INSPIRE GREATNESS

Special Olympics was founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver with the belief that individuals with intellectual disabilities could participate fully in their communities and in life.

By focusing on a person’s abilities and not his or her disabilities, Special Olympics athletes earn respect, acceptance and understanding from people in their communities. Special Olympics athletes build self-esteem and gain social skills by increasing fitness and skill levels, which in turn provide lifelong benefits.

WHY VOLUNTEER?

Special Olympics Delaware would not exist today - and could not have been created - without the time, energy, commitment and enthusiasm of our volunteers.

There are opportunities in our organization for volunteers of all ages, abilities and interests. No matter how much or how little time you have to give, when you volunteer, you will be making a difference in the lives of our athletes. More importantly, you’ll find that you get more out of your volunteer experience than you give.

CHANGING ATTITUDES, CHANGING LIVES

Special Olympics is a worldwide movement where one can act locally, but make a global impact. We are a movement, inviting the world not just to attend our sports events, but to come help create a world of acceptance and inclusion for all.

As a volunteer, you can change a life forever. Be a fan of Special Olympics and volunteer today!

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Special Olympics is about transforming lives, including your own. It’s about a spirit of giving and teamwork. It’s about making your community and neighborhood a more welcoming and accepting place for people of all abilities.
WAYS TO HELP SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Volunteers are the backbone of the Special Olympics movement. Volunteers from the community are essential and can offer their time and knowledge to help our athletes. Training will be provided for all volunteer positions to maximize your skill set.

Volunteers are needed as:

- **Unified Partners**
  Unified Partners train and compete with Special Olympics athletes in similar age groups and ability levels as part of our Unified Sports® program. Throughout the year in a variety of sports, Unified Partners improve their physical fitness, build new friendships and learn from one another. Volunteers ages 8 and older may become Unified Partners.

- **Team Volunteers**
  Team Volunteers assist by helping athletes in non-sport elements of practices and competition, such as chaperoning and escorting. Perfect for the volunteer with no prior experience, team volunteers must be age 14 yrs. or older.

- **Coaches or Assistant Coaches**
  Coaches and assistant coaches have the opportunity to help athletes train in their specific sport. Our athletes benefit from coaches with varying levels of experience. A certification program is in place for all coaches to complete. Adults who are 18 yrs. or older may become a coach or assistant coach.

**Time commitment:** Seasonal, depending on the sport. Minimum of 2-4 hours per week for 8-10 weeks prior to competition.

Other volunteer roles include: Becoming an athlete mentor, transporting athletes to practices or competitions, among others. Contact an area program near you for more information on how to get involved.

Special Olympics Delaware (SODE) is divided into five area programs: Wilmington, Newark, MOT (Middletown, Odessa, Townsend, Smyrna), Kent County and Sussex County. All areas provide community-based sports training for Special Olympics athletes of all ages and abilities. Volunteers are needed year-round and are based on your interest and availability, as well as the needs of the programs in your area.

For more information on how to help with our athletes at the local level, please contact the following Special Olympics Delaware areas to inquire about volunteer opportunities near you:

- **SODE Wilmington:** sode.wilmington@gmail.com
- **SODE Newark:** sode.newark@gmail.com
- **SODE MOT:** sode.mot@gmail.com
- **SODE Kent County:** sode.kent@gmail.com
- **SODE Sussex County:** sode.esussex@gmail.com

or call SODE at 302-831-4653. Areas are divided by geography and zip code. To view the area map, visit our website at www.sode.org.

The above positions are considered to be Class A volunteers who are in a supervision position and have regular interactions with athletes. These positions require the completion of a volunteer application, which includes a background check, and two online trainings.

MORE OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to helping with our athletes, there is also a wide range of day-of event or short-term volunteer opportunities with Special Olympics Delaware. The time commitment for these volunteer roles varies depending on the specific events.

Some examples are:

- **Sports official:** Serve as a referee, official or judge at Special Olympics competitions.
- **Event volunteer:** Work as an escort, scorer, awards presenter, Olympic Village volunteer or as needed at an event.
- **Medical:** Provide basic first aid at competitions or sports events. Medical service volunteers include physicians, athletic trainers, nurses, physical therapists, emergency medical technicians and paramedics.
- **Safety Team:** Assist with overall safety and security of events.
- **Photography:** Take photos or videos at sports events, community events or fundraisers.
- **Office support:** Volunteer your time with office mailings and other special projects.

For more information on these volunteer opportunities with Special Olympics Delaware, please contact: Mark Wise at mwise@udel.edu or visit our website at www.sode.org.

Day-of event or short-term volunteer roles are Class B volunteer positions. Class B volunteers support the organization on an as-needed basis. Class B Volunteers must pre-register and receive confirmation of their involvement before the event.

“The Special Olympics athletes and other people I have met along the way have shaped my life in such a dramatic way. I found strength in them that I could not discover in anyone else. As I helped them, they changed me.”

- Special Olympics volunteer