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Georgia's Champions

May 2015

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News and Stories

Competing and Coaching at State Summer Games May 29th-31st

Cameron Chalmers will play volleyball as an athlete and support the coaches as needed at State Summer Games in just a few weeks. Set with his own signature whistle, he's prepared lanyards made of yarn and name tags for his team and coaches. At practices, you'd probably hear him call out to his teammates: "Hit it this way! You need to hit the ball harder! Hit it straight to me!"

"In his heart of hearts, he is a born leader," said his mom Elaine Chalmers, and added sometime Cameron is allowed to use his whistle in games to signal it's time to serve.

Cameron, 18, and his Gwinnett volleyball team will join about 2,800 athletes, coaches, and unified partners May 29th-31st for the games at Emory University. Competitions will take place in athletics, aquatics, flag football, gymnastics, soccer, table tennis, tennis, and volleyball. Don't miss Opening Ceremony at McDonough Field. The parade of athletes will be led by Grand Marshal Harry Douglas, former Atlanta Falcon who recently signed with the Tennessee Titans.



Upcoming Events

Duck Pluck August 14th

Adopt a duck in Special Olympics Georgia's **Duck Pluck** set for August 14th at Post Chastain in Atlanta. A quack pack costs \$30, and you'll receive a junior souvenir rubber duck and seven entries in the Duck Pluck. For a donation of \$5, a lucky duck number will be assigned to your duck in your or your loved one's honor. All ducks will be put into the Post Chastain pool for a swim, and if your duck is one of the first plucked, you win! [Click here](#) to learn more about the prizes and for more information. Thank you to our sponsors Rooms To Go Children's Fund, Kids 'R' Kids Learning Academies, Allconnect, LAZ Parking, Whitaker Oil Company, Precision Aviation Group, Atlanta Arms, Highwoods Properties, Dobbins Thrift Shoppe, Sherwin-Williams, Craig Automotive, Dale Massey State Farm Insurance, and North Georgia Replacement Windows. Also, thank you to Post Apartment Homes and Star 94.



SOGA's cost for each athlete at Summer Games is \$100. [Please help make an](#)

athlete's dream come true and make a life-changing donation today! Any gift amount is greatly appreciated and will be a tremendous help.

Thank you to our generous sponsors: Aetna (Presenting Sponsor), The Winter Construction Company, Autotrader, UPS, American Honda Motor Company, ADP, ALTA Foundation, Cox Enterprises, SuperValu, The Coca-Cola Company, Nordstrom, Jones Day, Whole Foods, Magnolia Advanced Materials, LAZ Parking, The Men's Wearhouse, Voya Financial, Inwood Holdings, Aon, Which Wich Superior Sandwiches, Comcast, Macy's, Hewlett-Packard, Enterprise Rent-a-Car, Booz Allen Hamilton, Allied World, Malone Law Office, Rural Sourcing, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, Whole Foods, AmeriFleet Transportation, Hometown Foundation Inc./Dream Ride, and Emory University!

(Left to right in photo: Coach Karen O'Connor, Cameron Chalmers and Coach John Hardison.)

Coming to Atlanta: Unified Relay Across America

It's 50 states, 46 days, 3 routes and 1 destination -- the 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games. The World Games will begin when the cauldron is lit at the Opening Ceremony in Los Angeles. From May 26th to July 10th, **YOU CAN GET INVOLVED BY CARRYING THE TORCH** as the Flame of Hope travels across the country, hitting every state, in the first-ever Special Olympics Unified Relay Across America presented by Bank of America. The torch comes through Atlanta June 6th and ends at Turner Field. You can walk, jog, run, roller blade, or cycle! For more information, contact **Kristin Hill**.

Sign up today at unifiedrelay.org.



Athlete of the Month: Nathan Murphy

You might hear Nathan Murphy, athlete of the Macon-Bibb Parks and Recreation agency, do a little good-natured "trash talk" in the heat of competition. Though it's the positive attitude and encouragement of teammates that makes Nathan May's Athlete of the Month.

His involvement with Special Olympics, while still in high school, is preparing him for a lifetime of physical activity and camaraderie with his teammates.

Nathan has been involved with Special Olympics for several years, by playing softball and bowling. Most recently, he's competed at the 2014 State Fall Games in Gainesville, where he and his teammates came home with the bronze medal as a modified softball team!



