

joy

HELP MAKE THE WHOLE YEAR SPECIAL



BE A FAN



Special Olympics
Georgia

www.specialolympicsga.org

BE A FAN

Special Olympics Georgia provides year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

Our goal is to help bring persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected, and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens. When we achieve this goal through our sports program, we demonstrate that Special Olympics has a unique value: to show the world that every person counts and that every person can be something good when we work together.

Special Olympics Georgia invests in people with intellectual disabilities, helping them to develop athletic skills, while also promoting the abilities of the athletes off the field.

When our athletes succeed, attitudes change, communities develop, health and self-esteem are built, and the eyes of the world are focused on all that is good and hopeful and positive.

inspire



WHY IT WORKS

Special Olympics Athletes:

- Gain skills for employment.
- Learn independent living skills.
- Form friendships.
- Help others understand their extraordinary capabilities despite health issues they experience daily.

Special Olympics Georgia is truly a grassroots effort. Only through a volunteer base of more than 17,000 people are we able to fulfill our mission of serving our athletes and continuing to grow. The volunteers are dedicated to providing the highest quality programs and services to the athletes and serve as coordinators, certified coaches, assistant coaches, event staff, unified sports partners, trainers and fundraisers. The continuing success of the organization depends on the ongoing support of the community.

Through the program, over 23,000 Georgia athletes are given the chance to express themselves and test their limits. And while Special Olympics Georgia is currently serving approximately one-fourth of the eligible population, our goal is to extend the opportunity to all potential athletes.

“We show the world that every person counts and every person can be something good when we work together.”

- Timothy Shriver

Special Olympics Incorporated

MISSION AND HISTORY

INSPIRING CHAMPIONS SINCE 1970

The mission of Special Olympics Georgia is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for all 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.

In 1970, 500 athletes gathered at a suburban Atlanta college to participate in the first-ever track and field event held under the Special Olympics Georgia banner. Over the years, the organization has grown exponentially and has helped thousands of children and adults in the process. The number of active athletes has grown to more than 23,000, participating in 25 sports.

Special Olympics is the first – and still the only – organization to offer training and competition for these athletes. The continuing success of the organization depends on your support and the ongoing support of the community.

*Special Olympics Incorporated was founded in 1968 by Mrs. Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Mr. Timothy Shriver serves as Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

live

COMPETE – Thousands of children and adults with intellectual disabilities see a dream come true as they train, compete and succeed in more than 500 sports competitions at the local, area and state levels. Special Olympics Georgia hosts several state-level competitions throughout the year, as well as, other competition opportunities with various sport invitationals held across the state. Athletes may also compete in Southeast Regional events offered in sports such as alpine skiing, ice skating, powerlifting, tennis, sailing and floor hockey.

Every two years, the World Special Olympics Games are held, alternating Winter and Summer Games. These are patterned after the traditional Olympic Games and follow many of the same customs, rules and regulations. National Games are typically held the year prior to Special Olympics World Summer Games.

TRAINING – Athletes are required to engage in an eight-week training program prior to any Special Olympics competition to develop skills and learn rules and strategies from their coaches. Special Olympics also trains and certifies coaches, officials and games management team volunteers to ensure that all athletes receive the highest quality training and competition.

UNIFIED SPORTS® – Introduced in 1987, Unified Sports furthers Special Olympics Georgia's commitment to fostering integration into school and community sports programs. They bring together, on the same team, athletes with and without intellectual disabilities. These teams train and compete against other Unified Sports teams in 21 sports.

GET INTO IT

Get Into It is a resource kit made up of a series of lessons geared to students by grade level teaching them to be more accepting of people who have a disability. It can be divided into four lessons or taught throughout the year. The lessons give information about Special Olympics and how through acceptance and understanding individuals with a disability can achieve goals in spite of barriers. The lessons encourage all students to get involved through volunteering and engage those eligible to participate in Special Olympics.

To find out more about *Get Into It*, visit www.specialolympicsga.org

"There is so much joy in being here and watching these athletes participate. There isn't anyone in our company who doesn't come back and talk about this experience for a long, long time. They are just thrilled."

- Macy's

action

**JOIN US – AND HELP MAKE THE
WHOLE YEAR SPECIAL FOR THOUSANDS OF
ATHLETES WITH INTELLECTUAL
DISABILITIES IN GEORGIA.**



COMPETITIONS

Local/Area Games – Various competitions are held around the state throughout the year.

