Special Olympics Delaware (SODE) provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, offering them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.
A MESSAGE
FROM THE
BOARD PRESIDENT
AND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SHATTERING MYTHS

For those who are unfamiliar with our organization, it is a common misconception that Special Olympics takes place just once a year every summer. In reality, that is not the case. Special Olympics Delaware works hard to provide more than 65 competitive events in schools and communities across the state, along with hundreds of hours of sports training that occur at all times throughout the year. Another misconception is that Special Olympics is “not real sports”, when in fact, it is just the opposite. Through our program, individuals with intellectual disabilities can participate in real athletic pursuits based on true Olympic ideals, thus, challenging the stereotype that people with special needs are unable to participate in sports activities.

If you have come to know more about Special Olympics through supporting our athletes, hearing their stories, volunteering with us or donating to our cause, we are extremely grateful. Your support allows us to break barriers and shatter those myths in ways that help create positive attitudes towards inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. To that end, we are focused on ambitious goals to advance quality sports and competitions, build communities, and connect our fans with the movement to ensure our continued growth and success - so that any athlete who wants to participate gets the chance to do so. We are committed to a philosophy of ‘no charge to participate’ and continue to expand initiatives that make it easier for athletes and families to be involved in our program.

Reflecting on our numerous accomplishments and growth in 2018, we are continually inspired by the generosity of those who believe in our mission and choose to support the work of Special Olympics Delaware. Through the energy, time and dedication of our countless volunteers, we strive to provide quality competition and training to more than 4,000 athletes in the state in 19 different Olympic-type sports. We saw expanded Young Athletes programs - an innovative play program for 2-7 year olds - and training supported by enthusiastic local volunteers and organizations. Participation in our Unified Sports programs has increased and helped us to engage athletes and students, building communities of inclusion and acceptance in nearly 160 K-12 schools throughout all three counties.

Athlete leaders became empowered to take on new roles as ambassadors and spokespersons for Special Olympics, inspiring others through the Athlete Leadership program. And on the national stage in July, our triumphant group of more than 30 athletes, coaches, law enforcement Torch Runner, youth leaders and staff represented our state at the 2018 USA Games in Seattle. They deserved to be in the spotlight and we are so proud of their efforts and hard work!

It has been a year of extraordinary achievements. But yet, there were also a number of unplanned challenges. Our fundraising dollars, especially from the signature Polar Bear Plunge, as ever, hinged on the mercy of February weather ... and on this year, the Super Bowl. While the Eagles flew high with so many fans opting to stay home, our Plunge attendance, ultimately, felt the effect. Furthermore, investment returns were not as robust as we expected, due to a market downturn in 2018. Despite these challenges, Special Olympics Delaware has made great progress in examining our operations and streamlining processes. We strive to be a more effective organization as we navigate prudent stewardship of your financial support. We are focused on raising the bar in sports excellence and building bridges to acceptance as we educate our communities to shatter myths and stereotypes. Together, we are one mission, one movement — making a difference in the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff at Special Olympics Delaware, we thank you.
We change lives through the power of sports.

Special Olympics Delaware is an accredited program of Special Olympics Inc. and has been a part of this powerful global movement since 1971. Our organization serves more than 4,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities throughout the state of Delaware and uses sports as a platform to create life-changing experiences for those involved in our program.
Special Olympics Delaware is able to focus on delivering high quality sports programs for our athletes thanks to the hard work and committed support of our donors, volunteers, families, staff and Board of Directors. Developing innovative new opportunities, maintaining high standards and securing the critical support that makes it all possible is a year-round effort.