On the local level, Nathan enjoys competing in track and field with the Monroe County Schools Special Olympics program. Nathan is very committed to his Special Olympics teams and sports, occasionally having to sacrifice other activities for those commitments.

Strongly supported by his exceptional parents, Monte and Luan Murphy, Nathan's hard work and motivational attitude has led him into being a great leader and inspiration to others within his Special Olympics Georgia agency.

The Georgia Renaissance Festival April 18th-June 7th

The Georgia Renaissance Festival will take place on Saturdays and Sundays April 18th - June 7th. **Use promo code special**



to purchase tickets at a discounted price:

adults \$17.95 (regularly \$22) and children 6-12 \$7 (regularly \$10). In addition, The Georgia Renaissance Festival will donate \$2 per ticket sold to SOGA. Purchase your tickets today at **www.garenfest.com**.

Which Wich Give Back Days May 4th, 11th, and 18th

Which Wich

Superior Sandwiches will hold Fundraising



Days for SOGA on Monday, May 4th, 11th, and 18th at the following locations: Brookhaven @ Town Brookhaven, Canton @ Canton Marketplace, Cumming @ The Collection at Forsyth, Duluth @ Day Centre at Sugarloaf, Emory @ Emory Point, Norcross @ The Forum, Snellville @ The Shoppes at Webb Gin, and Woodstock @ The Outlet Shoppes at Atlanta. Which Wich will donate 10% of all sales before tax to support the State Summer Games. To find the address of the location nearest to you, or to start planning what you'll have for lunch or dinner, visit **www.whichwich.com**. For more information, contact **Susan Skolnick** or 770-414- 9390 x111.

SweetWater Brewing Tour Benefit May 6th

Please join Special Olympics Georgia at SweetWater



Brewing Company May 6th at 5:30 p.m. for a Tour and Tastings event that promises to be a wonderful experience and will support our cause! For every person who buys

Congrats to Nathan for being Special Olympics Georgia Athlete of the Month for May!

Volunteer of the Month: Elizabeth Holloway

Ever since Elizabeth Holloway began teaching special education in Monroe County, she's been involved with the county's Special Olympics Management Team.

She wanted to make sure her students were able to participate and have a positive experience! She's also been an instrumental leader in the Best Buddies chapter at Mary Persons High School in Forsyth. In March, her chapter hosted a Respect Rally as the culminating activity for their week-long Spread the Word to End the Word campaign.

The campaign included lunchtime pledge drives and the pep rally for more than 1,200 students, over 100 members of the schools' faculty and staff, parents of students with disabilities, and school alum.



The Respect Rally included a Jimmy Fallon-style "Lip Sync Battle" featuring 4 teachers who sang friendship/respect themed songs, such as Michael Jackson's "Man In the Mirror," Sister Sledge's "We Are Family," and The Rembrants' "I'll Be There For You." They also showed a video featuring students that described why the R-word is disrespectful, how we're all more alike than different, and various ways to demonstrate respect.

Thank you for your hard work, Elizabeth! Congratulations on being May's Volunteer of the Month.

Sponsor of the Month: Aetna

We are excited and honored to announce that **Aetna** once again is the Presenting Sponsor of our State Summer Games!

Aetna's relationship with Special Olympics Georgia spans the past 13 years, and 2015 marks the fourth consecutive year that they have taken on the role of Presenting Sponsor. Aetna is a passionate supporter of Special Olympics Georgia athletes, and **Aetna** employees have been very instrumental in the success of the Summer Games since 2003. 150 Aetna employees will be present over the course of the three days of Summer Games competition, and they will be cheering on the participants and working tirelessly to provide a high-quality event for everyone in attendance.



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"The Special Olympics Georgia State Summer Games are near and dear to the hearts of Aetna's employees," said Angela Meoli, president of Aetna's Georgia market. "They celebrate physical activity and the realization of human potential. These athletes inspire all of us to overcome obstacles and strive to be our very best."

a \$10 tasting glass, Special Olympics Georgia will receive a \$3 donation! Sweetwater is located at 195 Ottley Drive, Atlanta, GA 30324. For more information, contact **Thomas Ritch** or 770-414-9390 ext. 121

Cops On Doughnut Shops May 8th, June 5th-6th, June 11th-14th

Come see Cops ON TOP of Doughnut Shops in your area in May and June. Here are a few of the dates and locations that may be near you:



-May 8th & 9th - Time TBD - Albany: 400 N. Slappey Boulevard
-June 5th & 6th - Time TBD - Duluth: 2346 Pleasant Hill Rd.
-June 11th & 12th 6 a.m.-6 p.m. - Doraville: 5768 Buford Hwy NE
-June 12th-14th 8 a.m.-4 p.m. - Atlanta: 633 Evans Street.

