los Angeles is prepared to invest in them as a workforce. Through LA Inclusive, we're making sure the answer is yes."

Martin added, "The World Cup is coming to Los Angeles, and the jobs are coming with it. We intend to make sure neurodivergent Angelenos are hired, trained, and counted in that economy."

WHY IT MATTERS

California is home to the nation's largest population of individuals with developmental disabilities, yet unemployment and underemployment among neurodivergent adults remains disproportionately high. LA Inclusive was created to change that reality by connecting training, employment preparation, employer partnerships, and public awareness into a single workforce ecosystem.

The LA Metro activations provide the public-facing engagement component of that effort, showcasing the talent, skills, and contributions of neurodivergent Angelenos while connecting community members, employers, and policymakers to a broader vision of economic inclusion.

ABOUT SPECIAL NEEDS NETWORK

Special Needs Network, Inc. (SNN) is a leading nonprofit organization serving children, adults, and families affected by autism and other developmental disabilities across Southern California. Founded by attorney, advocate, and national media commentator Areva Martin, SNN provides advocacy, education, workforce development, clinical services, and community-based supports designed to create opportunity and improve outcomes for underserved communities.

Through innovative initiatives such as LA Inclusive, Special Flavours, and the CORE Workforce Development Program, SNN is helping build a future in which neurodivergent individuals are fully included in the economic, social, and civic life of their communities.

Learn more at snnla.org.

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