Christopher Truono recognized as 2015 Outstanding Athlete

Chris Truono once decided to raise his own athletic bar and travel across the world to Athens, Greece, to compete at the Special Olympics World Games.

Just last year he decided to rappel down a 17-story building to help support the very organization that has given him so many opportunities.

But whether swimming at the highest level that Special Olympics has to offer, or going “Over the Edge” in Wilmington, the 34-year-old multi-sport athlete says one of the best decisions he ever made was joining Special Olympics. “I got involved the year I began working at MBNA in my last year of high school,” Truono recalled. “My friends encouraged me to join and I have never regretted that decision.”

(continued on p. 2)

UD launches a pilot SODE experience class on campus - SODE athletes needed for spring semester!

The University of Delaware Dept. of Human Development and Family Services launched a pilot program in September entitled “Special Olympics Relationship Experience (SORE)” - a new class designed to give opportunities for UD students to learn about people with intellectual disabilities, and play sports together!

The course currently has more than 25 UD students and 25 SODE athletes meeting once a week to play soccer. Plans are underway for a Spring semester class. SODE athletes must be 18 and older to sign up. For more information, please contact kfrazer@udel.edu.
Since that big decision, Truono has competed in Nordic skiing, basketball, long distance running, bowling and swimming. Recently he’s narrowed his focus to the latter three sports, with swimming being his true passion. “I enjoy swimming the longer distances, 400- and 800-meters,” he said.

Truono won a gold and silver medal along with a few ribbons at the 2011 World Games. He has also completed a marathon. His drive as an athlete, coupled with his modeling of good sportsmanship as a teammate is what earned Truono the 2015 Outstanding Athlete award. He was honored at the organization’s annual Night of Heroes on Oct. 7

“This is definitely a huge honor,” Truono said. “I am so proud to be a part of Special Olympics Delaware.

Truono was quick to credit his coaches. “My coaches motivate me to be the best that I can be, which gives me a wealth of confidence to achieve anything and not give up,” Truono said. “Being a good teammate and enjoying team spirit and cheering for my teammates is very important as it shows great leadership and great sportsmanship, how to win and lose gracefully.”

As a graduate of the Communicate with Confidence course, Truono often shares his Special Olympics story to audiences of all sizes, including attendees at SODE’s monthly Mission Tours.

“It was quite an experience,” Truono explained of his 17-story rappel during a recent Mission Tour. “And I was the top fundraiser.”

Truono isn’t just an athlete, but a sports fan who spends Sundays with his father watching the Eagles. He also enjoys movies, reading the paper and collecting his favorite music. And like most people, he enjoys the friendships he’s created while being involved with Special Olympics.

“I have made many new friends, not only on the Delaware teams, but worldwide when I went to Greece,” he said smiling.

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**Sign up for Winter Sports!**

Winter Sports are a great opportunity to experience Olympic-type sports in the snow! Winter sports consist of Alpine skiing (downhill), Nordic skiing (cross-country) and Snowshoeing.

All athletes who train in a winter sport are eligible to participate at the state level competition, which is usually hosted by one of our neighboring states in the mid-Atlantic region.

**Eligible athletes who train in a winter sport may also apply to be considered for a spot in the 2017 Special Olympics World Games, to be held in Graz and Schladming, Austria.**

Remember! Special Olympics Delaware provides all equipment and winter gear (skis, boots and parkas) for the competition at no charge. Call your Area Director to get more information or contact Mark Wise (mwise@udel.edu) at the Special Olympics Delaware Office.
Fall season sports are winding down, and that means Special Olympics athletes will fill up the courts and fields to compete in soccer, flag football, long-distance running, bocce and volleyball.

Final event and sport-specific schedules, including game times and divisions, will be posted on our Fall Festival page on the website. Please continue to check online for updates regarding the event. Visit WWW.SODE.ORG for more information!

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**Friday, October 30**
- 5:00pm: Registration Opens
- Olympic Village
- 6:00pm – 9:00pm: Team Volleyball Competition
  - Sipprelle Field House
- Bocce Competition
  - Sipprelle Field House

**Saturday, October 31, 2015**
- 7:00am: Registration Opens
- Olympic Village
- 7:00am – 9:00am: Team Soccer Competition
  - Soccer Fields
- Bocce Competition
  - Sipprelle Field House
- 8:00am – 9:00am: Team Volleyball Competition
  - Sipprelle Field House
- Flag Football Competition
  - Football Fields
- 9:00am: Long Distance Running
- 10:00am: Opening Ceremony
  - Sipprelle Field House
- 11:00am – 1:30pm: Lunch
- 11:00am – 4:00pm: Olympic Village
- Bocce Competition continues
- Young Athletes Program
- Soccer Skills Competition
- Team Volleyball continues
- Team Soccer continues
- Flag Football continues

**Notes:**
Award times will be determined by each venue throughout the day.
Be sure to check out the fun festivities at the Olympic Village on Saturday!
For more details, please visit our website at www.sode.org.
Go Over the Edge for Special Olympics!

