



Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Special Olympics Georgia (SOGA) volunteer! We are happy that you have chosen to donate your valuable time, skills, and resources to providing opportunities for our 26,000 athletes to succeed. Our mission is to provide year-round sports training and competition to persons with intellectual and mental disabilities. Without dedicated and caring volunteers, we absolutely could not achieve this mission, so thank you for helping to make the whole year special!

Enclosed you will find:

- Volunteer Job Descriptions
- SOGA fact sheet

Please visit this website to fill out the Volunteer and Coach Profile Form: <https://formswift.com/free-write/edit-download.php?documentType=11748&ses=a676375d94233dce92ccdcb3dc36cabd&key=5466533>. By filling out this form you will become an official SOGA volunteer and receive regular correspondence regarding volunteer opportunities. You can fill out the form and even sign it using this site. You will then email the downloaded PDF to me, or you can download it as a blank PDF and fill it out by hand. All of my contact information can be found below. Once I receive your profile and it is entered into our database, you will receive a Welcome Email detailing the next steps for getting involved, so be sure to **include a working email** address on your form.

This is what you should know as a SOGA volunteer:

1. After your profile is activated you will receive a Welcome Email. This will take 1-2 weeks from the time you send in your profile.
2. You will receive monthly volunteer email updates that detail upcoming volunteer opportunities.
3. If you indicate an interest in coaching on your profile your name will be forwarded to the Regional Manager in your county and he/she will contact you.
4. You can view a list of our Regional Managers on our website: www.specialolympicsga.org. Please visit our website often for the most recent SOGA news.
5. If you have any questions about volunteering, please contact Stephen Sparks at 229-292-6955 or stephen.sparks@specialolympicsga.org

Thank you again for your interest in and support of SOGA! SOGA would not exist without our more than 29,000 volunteers. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Stephen Sparks
Volunteer and Event Manager
229-292-6955
fax 404-745-0550

Special Olympics Georgia
4000 Dekalb Tech Pkwy
Building 400, Suite 400
Atlanta, GA 30340

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Coaches:

Our Special Olympians need proper training from devoted coaches and assistant coaches. Coaches go through a short training/certification session that will explain what is expected and what to expect during training.

Time Commitment: 1-2 times per week for 8-10 weeks prior to the state competitions

Skills: You DO NOT need to be an expert in the sport you coach. You only need a desire to work closely with the athletes.

Fundraising Event Team Members:

We have several fundraisers throughout the year that need planners, recruiters and participants. Whether it's serving on a planning committee or organizing the day of the event, we have the job for you.

Time Commitment: One day or biweekly, two to three months leading up to the event of your choice

Skills: Creativity and Organization

Games Organizing Committees:

This is a team of individuals devoted to planning, organizing and implementing each of the 5 state competitions. We need volunteers to organize and plan every aspect of the state competitions - from the Athlete Dance to each sporting venue.

Time Commitment: Once a month for the 4 months preceding the competition and the whole weekend of the competition (Friday-Sunday).

Skills: Creativity and a desire to try new things

State Games Volunteers:

Summer, Winter and Fall Games, Horse Show and Masters Bowling are the five state competitions. Volunteers are needed for jobs at each of these - from cheering on athletes during competitions, to assisting with equipment set-up.

Time Commitment: 4-8 hour shifts during the event(s) of your choice

Skills: There is a job for everyone at these events.

Local Management Team Members:

The state is divided into 18 areas, with several local programs making-up each area. We need volunteers who are interested in providing leadership through service on a Local Management Team. These Teams organize and efficiently run the local or area Special Olympics program. From Chairman to fundraising, there is a place for everyone!

Time Commitment: 2-3 days per month

Skills: Desire to lead and be creative!

Office Assistants:

There is always a need for assistance around our state office in Atlanta. Volunteers would work on mailings, phone calls, word processing, filing, data input and other tasks.

Time Commitment: Volunteers can select their hours and days Monday through Friday from 8:00-5:00.

Skills: Organization, phone courtesy, basic computer skills (not necessary)

Speakers:

We are always looking for volunteers willing and able to speak to our constituency on a wide variety of issues ranging from developmental disabilities to organizational skills. If you have the desire to grow the capacity of SOGA, let us know!

Time Commitment: 1-2 hours when giving presentations

Skills: Comfortable speaking to others, strong knowledge in one subject area



Special Olympics Georgia is a year-round program of sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

Bryan Brum
Chairman, Board of Directors

Georgia Milton-Sheats
Chief Executive Officer

MISSION

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 physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

GOAL

To help bring individuals with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens.

VOLUNTEERS

Thousands of volunteers implement the Special Olympics program on the grassroots level. They serve on management teams, organize and conduct local, area and state Special Olympics activities and competitions, and assist in fundraising efforts.

Volunteers serve as certified coaches, games officials, assistant coaches and in a wide variety of other capacities in support of Special Olympics athletes.

