



Special Olympics Arkansas (SOAR) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit headquartered in North Little Rock (Pulaski County). The Mission of Special Olympics Arkansas is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendships with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics Arkansas began in 1970, just two years after Special Olympics Incorporated founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver held the first Special Olympics games at Soldier Field in Chicago (1968). Arkansas' games were held in Conway Arkansas at Hendrix College. There were approximately 260 athletes in attendance. The following year games were held in North Little Rock, Arkansas at Old Main. Eunice Kennedy Shriver was in attendance.

Since our first games in 1970 Special Olympics Arkansas has grown to 17 Areas encompassing all counties in the state. SOAR supports 14,000 adults and children with intellectual disabilities. There are 20 different Olympic-type sports offered and 240 competitions year-round. Some sports include Bocce, Bowling, Floor Hockey, Basketball, Flag Football, Softball, Golf, Soccer, Athletics, Volleyball, and Tennis. Our largest competition event is summer games. The event, held in May each year, is host to 2000 athletes participating in 6 different sports. Arkansas athletes also compete in Special Olympics USA Games held in the summer every four years and Special Olympics World Games held every four years alternating between winter and summer competitions.