

# Special Olympics Arkansas General Session

***Special Olympics***  
*Arkansas*



The first step in becoming a coach for  
Special Olympics Arkansas

# In The Beginning.....



## *Eunice Kennedy Shriver*

In 1960, ran a day camp for persons with intellectual disabilities, literally out of her back lawn, and the vision was born.

Organized the first International Special Olympics Games at Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois in 1968.

# What Does Special Olympics Participation Provide to the Athletes?

- Year round sports training and competition in Olympic-type sports for persons with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities.
- Improved physical/mental fitness and sport skills for athletes.
- Opportunities for athletes to develop lifelong friendships, discover their courage, experience joy, enjoy opportunities to share gifts, and to develop a vision for the future.

# The Athletes Deserve:

- To receive appropriate instruction and encouragement.
- Consistent training and coaching performed at a professional level.
- Opportunities to compete with athletes of *equal* abilities.
- New Opportunities for life-changing experiences.

# **Athletes Will Leave With:**

- Improved physical fitness.
- A sense of joy at their accomplishments and courage to reach new heights.
- Additional opportunities for sharing their unique gifts and skills with others.
- Expanded friendships for themselves, their families, and their communities.

# How Many Lives Does Special Olympics Touch?

- In 1968 there were approximately 1,000 athletes participating in Special Olympics in Chicago, Illinois.
- In 1994, there were 1,000,000 athletes participating in Special Olympics competition world wide.
- In 2005 there are over 1.5 million athletes participating in the global message of Special Olympics competition.
- Another interesting fact, one of six families in the U.S. know someone who could or is participating in Special Olympics training and competition.

# Global Structure of Special Olympics Incorporated

- **Special Olympics, Incorporated Board of Directors** *Oversees all programs throughout the world*
- **National Programs/US Programs** *Region based*
- **Area Program** *County based*
- **Local Programs** *District/Community Based*

# Special Olympics Arkansas Structure

- The Athletes
- Special Olympics Arkansas Board of Directors  
Approve policies/procedures.
- Executive Director  
Terri Weir  
Program Staff/Committees  
Oversee implementation of policies/procedures.
- Development Director  
Oversee the fund raising aspect of Special Olympics Arkansas at the Area and Program Level.
- Area Directors  
Oversee Area Management Teams.
- Area Management Teams  
Oversee all areas of Special Olympics Arkansas Programs at an area level.  
(Competition, Training, Fund Raising, Volunteers)



# YOU make it ALL happen



Special Olympics Arkansas Volunteer Participation:

Nearly 15,000 volunteers in 2005—that is Grassroots volunteers bringing the Mission of Special Olympics to the communities in Arkansas. Coaching, Training, Fund Raising, Escorting Athletes, Slinging Burgers!

Over 2500 Certified Coaches.

# How is Special Olympics Unique?

- No fees charged to athletes
- Sports opportunities for all ability levels.
- Divisioning for equitable competition.
- Awards for all competitors

# Special Olympics Benefits The Athlete...

Athletes are shown to have increases in performance at work, school, and home that correspond directly with the length of time an athlete spends in a Special Olympics Program.

(Yale University Study-1995)

Athletes are shown to have significantly improved attitudes toward school and physical education after participation in Special Olympics.

(Texas Tech University Research Study)

# Athlete Leadership Program (ALPS)

- Athletes as Volunteers,  
Coaches and Officials
- Global Messengers
- Board Members
- Committee Members on  
your Area Management  
Team
- Input Council and Athlete  
Congress



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# Healthy Athlete Initiatives

Designed to enhance the opportunities for Special Olympians to receive medical needs or therapeutic needs.

- Special Smiles
- Opening Eyes
- Healthy Hearing
- Fun Fitness



Are the Healthy Athlete initiatives offered through participation during Summer Games competition.

# Special Olympics Credibility and Awareness

- 97% name recognition in the United States  
(Performance Research, 2001)
- 2001 Non-Profit of the Year  
(Direct Marketing Association, 2001)
- Named the most credible charity in the United States (Chronicle of Philanthropy, 1995)

# **Special Olympics Participation Benefits The Families...**

- Share the accomplishments of their children.
- Allow the extended family to participate in year-round sports training and competition.
- Share Special Olympics' experience with other families.

# Volunteer Tasks.....

- Board Members
- Area Directors
- Training Directors
- Coach/Assistant  
Coach
- Games Directors
- Area Management  
Team Members
- Sports Directors
- Office Support
- Officials
- Local Coordinators
- Unified Partners
- Public Relations
- Fund Raising
- Competition Directors
- Liaison in the  
Community



# What Can YOU Do?

- Increase the number of athletes and volunteers participating in the program.
- Improve the quality of coaching and training.
- Provide inclusive/integrated sports opportunities.
- Create family opportunities.
- Update public awareness.
- Focus on ability of athletes.