WHEN: THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2016
WHERE: 300 DELAWARE AVE., WILMINGTON

Looking for an adventure of a lifetime? Over the Edge, co-sponsored by TD Bank, Brandywine Realty Trust and New Castle County Fire Service, is a unique fundraising event -- and the first of its kind in the Tri-State area -- allowing brave individuals to challenge themselves by rappelling 17 stories (222 feet) “Over the Edge” of a building to raise money and awareness for Special Olympics Delaware.

Challenge yourself to new heights ... then, sign up online and start early to raise funds through Firstgiving!

For the third straight year, we are streaming the event live on the Internet so anyone anywhere in the world can watch YOU Go Over the Edge.

Registration is open ... visit www.sode.org and sign up today!

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Run or Walk at the Sea Colony
5K Turkey Trot in Bethany Beach on Sun., November 29.

Registration begins at 7:00am. Race starts at 9:00am.

$25 Pre-Registration fee (check must be received by November 14); $30 fee after November 14.

Join your fellow turkeys for a 5K run through the west side of Sea Colony as trotters raise money for Special Olympics Delaware. The race begins and ends at the Freeman Fitness Center. What better way is there to burn off those holiday over-indulgences?? To download a registration form, visit www.sode.org.

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Charitable giving through United Way

The United Way campaign is currently in progress and all contributions are appreciated.

You may designate any portion of your United Way contribution to Special Olympics Delaware by indicating our name and address (listed below) in the donor designation area located at the bottom of the pledge form. Thank you for your support!

Agency # 9026
Special Olympics Delaware
University of Delaware
Newark, DE 19716-1901

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Sponsored by

BNY MELLON

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Reindeer Run
Benefiting Special Olympics Delaware

Sign up today for the 10th Anniversary of the Reindeer Run & Romp 5K benefiting Special Olympics Delaware!

WHEN: Friday, December 4, 2015. On-site registration opens at 5:00pm. Runners will take off at 7:00pm with walkers immediately following.

WHAT: This merry event, sponsored by BNY Mellon, features holiday entertainment all along the course and - NEW THIS YEAR - a costume contest. Run or romp in your most festive gear and then stick around for post-race refreshments!

WHERE: Begins at the Aetna Fire Station on the corner of Academy St. & Delaware Ave. in downtown Newark.

HOW: Pre-registration available for $25 until November 24, 2015 - sign up online at www.sode.org. Day-of registration fee will be $30.

Learn more at www.sode.org, or feel free to reach out to Corinne Plummer at cplummer@udel.edu or 302-831-4796 with questions.

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Special Olympics Delaware: One Team, One Vision.
Help us grow our Plunge to 3,700 Polar Bears - that’s one for every athlete we serve!

The Lewes Polar Bear Plunge for Special Olympics Delaware is a fundraising event in which participants pledge $75 or more to “take the Plunge” on Sunday, February 7 in support of 3,700 Special Olympics Delaware athletes around the state.

Whether you dip your toes, venture ankle deep, or go for the full immersion - YOU can be a Polar Bear! Plunge with a friend, or better yet, form a team and make it a group effort!

Plunge teams can be companies or organizations, school groups, friends, co-workers, neighbors or family members who want to experience the thrill of the chill together ... it’s fun to plunge together!

NEED A PLUNGE TEAM TOOLKIT? Contact lismith@udel.edu to register your team and to receive your free Plunge Team Toolkit or call 302-831-3482.
Be inspired to volunteer for SODE ...

AREA LEADERSHIP TEAM POSITIONS: MOT Area is looking for a Volunteer Manager. Volunteer Managers work with SODE staff to ensure that all volunteers are registered with SODE and that area volunteer needs are being met. Also currently looking for a Basketball Coach for MOT. Please Email Bonnie Wagner at sode.mot@gmail.com.

COACHES AND UNIFIED PARTNERS: Coaches and Unified Partners are needed to volunteer for Winter and Spring Sports in all Areas. Interested? Open positions are listed in the Area pages at www.sode.org -or- please contact the Area directors below.

FAMILY TEAM SUPPORT: Special Olympic Area teams need family support for tasks such as uniform inventory, practice attendance, coach thank you’s and more. Please speak with your team coach or sport director for more information on how you can help your team.
-OR- For further information on volunteer needs or how to register as a volunteer, please contact Carly Thompson at 302-831-3479 or cthom@udel.edu.

SODE Kent: Dave Manwiller at sode.kent@gmail.com
SODE MOT: Bonnie Wagner at sode.mot@gmail.com
SODE Newark: Tim Kiser at sode.newark@gmail.com
SODE Wilmington: Ed Capodanno and Joanne Cunningham at sode.wilmington@gmail.com
SODE Sussex: contact info@sode.org

MOTIVATE THE FIRST STATE - make your workouts count!

