

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



"Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."



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To our Thousands of Friends and Supporters,

2024 was an awesome year and thanks for being there for the athletes and the organization. Special Olympics Georgia (SOGA) is excited and looking forward to everything we have planned in 2025 and beyond. In 2024, we hosted three state games, 23 coaches clinics, 9 Medfests, and Healthy Athletes initiatives at every state game.

Athletes, we are so proud of each of you! Today we have 19,853 registered athletes in our state and can't wait to see you at events and competitions this year. SOGA athletes continue to tell us their amazing stories. They are true champions!

Thank you for your contribution of time and financial donations that have put the organization in a solid position and we are planning many more great things for the near future. Thank you athletes for believing in Special Olympics Georgia and sharing your time and talents year-round. You enhance our lives.

Tune in for things coming in 2025 and we appreciate you. Log on to www.specialolympicsga.org and see how you can get more involved.

Harmon B. Miller (Chip)

Warm Regards,

Chairperson, Board of Directors

Georgia Milton-Sheats

Chief Executive Officer

THE ATHLETES

Health Messengers
The Special Olympics Health Messengers program trains athletes to promote health and wellness

The Special Olympics Health Messengers program trains athletes to promote health and wellness in their communities. By becoming Health Messengers, athletes lead by example, educating peers on healthy lifestyles and helping others navigate healthcare, creating a culture of health and inclusion. In July of 2024, SOGA was able to send two athletes to attend the training to become Health Messengers, we are pleased to introduce, Erin and Daley.



Erin H.

FORSYTH COUNTY

Erin has been an enthusiastic participant in Special Olympics Georgia for over 40 years, competing in a diverse range of sports such as track and field, swimming, bocce, snow skiing, bowling, sailing, softball, and golf.

As a Health Messenger, Erin is deeply committed to promoting the importance of both mental and physical well-being. She strives to inspire others to prioritize their health and wellness. One of Erin's favorite ways to stay active is through yoga, in addition to the sports she's participated in over the years. This allows her to calm her mind and work on her flexibility all at the same time!



Daley F.

FORSYTH COUNTY

Daley has been a dedicated participant in Special Olympics Georgia for nearly 20 years, competing in various sports such as track and field, basketball, softball, and powerlifting.

As a Health Messenger, Daley is passionate about motivating others to adopt healthy lifestyles through regular exercise and balanced nutrition. She enjoys staying active by following online workout videos, hitting the gym, and working out with friends. Daley is committed to inspiring others to make fitness a fun and sustainable part of their daily routines.

THE ATHLETES



Athlete of the Year - Raven A.

AUGUSTA STARS

Raven excels in whatever she puts her mind to, on and off the playing field. Not only does she live independently, but she also has a full-time job, as a nurse assistant in a clinic that serves individuals with disabilities. Raven was selected and competed at the 2023 Special Olympics World Games in Berlin, Germany, where she won a silver medal, bronze medal, and 4th place in Kayaking! Special Olympics Georgia is proud to have presented 2024's Distinguished Service Award for the Female Athlete of the Year to Raven A., of the Augusta Stars.

Athlete of the Year - Erik P.

North Fulton United

Erik has been participating in Special Olympics for over 20 years. He has competed in tennis at summer games for 15 consecutive years, as well as, basketball, cycling, bowling, and soccer. while achieving all of these accomplishments, this athlete has also maintained a job. This multi-sport and multi-decade experienced athlete is well deserved. Congratulations to the Male Athlete of the Year, Erik P. with North Fulton United!



THE ATHLETES OF 2024



Georgia Milton-Sheats Athlete of the Year Award Winner - Paige C.

Please join SOGA in congratulating the 2024 winner of the annual Georgia Milton-Sheats Athlete of the Year Award to athlete, Paige C.! Paige has been competing with Special Olympics Georgia for over 19 years. Swimming, Bocce, Equestrian, Alpine Skiing, Cheerleading and Basketball are the favorite sports that Paige has taken home the gold. She has received hundreds of medals and ribbons during her career and has been an integral part in the success of her teammates over the years.

Paige is a global messenger and assists coaches with different tasks at games and events. She truly embodies the spirt of Special Olympics and is truly deserving to receive the 2024 Georgia Milton-Sheats Athlete of the Year award!

COACH/LOCAL COORDINATOR OF 2024



Leah D.Special K's Coach

Leah began like a lot of people, by getting involved with their local program as a mother of a Special Olympics Georgia athlete. From there, her involvement increased in becoming a certified coach in several sports, a member of the program's management team, and an avid fundraiser for the program. In 2021, after getting certified as a flag football coach, she started the first flag football team for the Special K's program. Leah fulfills the promise of a "positive experience for all," which is a part of the coaches' oath! Congratulations to the 2024 Outstanding Coach/Local Coordinator of the Year, Coach Leah of the Special K's Delegation.

SOGA BY THE NUMBERS

Special Olympics Georgia (SOGA) provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in 29 Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, and three State Competitions. Participation in sports provides athletes opportunities to develop physical fitness, share friendships, interact with the community, and gain confidence to carry throughout life. 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 these goals through our sports and training program, we demonstrate that Special Olympics Georgia has a unique value.