Thanks to the wealth of time, commitment and love for the mission so generously shared by our stakeholders, Special Olympics Delaware keeps its programs available, at no cost, to an ever growing number of athletes. Through your generosity, individuals with intellectual disabilities can showcase their abilities and demonstrate their courage, while benefiting from increased access to sports programs, more interaction in their communities, participation in health and fitness education, and—most importantly—the creation of a more welcoming society for all.
2018 SODE REACH REPORT SUMMARY

ATHLETES
4,097

ATHLETE LEADERSHIP
35

ATHLETE GENDER
1,410
2,687

ATHLETE AGE
AGES 2-5 994
AGES 6-7 506
AGES 8-15 1,213
AGES 16-21 745
AGES 22+ 639

COMPETITIONS
65 ON AVERAGE

VOLUNTEERS
4,000+

ADULTS 2,995
YOUTH 1,612
LAW ENFORCEMENT 500

AREA LEADERSHIP
80

AREA DIRECTORS 5
AREA LEADERS 75

SPORTS
19

OLYMPIC-TYPE

SCHOOLS
158

WHOLE SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT
135 SPORTS
83 YOUTH LEADERSHIP

SPONSORS
49

Fundraising Events 11

HEALTHY ATHLETES SCREENINGS

OPENING EYES 96
FIT FEET 75
HEALTHY HEARING 48

Area Directors 6
Whole School Engagement 158
Volunteers 4,000+
Area Leadership 80
Sports 19
Competition 65
Athletes 4,097
Athlete Leaders 35
Athlete Gender 1,410
2,687
Special Olympics is based on the belief that people with intellectual disabilities can enjoy a better quality of life through participation in sports. Our programs provide critical opportunities to forge friendships, learn new skills, build confidence and discover independence. As a result, Special Olympics athletes become fulfilled and productive members of their families and the communities in which they live.

Special Olympics Delaware offers 19 different Olympic-type sports in community-based programs for children and adults with intellectual disabilities in these five areas:

- Wilmington ("Wilmington Wizards")
- Newark ("Newark Dragons")
- MOT: Middletown, Odessa, Townsend ("MOT Tigers")
- Kent ("Kent Wild Kats")
- Sussex ("Sussex Riptide")

School-based programs for Special Olympics athletes in grades K-12 are also offered in nearly 160 schools:

- Unified Track & Field
- Unified Flag Football
- Unified Soccer and Soccer Skills
- Unified Basketball and Basketball Skills
- Motor Activities Training Programs (MATP)
- Young Athletes Programs (YAP)

Athletes are encouraged to be involved in both school-based and Area programs to maximize their sports involvement.

SPORTS OFFERED YEAR-ROUND:

1. Alpine Skiing
2. Aquatics
3. Basketball
4. Bocce
5. Bowling
6. Cycling
7. Figure Skating
8. Flag Football
9. Golf
10. Nordic Skiing
11. Powerlifting
12. Long Distance Running /Walking
13. Roller Skating
14. Snowshoeing
15. Soccer
16. Softball
17. Tennis
18. Track & Field
19. Volleyball

$0 charged to athletes to participate
MORE THAN JUST SPORTS

Initiatives enhance the mission of Special Olympics Delaware and offer athletes of all abilities the opportunity to be introduced to Special Olympics at a young age, provide the chance to improve their health and fitness, progress beyond their role as competitors through leadership, and encourage school-age youth to celebrate differences and break down barriers.

Special Olympics Delaware is a leader in sports, inclusive health and community building, empowering children and adults with intellectual disabilities to be valued on and off the playing field. By offering a wide range of programs, trainings and competitions, we provide athletes of all ages the education and opportunity to build their confidence and self-esteem.

Young Athletes™ Program

Special Olympics Young Athletes Program is a unique sports and play program for children ages 2-7 with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their typically developing peers in an inclusive setting. The program focuses on the basics that are crucial to cognitive development -- physical activities that develop motor skills and hand-eye coordination, and the application of these physical skills through sports and social interaction.

Motor Activities Training Program (MATP)

Motor Activities Training Program is designed for athletes with severe or profound intellectual disabilities, including athletes with significant physical disabilities who are unable to participate in official Special Olympics sport competitions because of their skill and/or functional abilities. Emphasis is on training and participation, rather than competition. Activities can be conducted in schools and large residential facilities, as well as in community-based settings.