SPORTS

Special Olympics Georgia offers year-round training and competition in 25 Olympic-type sports:

Alpine Skiing	Gymnastics - Artistic
Aquatics	Gymnastics - Rhythmic
Athletics	Ice Skating
Badminton	Kayaking
Basketball	Long Distance Running
Bocce	Powerlifting
Bowling	Roller Skating
Cycling	Sailing
Equestrian	Soccer
Flag Football	Softball
Floor Hockey	Table Tennis
Golf	Tennis
	Volleyball

In addition to the sports listed above, the Motor Activities Training Program (MATP) is offered to individuals with more severe disabilities who are not able to compete in a rigorous sports program. The MATP emphasizes training and participation rather than competition.

Special Olympics is unique by accommodating competitors at all ability levels in order to give everyone a reasonable opportunity to win. It does this by assigning all athletes to competition divisions based on previous performances and/or preliminary heats. Athletes from all divisions may advance to Area, State, Regional & World Games.

BENEFITS

Special Olympics Georgia contributes to the physical, social and psychological development of people with intellectual disabilities. Through successful experiences in sports, the athletes gain confidence and build a positive self-image which carries over into the classroom, the home, the job and the community.

In addition, involvement with Special Olympics Georgia strengthens families, causing a richer appreciation of talents and greater support between the Special Olympics athletes, siblings and parents.

Also, the community at large — through observation and participation — is united in understanding people with developmental disabilities in an environment of equality, respect and acceptance.

COMPETITION

Special Olympics Georgia athletes train year-round for sports competitions which are patterned after the Olympic Games and held annually at each organizational level. Over 500 games, meets and tournaments are held in communities throughout Georgia. Five Statewide events are held annually. They culminate in the Special Olympics World Summer and Winter Games which alternate every two years.

ELIGIBILITY

Individuals eight years of age and older who are identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability are eligible to participate in the Special Olympics Georgia program. In Georgia, intellectual disability refers to significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning (approximately 70 IQ and below) existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior (significant limitations in an individual's effectiveness in meeting standards of maturation, learning, personal independence or social responsibility expected of the individual's age level).

In addition to its year-round program of training and competition, Special Olympics Georgia sponsors ongoing training for coaches, officials, volunteers and families.

PROGRAMS

Special Olympics introduced the **Unified Sports**[®] program to bring together, on the same team, athletes with and without intellectual disabilities. These teams train and compete with other **Unified Sports**[®] teams in 20 established sports — aquatics, artistic gymnastics, badminton, basketball, bocce, bowling, cycling, figure ice skating, flag football, floor hockey, golf, long distance running, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, sailing, soccer, softball, table tennis, tennis and volleyball. **Unified Sports**[®] furthers Special Olympics Georgia's commitment to foster inclusion into school and community sports programs.

Partners Clubs bring together Special Olympics athletes and volunteer students who serve as peer coaches.

FAMILIES

The Family Action Network (FAN) consists of local and area family representatives. FAN creates, promotes and supports Special Olympics families by establishing a statewide family network that will provide education and outreach (recruitment).

FAN provides year-round activities for families of Special Olympics athletes. These activities give families the opportunity to share experiences and knowledge, and to form friendships with other Special Olympics families.

GOVERNANCE

Special Olympics Georgia is authorized and accredited by Special Olympics Incorporated to provide sports programs for citizens of Georgia with intellectual disabilities. Established in 1970, Special Olympics Georgia is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Special Olympics Incorporated was founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Tim Shriver is Chairman of the Board of Directors and Janet Froetscher is the President and CEO.



Special Olympics Oath:
Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.

The Spirit of Special Olympics:
Skill, Courage, Sharing, Joy

ATHLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Special Olympics athletes also participate through the Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPS).

Global Messengers are Special Olympics athletes who serve as ambassadors for Special Olympics Georgia, helping to recruit athletes and volunteers, secure donations, and raise public awareness. These athletes have received training in public speaking and travel throughout the state, telling their story of what Special Olympics means to them. Visits from Global Messengers can be arranged through the Special Olympics Georgia office.

In other ALPS programs, athletes participate in improving Special Olympics through the Athlete Input Council, and serve as assistant coaches and competition officials. Athletes can also serve as members of the board of directors, and on local and area management teams.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Special Olympics Georgia is supported by funds raised from individuals, organizations, corporations, foundations, Board members, Honorary Board members and by revenue generated from special events, special projects and cause-related marketing programs.

The largest annual fundraising event is the Law Enforcement Torch Run. Held prior to Special Olympics Georgia's Summer Games, the Torch Run generates statewide publicity for Special Olympics and the Summer Games.

Special Olympics Georgia does not charge athletes or their families to participate, does not receive any funding from Special Olympics Incorporated or state government, and is not a United Way agency.

For more information, visit the Special Olympics Georgia website at www.specialolympicsga.org