# Who Can You Help Reach?

Schools

*Elementary, Middle, Junior and High Schools*

Transitional Students

*Those Students leaving High School not affiliated with a DDS Program*

Community Agencies-DDS Agencies

Parks and Recreation Programs-

*Targeting “stay at home” individuals*

Current Athletes/Families-

*Communicating new initiatives and competitions in your area.*

*Outreach Initiatives*

# Challenges....



- More athletes
- More volunteers, especially coaches and key sports/ competition personnel
- Quality training and competition
- Athlete Leadership
- Integrated Sports Opportunities
- FAMILY involvement
- Public Education
- Facilities for training and competition programs.

# Identification for Eligibility

The person is 8 years of age or older and...

- Is identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability? *Yes, the individual is eligible for participation!*
- Has a *cognitive delay* determined by acceptable standardized test or other measures? *Yes, the individual is eligible for participation!*
- Is Identified as having *closely related developmental disability* with function limitations in both general learning and adaptive skills? *Yes, the individual is eligible for participation!*
- If the functional limitations are only due to: physical disabilities, emotional disturbances, behavior disorders, specific learning disabilities, visual impairments or sensory disabilities...The individual is NOT eligible.

# Athletes Are Individuals That...

Demonstrate substantial limitations in present functioning characterized by:

- Sub-average intellectual functioning
- Limitations in two or more areas of adaptive behavior
- Usually manifested prior to the age 18

# Adaptive Behavior Areas

- Communication
- Self-care
- Home Living
- Social Skills
- Leisure
- Health and Safety
- Work
- Academics

# Special Olympics Offers Competition in

- Aquatics
- Athletics
- Basketball
- Bocce
- Bowling
- Cycling
- Equestrian
- Football
- Figure Skating
- Softball
- Volleyball
- Team Handball
- Tennis
- Table Tennis
- Powerlifting
- Floor Hockey
- Speed Skating
- Gymnastics
- Golf

# A Place For Everyone To Participate...



***Special  
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- Motor Activities Training Program
- Individual Skills
- Individual Sports
- Team/Traditional Sports
- Unified Sports



# Unified Sports

Provides opportunities for athletes to participate in competitive sports on teams with peers without intellectual disabilities and similar ability.

Special Olympics Arkansas offers Unified Sports Competition in Basketball, Bocce, Football, Golf, Floor Hockey, Softball, Table Tennis and Volleyball.

# Simple Coaching Techniques

- Frequent Repetition
- Frequent reinforcement
- Use of a few key words
- Appropriate levels of instruction
- Continuous assessment and advancement
- Continuous training

# Coaches Training

You Must...

- Attend a General Session.
- Attend a Coaches Training School in the sport you wish to be certified.
- Have 10 hours of practicum hours in that sport prior to turning in certification form.
- Submit your form for certification to the Area Training Director.

# About the Competition



## Competition must:

Adhere to National Governing Body (NGB) and Official Special Olympics Sports Rules.

Allow all athletes to excel within the rules of Special Olympics.

Use the appropriate guideline for individual competition (10-15%).

Utilize assessment and classifications for team sports (divisioning rounds).

# Age Divisions

## Individual Sports

- 8-11
- 12-15
- 16-21
- 22-29
- 30 and over

## Team Sports

- 8-15
- 16-21
- 22 & Over

# Where Can Your Athletes Compete?

- Leagues
- Local Competition
- Tournaments
- Regional Games
- Area Games
- Community Programs
- Chapter Games
- National Games
- World Games



# Competition Advancement

Athletes must have on file in the Special Olympics Arkansas Office and Area Directors a current physical/parental release prior to any training or competition.

## **Area Competition**

Athletes eligible for competition and wanting to advance to Chapter Competitions must compete in the competition at their area.

## **Chapter Games**

All athletes must have competed at the area and meet criteria selected by Area Directors/Coaches to advance.

## **National Games/World Games**

Athletes must have competed in sport selected. Athletes must have been a participant during one of two Sports Camps. Athletes must be nominated for competition by Area Director.

# Making it all work...

- **TRAINING** is the key
- **COMPETITION** is the means
- Skills, confidence, courage are the **OUTCOME**
- Better preparation for life is the **GOAL**
- Lifelong skills and increased independence are the **RESULTS**



# Special Olympics Oath

*“Let me win,  
But if I cannot win,  
Let me be brave  
In the attempt.”*