Make every time you’re active count for charity. Sign up for FREE

for the three charities. So you can raise money for SODE every day just by getting or staying in shape or just recording your healthy habits like eating vegetables, brushing your teeth or a slew of other everyday activities.

If you aren’t working out, what a perfect reason to start. You’ll be inspired because you’ll be doing it for not only your own health, but to benefit the 3,700 Special Olympics Delaware athletes who inspire us each and every day on and off the playing fields.

It’s easy to sign up and track your exercise and other daily healthy habits. No matter what your daily exercise and healthy living habits are, you can make a difference! Register today and join our SODE team -- just search Special Olympics Delaware for our team. Thank you!

Stay connected with Special Olympics Delaware!

- Have you changed your contact information (mailing address, email or phone number)? Please notify the SODE office asap at 302-831-4653 so that we can update our records. Thank you!

ATHLETE LEADERSHIP - Communication Classes return this Spring

Special Olympics Delaware will be revamping the Communication course to align with new resources developed through Special Olympics Inc. Plans will include continuing the partnership with Toastmasters and involving athletes as mission ambassadors.

We hope to pilot some of these athlete leadership opportunities in spring 2016 - look for more information soon!
Phil Saxon remembers exactly where he was the first time he was introduced to Special Olympics.

“Back in 1991 I was playing basketball with the Brandywine Social Club and Melvin and Claudia Brown saw me play and thought I’d be a good player for Special Olympics,” he recalled fondly. “And so they talked to me about it and I talked to my mom about it, and we both decided let’s go for it.”

While the script has been written for the start of Saxon’s participation with Special Olympics, the final chapter has yet to be penned as the 61-year-old Wilmington resident plans to continue to play sports for many years to come.

On October 7 at the Night of Heroes, Saxon officially became the 26th member of the Special Olympics Delaware Hall of Fame, joining fellow athletes and longtime volunteers as a recipient of the organization’s highest honor.

“I was so excited,” Saxon said of his reaction when he received the phone call. “I said, ‘Whoa!’ I was yelling a little bit and I was glad there was nobody around to wonder what was happening to me. I was really happy and surprised to hear that I was selected.”

Saxon played basketball and ran track and field early on in his involvement and soon added the sports of volleyball, bowling, golf and tennis to his repertoire. “Tennis is my favorite,” he admitted. “And golf is probably my second. I do like competing in all of them, but tennis is definitely my favorite.”

Saxon’s talents and contributions aren’t limited to swinging a racket. He served on the SODE Board of Directors for more than a decade, chairing the Athlete Input Council and serving on the Sports Program committee. He also delivers speeches to audiences of all sizes, telling his Special Olympics story and the impact the organization has had on his life.

Saxon admitted he has many fond memories during his nearly 25 years in Special Olympics. But when asked his favorite to date, he responded without hesitating. “When I was chosen Athlete of the Year back in 2002,” he said smiling. “That was pretty special.”
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIAL OLYMPICS EVENT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Sports Festival</td>
<td>Fri., Oct. 30</td>
<td>See P.3</td>
<td>St. Andrew’s School, Middletown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sat., Oct. 31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basketball Coaches Clinic</td>
<td>Wed., Nov. 4</td>
<td>6:30-8pm</td>
<td>Goldey Beacom College gymnasium</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCHOOL BASKETBALL COMPETITIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCCo Elementary Schools</td>
<td>Thurs., Nov. 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Middletown HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCCo Secondary Schools - 1</td>
<td>Tues., Nov. 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>William Penn HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent Co. Elementary Schools</td>
<td>Fri., Nov. 13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Smyrna HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent Co. Secondary Schools</td>
<td>Mon., Nov. 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caesar Rodney HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sussex Co. Elementary &amp; Secondary</td>
<td>Tues., Nov. 17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sussex Tech HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCCo Secondary Schools - 2</td>
<td>Thurs., Nov. 19</td>
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<td>McKean HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCCo MATP Demonstrations</td>
<td>Tues., Dec. 1</td>
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<td>Hockessin PAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Champions Together Breakfast Fundraiser</td>
<td>Wed., Nov. 18</td>
<td>7:45-9:00am</td>
<td>Sheraton Wilmington South, Airport Rd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reindeer Run</td>
<td>Fri., Dec. 4</td>
<td>Race starts at 7:00pm</td>
<td>Aetna Fire Station - corner of Academy and</td>
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<td>Delaware Ave. in Newark</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Coaches Clinic</td>
<td>Tues., Dec. 8</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Del. State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowling State Tournament</td>
<td>Sat., Jan. 9, 2016</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Milford Bowl &amp; Brunswick Doverama</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLAR BEAR PLUNGE WEEKEND FESTIVAL</td>
<td>Fri., Feb. 5 - Sun., Feb. 7</td>
<td>All day</td>
<td>Boardwalk &amp; Main St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLAR BEAR PLUNGE - 25th Anniversary</td>
<td>Sunday, Feb. 7</td>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>Rehoboth Beach Boardwalk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THANK YOU TO OUR YEAR-ROUND SPONSORS:**