Talbots Give Back Day June 13th

TALBOTS

Please join us and help make a difference June 13th from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Talbots located in the Peachtree Battle Promenade, 2391 Peachtree Road NE, Atlanta. Talbots will donate 10% of pre-tax sales to Special Olympics Georgia. Plan to update your summer wardrobe and give to the athletes at the same time!

Title Town Tasting August 8th

Title Town Tasting is a silent auction fundraising event in Valdosta on August 8th. Held at Bas Bleu in downtown Valdosta, all proceeds go towards supporting Special Olympics Georgia athletes and allowing them to compete at State Games! Please [click here](#) for more information or contact **Whitney Warren** or 229-712-9973.



As one of the nation's leading health care benefits companies, **Aetna** believes it can help create a better health care system. Aetna helps people achieve health and financial security by providing easy access to cost-effective, high-quality health care. Aetna is committed to helping people live healthier, more productive lives.

Thank you Aetna for your extraordinary Summer Games support and for believing in Special Olympics Georgia athletes!

Count On Me Family Foundation Youth Volunteer of the Month: Amber Spearman

Ever since Amber Spearman was in elementary school, she's been a Special Olympics volunteer. That means she has assisted in preparation for competitions, participated along with the athletes as a unified partner, and helped clean and store equipment at the end of the day.



Now she is a 23 year-old college student at the University of Georgia, where she majors in Nutritional Science. When she completes her bachelors degree, she plans to enroll in the School of Pharmacy. Her goals are to earn a doctoral degree, become a pharmacist and work at Emory Hospital in Atlanta.

She loves sharing her love of sports with the athletes. Not only did she graduate as salutatorian of her class and earned the Presidential Academic Achievement Award, she earned the Basketball MVP Award and was chosen as Team Captain for Basketball and Track.

Still, she comes home just so she can volunteer at competitions and the Coweta/Heard County Invitational Track Meet. She continues to serve as the Fundraiser Chairperson and has not missed any Special Olympics fundraising projects.

The Jim Mora Count On Me Family Foundation Youth Volunteer Award recognizes youth who enrich the lives of athletes.

Nominations (including nominator's name and contact information, nominee photo and bio, and a paragraph explaining why the young person should be named The Count On Me Family Foundation Youth Volunteer of the Month) must be emailed to **Susan Skolnick** by the 15th of each month.

Forward to a Friend

We're fortunate to have you as part of the Special Olympics Georgia family. Our goal is to reach as many potential sponsors, volunteers and athletes as possible, so please help us grow the family even more. Please forward this e-newsletter to your friends and family so they can **sign up** to also receive the monthly e-newsletter!



Tell Us Your Story

We want to tell your stories!
Email **Susan Skolnick** with a story about a Special Olympics event or person who has inspired you! You can also **submit** your story online.

Shoot For Champions September 3rd

Last year, the first **Shoot for Champions** raised \$30,000 for State Games. Please join us September 3rd at Foxhall Resort. The day will include 15 stations of sporting clays, beautiful scenery, lunch, silent auction, and prizes. Please contact **Thomas Ritch** for more information.



Strike the R-word September 29th

Strike the R-word and bowl to help raise money for Special Olympics Georgia athletes September 29th at Bowlmor Atlanta. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded to the top three bowlers. Event features delicious "not your father's bowling alley pizza," snacks, beverages and a great silent auction. The event's Presenting Sponsor is The Winter Construction Company. For more information, contact **Susan Skolnick**.



Bob Busse Memorial Golf Classic November 2nd

Special Olympics Georgia once again proudly hosts the **20th Annual Bob Busse Memorial Golf Classic** in honor of long-time volunteer Bob Busse, who passed away last year. The tournament will be held at a prestigious golf club November 2nd in Sandy Springs. This event is a great way to spend your Monday! Each year this tournament grows and becomes better than the last. Expect a fun day of golf, prizes, silent auction and a wonderful lunch reception. Contact **Jennifer Harper** for more information.