SPORTS

19,853 ATHLETES

49,285
VOLUNTEERS

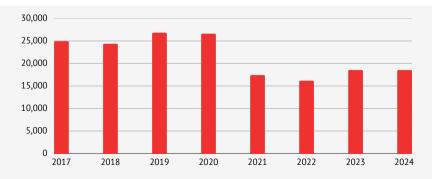
18,286
UNIFIED PARTNERS

10,601
CERTIFIED COACHES





ATHLETE GROWTH



SOGA BY THE NUMBERS CONT.

117
ACTIVE COUNTIES



193
AGENCIES



200
ACCREDITED LOCAL/AREA PROGRAMS



1,269 SCHOOLS



70
PARKS & RECREATION
PARTNERS



123,212
VOLUNTEER HOURS



SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED SPORTS®



Special Olympics Unified Sports® is an initiative that combines approximately equal numbers of Special Olympics athletes and athletes without intellectual disabilities (called Partners) on sports teams for training and competition. Age and ability matching of athletes and Partners is defined on a sport-by-sport basis.





Drake London, #5 with the Atlanta Falcons NFL team, is a Special Olympics Georgia Ambassador and supporter of Special Olympics. Drake was the 2024 Grand Marshal for the 2024 State Summer Games at Emory University. During a game in 2024, Drake wore specialty cleats, with the Special Olympics logo! UNIFIED SPORTS® - Introduced in 1988, Unified Sports furthers
Special Olympics Georgia's commitment to foster inclusion into school
and community sports programs. Unified Sports programs bring
together on the same team, athletes with and without intellectual
disabilities.

These teams train and compete with other Unified Sports teams in 29 sports – alpine skiing/snowboarding, athletics, artistic gymnastics, badminton, basketball, bocce, bowling, cheerleading, cycling, dance, equestrian, figure/speed ice skating, flag football, floor hockey, golf, kayaking, pickleball, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, sailing, soccer, softball, roller skating, swimming, table tennis, tennis and volleyball. Unified Sports furthers Special Olympics Georgia's commitment to foster inclusion into school and community sports programs.

HEALTHY ATHLETES & MEDFESTS IN 2024



Special Smiles dentistry



0

Healthy Hearing



Strong Minds Emotional Health



Opening Eyes

Healthcare professionals volunteer their time to provide health screenings and education to athletes in 5 different disciplines. The Healthy Athletes Program offers a fun and welcoming healthcare environment for athletes, while working to improve healthcare policies and programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities. In 2024, 646 Athlete were screened during State Games!



This year we were able to host our annual Medfest's! Over 810 athletes came out and received free medicals and enjoyed games and crafts with their peers! Huge shout out to our medical providers and their team for helping us provide our athletes with their free medicals so they are able to continue to compete in all our state competitions!



800 600 400 200 0 2021 2022 2023 2024

Healthy Athletes' Attendees

Special Olympics Georgia

Thanks and appreciates the support of the 2025 Honorary Board of Directors

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Carl Walker, Senior Vice President of General Services, Fiserv

Chris Ward, Area President (Georgia), Gallagher Richard Wells, Partner, KPMG LLP Katy Wilson, Special Olympics Georgia Athlete

Mike Wolf



2024 STATE GAMES



Winter Games January 26th - 27th

Athletes: 1,666 Coaches: 537 Unified Partners: 196 Volunteers: 1,170



Summer Games May 24th - 26th

Athletes: 1,293 Coaches: 387 Unified Partners: 174 Volunteers: 2,700



Fall Games November 22nd - 23rd

Athletes: 486 Coaches: 172 Unified Partners: 85 Volunteers: 141

LAW ENFORCEMENT

TORCH RUN

73 ACTIVE AGENCIES ACROSS GEORGIA

The Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) had another impactful year for the athletes.

They raised \$1,603,736 throughout their various fundraising events and initiatives.

Publix, Publix Customers, and Proctor & Gamble teamed up with LETR and SOGA to raise about \$1,125,221 with the annual Torch Icon sales at the registers.

LETR, SOGA, and the community were freezin' for a reason at Acworth Beach while raising \$234,020 for SOGA athletes at Polar Plunge.

Dunkin' partnered with LETR on National Donut Day to raise \$77,088 with their Cops in Donut Shops event held across 220 Dunkin' locations in Georgia.

LETR Executive Council 2024

CHAIR PERSON

John Clay - Warner Robins Police Department VICE CHAIR

Tyler Seymour - Johns Creek Police Department

MEMBERS

John Clifton - Johns Creek Police Department Latera Davis - Department of Juvenile Justice Amie Garrett - Cobb County Sheriff's Office Evan Hodge - Athlete Greg Martin - Warner Robins Police Department Nicolette Pinnock - Gwinnett County Schools Theresa Hernandez - Dunwoody Police Department Lisa Vorrasi - Georgia Bureau of Investigation Beth Walsh - Emory University Police Department Jason Rozier - Gwinnett County Police Department





-SPECIAL EVENTS-

Although sports are the center of our mission, we step off the field to raise funds and awareness for our athletes and individuals with intellectual disabilities so they can benefit from all that SOGA has to offer. Some of our 2024 events included:

The 15th annual <u>Polar Plunge</u> was held at Acworth Beach on February 24th. We had 419 Plungers come out and raise money to jump into the freezing lake. With the help of all our supporters for this event, we raised \$234.020.