Healthy Athletes® Program

Special Olympics is the world's largest public health organization for people with intellectual disabilities. Through our Healthy Athletes® program, we offer free medical screenings at no cost, health education and resources to enhance our athletes' overall well-being and to help them become strong competitors in sports and in life.
**Unified Sports®**

Special Olympics Unified Sports® is an inclusive sports program that brings together Special Olympics athletes (individuals with disabilities) and Unified Partners (individuals without disabilities) through sports and friendship. Unified Sports promotes social inclusion through shared sport training and/or competition experiences. By providing the opportunity to participate together, Unified Sports® helps to develop increased understanding of persons with different abilities.

**Interscholastic Unified Sports® and DIAA**

The Interscholastic Unified Sports® program is a partnership between Special Olympics Delaware and the Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association (DIAA). Through this partnership, high school students with and without disabilities train and compete on the same team in the Unified Sports divisions of flag football, track & field and basketball that are sanctioned by the DIAA. Participating schools, along with their athletic departments and administration, support Unified Sports and treat their SODE Unified teams as they do all other varsity sports -- accepted, respected, and celebrated.

**Unified Champion Schools**

The Unified Champion Schools program is a dynamic collaboration between Special Olympics and school communities, engaging young people with and without disabilities to join together through a variety of sports experiences. This becomes a pathway to promoting attitudes and behaviors of acceptance and inclusion in schools.

Unified Champion Schools also build on youth leadership and social advocacy within the schools, helping to bring greater awareness for respecting people with intellectual disabilities. Efforts such as the Respect campaigns (Spread the Word to End the Word), youth engagement, Unified Sports and whole-school awareness are cornerstones of the Unified Champion Schools program.

**Athlete Leadership Program**

Integral to Special Olympics is a dedication to empowerment and dignity. Athlete Leadership allow athletes to learn leadership skills and explore new opportunities outside the playing field. Athletes are empowered to serve as board members, serve on local Athlete Input Councils and committees, represent their peers at Athlete Leadership Conferences, volunteer at Special Olympics fundraisers, and act as spokespersons for our organization.
Special Olympics Delaware’s annual State Basketball Tournament, sponsored by Farmers Insurance and Bristol West Insurance, tipped off in March with 34 traditional and Unified teams from all across the state. The tournament, which took place at the University of Delaware Bob Carpenter Center, included teams from five Area programs and several schools.

Bowling is among the most popular sports in Special Olympics and is a particularly beneficial sport to people with intellectual disabilities, irrespective of their age or sports abilities. Training for the bowling season in Delaware began in the fall and culminated with the State Bowling Tournament in January, with more than 1,500 participating Special Olympics Delaware athletes.

The 2018 Lewes Polar Bear Plunge celebrated its 27th year with 3,383 Bears who raised more than $875,000 for Special Olympics Delaware. The Plunge, presented by Wawa, takes place annually in Rehoboth Beach and is one of the state’s most unique fundraising events. Also in February, athletes who trained in Alpine, Nordic Skiing, Snowshoeing or Figure Skating ended their season by competing at the Special Olympics Pennsylvania Winter Games.

Members of Team Delaware competed in Seattle as part of the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games that took place at the University of Washington campus in July. A delegation of 30 individuals from Special Olympics Delaware (20 athletes and 10 coaches, staff, Unified partners, volunteers and a Law Enforcement Final Leg runner) represented our state during this weeklong celebration of sport and inclusion.

During the month of August, the 18th annual Special Olympics Delaware Summer Camp was held over two sessions at Camp Barnes in Frankford, Delaware. The camp brings together more than 100 Special Olympics athletes and student/adult volunteers in a setting where they can enjoy typical camp activities including swimming, archery, canoeing, kayaking and crafts.

