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For immediate release

## **“Try Hockey for Free” at Wilson Ice Arena April 30**

Milwaukee, WI (April 14, 2016) – Try Hockey for Free, an event offered through the partnership of the Southeastern Hockey Association of Wisconsin (SHAW) and Milwaukee County Parks, is expanding this year to include a session for families with children with developmental disabilities. The general session is April 30, from 10:30 a.m.–noon, with the session for children with special needs following, from noon–1:30 p.m. The Ice Arena is located at 4101 S. 20 St.

“To grow the sport of hockey, we want to expose more families not only to the skills that are developed on the ice, but also to the friendships, and life skills that continue to flourish off the ice,” said Parks Director John Dargle, Jr.

This year’s expanded program was developed by the Southeast Wisconsin Association for Special Hockey (SWASH), the special programming arm of SHAW. Through SWASH, Milwaukee joins over 50 other cities throughout the United States and Canada that provide hockey programs for individuals with special needs.

Juan Rios, Coordinator for Special Hockey Programs at SHAW, said, “SWASH will bring to the ice individuals who might otherwise feel left behind due to their developmental status. As a parent of both a SHAW hockey player and a child with special needs, I have tried to find activities that my children can share. Special hockey allows my child to have something in common with his brother.”

A question and answer session on Special Hockey Programs will run from 11:45 a.m. –noon, just prior to the session for children with special needs.

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Rios also noted that SWASH is developing a hockey team.

“When kids get fired up about hockey, we want to offer them the chance to learn more and play on a team,” said Rios. “We’re eager to start filling the roster for The Pirates!”

Registration for the event is not required but will help in assigning instructors, volunteers, hockey gear, and equipment. All equipment will be provided; however participants are welcome to bring their own gear or equipment. Families may register by contacting Rios at (414) 801-7613 or [swash.specialhockey@gmail.com](mailto:swash.specialhockey@gmail.com).

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