Our 18th annual <u>Duck Pluck</u> had a great turnout for 2024! We gave away 1st - 5th place prizes to our contributors. Our goal of adopting 11,000 ducks was met and our amazing supporters helped us raise \$86,056.

The Bob Busse Golf Classic was held at The Country Club of Roswell on November 11th.

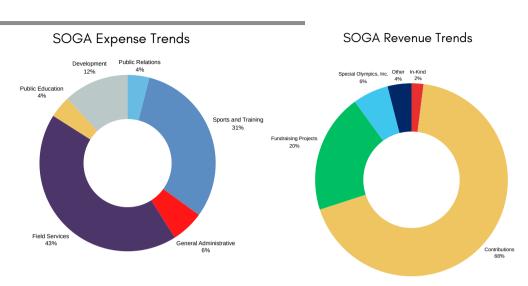
Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and golfers this event raised \$117,450, which surpassed our goal. 128 golfers from 32 different teams showed up to compete in this 29th annual event to help raise money for our





We are always thankful for Marlow's
Tavern and the rest of the vendors that
continue to make the Marlow's Tavern
Golf Classic a huge success year after
year. We had 136 golfers participate in
our 26th annual event on October 12th.
This year we were able to raise a net of
\$65,514 at the event and it was such a
great turn out per usual!

SOGA 2024 Financials in Review





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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-VICE-CHAIRPERSON Elizabeth Burdette - Director of Giving - Signature FD

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Rudolpha Richards- Athlete

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Alicia Wilson - Director of Operations and Human Resources -**Inwood Holdings**

SOGA TEAM 2025

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Volunteer and Health Manager

Aleksija Whatley

Alexander Grainger

Ansley Bonner Account Manager

Brittney Kirby Program Manager

Brendan Bibb

Program Manager

Senior Events Manager

Chief Sports & Training Officer

David Crawford

Elena Weaver

Intern

Knight

Hadley Shore

Events Manager

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Santiago Arias **Director of Programs**

Sara-Angelica Gomez **Program Manager**

Sean Munroe

Maurissa Dugger

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Chief Operating Officer

Robert Yost

Sam Elkins

Events Manager

Communications and Public

Program Manager

Conner King

Torch Run and Events Manager

Lewis Gordon

Intern

Liz Smith

Director of Sports

Sponsors and Contributors of 2024

The confidence that stems from athletic competition both on and off the field would not be enhanced without the generous support of many individuals, corporations, foundations, and organizations. These names represent those who believed in and supported the 19,853 athletes of SOGA in 2024. Thank you!

Statewide Premier Sponsors and Platinum Sponsors







Statewide Premier Sponsors and Platinum Sponsors

Marlow's





\$50,000 and Up

Publix Super Markets, Inc.

Special Olympics Inc.

David R. Clare & Margaret C. Clare Foundation

Anonymous

Brad Reid, Winter Construction Company

Our Neighbor Inc.

Dunkin' Donuts

Johns Creek Police Department

Dunwoody Country Club

\$25,000 to \$49,999

Emory University

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

Coca-Cola North America

Kennesaw Police Department

GAME - Great American Merchandise & Events

Abraham J & Phyllis Katz Foundation

Northside Hospital

Columbus Police Department

Honda USA Foundation

Yardi Systems Inc.

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Engel & Volkers North Fulton Buckhead Atlanta

Carlyle Fraser Employees Benefit Fund

George Summers Family

Michael Bond

Knights of Columbus Charities of Georgia Inc.

The Downey Family Foundation

Ryan LLC

Meredith Hilton Law

Acworth Police Department

Gwinnett Police Department

Warner Robins Police Department

Beaver Toyota of Cumming

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Dave Gutmann Family

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Aflac

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The Coca-Cola Company

Toyota Financial Services

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William Sandbrook

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Timothy Arnold, D.R. Horton Inc.

Waffle House Foundation Inc. William & Lacy Evans

John Clay, Warner Robins PD

Sandy Springs Police Department

Community Foundation of Northwest Georgia

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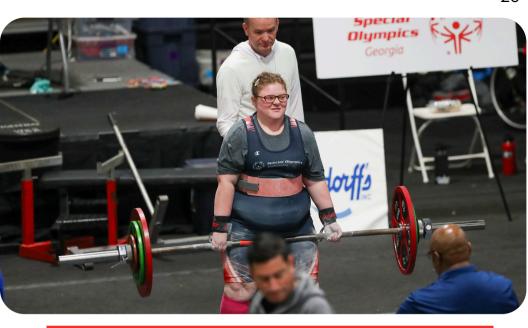
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