Volunteer Opportunities



**State Summer Games
May 29th-May 31st
Atlanta**

Volunteers are needed to help at venues and be fans in the stands. To apply to volunteer, please [click here](#).

**State Masters Bowling
August 21st-23rd
Warner Robins**

Volunteers are needed to assist at the bowling lanes and be fans in the stands. To apply to volunteer, please [click here](#).

If you are interested in volunteering for any of the opportunities above, please contact [Whitney Warren](#).

Promotions

There are currently several great ways to earn free money for SOGA athletes. If you have questions on any of these promotions, please contact [Susan Skolnick](#) or 770-414-9390 x111.

Kroger Community Rewards®

Kroger Community Rewards® makes supporting Special Olympics Georgia super easy...[all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card!](#) Sign up with your 12 digit Kroger Plus Card number at www.kroger.com/community_rewards, and in the Community Rewards section, select Special Olympics Georgia (code 57973) as the organization you wish to support. Once you're enrolled, you'll earn rewards for Special Olympics Georgia every time you shop and use your Plus Card, and



you'll keep earning rewards/fuel points for yourself. **Enroll now for the Kroger Community Rewards Program** (you must re-enroll each year to continue earning rewards for SOGA). If your Kroger Plus Card is not already registered online, you will need to create an account. If you already have an account, simply sign in, find the Community Rewards section, and select Special Olympics Georgia.

AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to



support SOGA every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at **smile.amazon.com**, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price back to SOGA. On your first visit to **AmazonSmile**, select Special Olympics Georgia to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Then, always shop Amazon through AmazonSmile, and every eligible purchase you make will result in a donation.

Vehicle Donations

Are you thinking of selling or trading in that old car, boat or RV? Why not donate it



instead? SOGA has partnered with Car Program, LLC to turn your old vehicle into much needed funds for our athletes. Car Program will make all the arrangements at no cost to you. They handle the title transfer requirements and will provide you with a tax deductible donation receipt when they pick-up your car. Click here to **donate your vehicle** and a helpful representative will call you shortly, or you may call our car donation program at (800) 240-0160.

DialAmerica Magazine Subscriptions



Whether renewing your favorite magazine or subscribing to a new one, you can help raise funds for Special Olympics Georgia by ordering through our partner, DialAmerica. You'll get BIG discounts, and **DialAmerica** will donate 12.5% of your paid subscription to SOGA. To subscribe, call (877) 872-2362 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. or [click here.](#)

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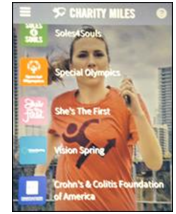
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Spread the word.
Invite your friends through your iMyne account. As your network grows, so will your earnings and donation for SOGA.

Join us and make your shopping count!

Charity Miles Exercise App

Charity Miles is a free GPS-enabled iPhone and Android compatible app that tracks/logs exercise mileage and allows you to raise money for SOGA athletes. Cyclists earn 10 cents a mile and walkers/runners earn 25 cents a mile. How to use the Charity Miles app:



- * Download the free Charity Miles app from the App Store.
- * Once logged in, swipe until you find Special Olympics and then select it as your charity of choice.
- * Select "Walk," "Run," or "Bike" on the top of the screen.
- * Select "Start" on the bottom of the screen and then run/walk/bike!
- * Once done with your workout, select "Stop" on the bottom of the screen.
- * To complete, select "Finish."
- * If you want, you can post your work out details to Facebook and Twitter by selecting the social media icons on the bottom of the screen.
- * You will be able to see the funds raised for Special Olympics through your exercising.

"Power of Unity" Bangle

Alex and Ani, a made in America lifestyle brand and producer of jewelry, and Special Olympics have



partnered through their Charity by Design division to create a new bangle. The "Power of Unity" bangle will be sold in Alex and Ani retail stores nationwide, online at www.Alexandani.com, and at partnering retail accounts. Alex and Ani will donate to Special Olympics 20% of the purchase price from each Power of Unity Charm sold between November 2014 and December 2015. The bangle design features the Special Olympics symbol on one side, and the athlete oath on the other side.

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