After months of planning with Special Olympics USA, Special Olympics Delaware hosted athletes from around the country at the Team USA Training Camp in preparation for the 2019 World Games in Abu Dhabi. Annual events, such as the Special Olympics Delaware Golf Tournament, were held at Maple Dale Country Club. The Summer Camp Golf Classic also took place in September at Bidermann Golf Club.
In April, students competed in basic and advanced soccer skills, along with Young Athletes and MATP demonstrations. Unified Team Tournaments were also offered as part of the Unified Champion Schools program. Also in April, the 12th annual Ride to the Tide fundraiser, one of the most popular motorcycle rides in the First State, was held with 1,000 motorcyclists participating in the sold-out event escorted by Law Enforcement.

Ninety brave men and women participated in the annual ‘Over the Edge’ event in 2018, rappelling 17 stories on the north face of a downtown Wilmington office building to raise funds in support of more than 4,000 Special Olympics Delaware athletes. The only event of its kind in Delaware, ‘Over the Edge’ requires lots of courage and support from friends, family and colleagues who sponsor rappellers on their extreme adventure.

Special Olympics Delaware held its 48th Summer Games sponsored by DuPont at the University of Delaware (the 30th year that the Blue Hens have hosted Special Olympics Summer Games.) More than 800 children and adults competed in Swimming, Softball, Tennis, Powerlifting, Bocce and Track & Field, along with the help of more than 140 coaches and 1,000+ volunteers.

A total of 186 trucks participated in the police-escorted Truck Convoy to celebrate the trucking industry and its support of Special Olympics in this annual fundraiser for SODE. For the second year in a row, the “Delaware Memorial Bridge 5K Run to Acceptance” was also held in October with 189 runners and walkers who helped raise more than $34,000 for Special Olympics Delaware programs.

During the month of November, more than 450 Special Olympics athletes and Unified partners competed at the annual Special Olympics Delaware Fall Sports Festival at St. Andrew’s School in Middletown. For the 21st consecutive year, Chase was the presenting sponsor. Athletes competed in Bocce, Flag Football, Long Distance Running/Walking, Soccer and Volleyball.

The Unified Flag Football championship, a partnership between Special Olympics Delaware and the Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association, took place at the University of Delaware between Smyrna High School and Newark Charter School. In December, Unified basketball teams were also featured in the annual Slam Dunk to the Beach tournament as well as at the Diamond State Classic benefiting Delaware charities.
Excellence • Inclusion • Integrity • Respect • Trust the Team

Our core values embody our culture, spirit and commitment to do our best at all times.
A partnership that makes a difference - Delaware Law Enforcement for Special Olympics

Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics (LETR) is a global volunteer movement that was established by members of the law enforcement community to support Special Olympics. Here in our state, Delaware Law Enforcement for Special Olympics (LESO) and the LETR have proudly supported Special Olympics Delaware for over 32 years and raised nearly 8 million dollars for our organization.

The flame burns bright each year as countless Law Enforcement officers share their time as volunteers, participants, medal presenters, coaches and Unified partners for Special Olympics Delaware events and competitions.
We empower athletes to shatter stereotypes and exceed their personal bests on the playing field and in life, through the power of sports.
### YEAR-ROUND PARTNERS ($500,000+)

Delaware Law Enforcement for Special Olympics

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- Discover
- DuPont
- JP Morgan Chase

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#### COMMUNITY ($2,500 - $4,999)
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THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARTNERS AND SPONSORS FOR THEIR VITAL SUPPORT

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We thank the following individuals, groups and businesses who donated to Special Olympics Delaware in 2018. Space limitations prevent us from recognizing the thousands of others who have so generously supported our organization. Every effort has been made to ensure the completeness of this list. Please inform us of any inaccuracies.

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Through unique fundraising events, we challenge our communities to open their hearts to a wider world of human talents and potential.
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We would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their outstanding support in raising funds for Special Olympics Delaware in 2018 at the Lewes Polar Bear Plunge, Torch Run and Over the Edge.

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