State Indoor Winter Games – Basketball and 3 on 3 Basketball, Bowling, Floor Hockey, Ice Skating, Powerlifting, Artistic Gymnastics, Roller Skating

State Summer Games – Aquatics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Athletics, Badminton, Soccer, Table Tennis, Volleyball, Tennis, Flag Football

State Fall Games – Bocce, Cycling, Golf, Long Distance Running/Walking, Softball

State Horse Show – Equestrian

State Master's Bowling – Bowling for ages 22 and up

Young Athletes – A play program with developmentally appropriate activities for children ages 2-7, geared to strengthen physical development and self-esteem

Southeastern Regional Events – Alpine Skiing, Floor Hockey, Ice Skating, Powerlifting, Sailing, Tennis

Invitationals

Offered periodically in sports like:

Athletics	Floor Hockey	Soccer
Basketball	Volleyball	Softball
Bocce	Golf	Tennis
Equestrian	Gymnastics	Volleyball
	Sailing	

National Games – Special Olympics US National Games

World Games

- World Summer Games
- World Winter Games

VOLUNTEER

YOU POWER THE MISSION

Special Olympics Georgia is truly a grassroots effort. With only a small staff of full-time employees and more than 500 sports competitions throughout the year, it takes a large and dedicated volunteer force to fulfill our mission and to make our program a reality. Our volunteers take on numerous roles within the organization – from assisting with competitions and special events, to becoming certified coaches and serving on management teams. Whether a volunteer can commit to a single afternoon's event or to years of coaching a team, we have a place for you. There simply would not be a Special Olympics Georgia without your generous donation of time and talents.

HOW CAN YOU BECOME A SOGA VOLUNTEER?

The first step is to obtain a volunteer packet. You can do this by contacting the Volunteer Manager, by visiting www.specialolympicsga.org, or by calling Special Olympics Georgia at **770-414-9390**, extension 120.

Everyone at Special Olympics is a winner. While our athletes take home medals and awards, our volunteers leave with a wealth of satisfaction, having seen the expressions of joy from our athletes during competition.

Please help make the whole year special. Log on to www.specialolympicsga.org for current events and all the opportunities to get involved.

courage

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Individuals:

Get involved with Special Olympics in any of the following ways:

- Be a fan
- Be a coach
- Join a committee
- Serve on a community management team
- Serve on a state games management team
- Volunteer at regional games held in Georgia
- Volunteer at one day events

Groups:

SOGA welcomes groups of all sizes for many of our events. Contact the Volunteer Manager at 770.414.9390, extension 120 and they can assist you with finding the perfect opportunity for your group.

Young Professionals:

SOYL - Special Olympics Young Leaders (S.O.Y.L) is a dynamic group of caring, motivated, young professionals who want to make a difference in their community and are dedicated to the important mission of Special Olympics Georgia.

"Coaching with Special Olympics gives anybody who's been fortunate enough to have positive role models and mentors a golden opportunity to create a difference in the life of someone who came into this world with certain limits. You're going to help bridge the ability gap for them - and you will enrich your life in the process."

- SOGA Coach

SPONSORSHIP YOU CAN MAKE AN IMPACT



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 Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) is SOGA's largest statewide fundraiser. It is made possible by law enforcement agents from all over Georgia who take the time and make the effort to not only raise funds and awareness about SOGA, but they also guard the "Flame of Hope" on its way to the Opening Ceremony for each of the State Games.

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

YOU can make an impact:

- Make a gift – visit www.specialolympicsga.org to make a secure online gift using your credit card or make a contribution to our office.
- Turn Old Into Gold – give SOGA your old cell phones, used ink cartridges, cars, boats, or trailers and they can be recycled for money for the program.
- Donate an item – look at the SOGA wish list online. There is always a need for donated items for the athletes and the office. Simple things like copy paper are a big help to keep our expenses low.
- Be a sponsor – consider having your company or group be an official sponsor of one of the many events Special Olympics Georgia conducts each year. There are several benefits associated with sponsorship like corporate recognition and volunteer placement at events.

For more information, visit us online or call us at 770-414-9390 and press 4 for fundraising.

BEYOND SPORTS TRAINING SOGA CHANGES LIVES

Special Olympics Georgia is committed to empowering people with intellectual disabilities on and off the playing field. By working to remove obstacles, change attitudes and open minds, Special Olympics provides opportunities for its athletes to demonstrate courage, experience joy and share their gifts, skills and friendship with the world. Special Olympics initiatives change lives.

Athlete Leadership Programs offer athletes the opportunity to take active leadership roles through self-directed, meaningful participation in virtually every aspect of the organization.

- Athletes get involved by serving on the Board of Directors at Special Olympics Georgia, volunteering as coaches, participating on the Athlete Input Council and spreading the word as Global Messengers both locally and globally.
- Through its Family Leadership and Support initiative, or F.A.N. (Family Action Network) Special Olympics offers families not just opportunities for sports, social interaction and fun, but also a much needed support system.
- The Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® initiative's mission is to improve each athlete's ability to train and compete in Special Olympics. The Special Olympics Healthy Athletes Initiative includes several disciplines: Fit Feet, FUNfitness, Health Promotion, Healthy Hearing, Opening Eyes® and Special Smiles®.

**“Special Olympics is a wonderful thing
to have in life.”**

- SOGA Athlete



Special Olympics Georgia

4000 DeKalb Technology Parkway

Building 400, Suite 400

Atlanta, GA 30340

Phone: 770.414.9390

Fax: 770.216.8339

www.specialolympicsga.org