

Georgia's Champions



Special Olympics
Georgia



Happy Holidays

From all of us here at Special Olympics Georgia, we want to wish you and your family the happiest of Holidays! We thank you for being a part of the SOGA community and impacting the lives of the 26,620 athletes in our state!

2021 POLAR PLUNGE



The 2021 Polar Plunge date is official and we want YOU to be a part of this awesome event. Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 20th at Lake Acworth in Acworth, Georgia! If you are interested in getting involved or learning about our sponsorship opportunities please contact Kaitlin Henderson: (770)-414-9390 Ext. 1113. Do you have what it takes to make the plunge? [Click here for more information!](#)



POLAR PLUNGE®

*Special
Olympics
Georgia*



Publix Super Markets and Special Olympics have teamed up once again for the Torch Icon campaign!

January 7—18, make sure to visit your local Publix and with a donation to SOGA, you'll receive your Torch Icon with coupons for your favorite P&G products!



Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®

Contact Stephanie Bailey at
Stephanie.Bailey@specialolympicsga.org
to find out more about volunteer
opportunities and how to become a
Clinical Director



The Healthy Athletes initiative is dedicated to providing health services and education to Special Olympics athletes and changing the way health systems interact with people with intellectual disabilities. Through free health screenings, training for healthcare professionals, and evaluation of the health status of people with intellectual disability, Healthy Athletes has become a powerful public health organization worldwide.



HONORING A SOGA CHAMP

Dennis loved Special Olympics with a passion and was very proud of all his medals. He loved BIG and was the heart of Heard County. Rodney Kay stated, "Dennis Shaw was someone I looked forward to seeing every day. His daily visit injected life into the office without fail." He was Heard County's Special Olympics Champion and a friend to everyone he met." We all miss him very much!



ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

HALLIE MCCOLLUM - OCONEE COUNTY



Hallie McCollum attends Oconee County High School and is an athlete with Oconee County Schools' Special Olympics program. She has also competed in Special Olympics with ESP (Extra Special People), and with Athens Clarke County. Hallie has been a Special Olympics athlete since elementary school, and has enjoyed competing in a variety of sports, at the local and area level as well as at State Games: artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, swimming, athletics, basketball, and bowling. Hallie loves to sing and dance and has sung "The Star-Spangled Banner" for local and area games! She is in the musical theater program at Oconee County High School and has performed with several local theater groups too – most recently in a production of "Mary Poppins"! She also performs in the annual "Big Hearts" stage show for ESP.

Hallie's dreams for the future are to attend the inclusive college program at UGA, "Destination Dawgs", and to have a career as a music teacher. Her favorite things about Special Olympics are "winning medals and staying in a hotel with my friends!"

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

JANICE AND HAROLD TRIBBLE - WALTON COUNTY

Janice and Harold Tribble have been volunteering with Walton County Special Olympics for over 25 years. They began serving on our management team many years ago and have been a tremendous help with fundraising, volunteering, and increasing community awareness. They work tirelessly at every local event and fundraiser. You can find them cooking at our annual Spaghetti Supper, preparing lunches at our Local Games, and cheering on our athletes and just imagine Harold is 92 years young!



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

PUBLIX SUPER MARKETS

Since 1996 Publix and its customers have helped raise over \$8 Million to help fund Special Olympics Georgia Programs (SOGA).

During each Publix campaign SOGA arranges over 190 visits from local law enforcement officers to each store manager as a thank you for their continued support. Publix has helped fund over 86,000 athletes to compete at State Games over the last 24 years!

Publix spreads the word and allows for local shoppers to Be a Fan of SOGA athletes



Thank you for the past 24 years of support, Special Olympics Georgia is once again looking forward to another great year of partnership with Publix Super Markets!

LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

Since 1987, LETR has grown consistently every year. The Law Enforcement Torch Run is the single largest year-round fundraising vehicle benefitting Special Olympics Georgia. Law enforcement agencies across the state of Georgia raised over \$1.2 million for Special Olympics Georgia in 2019! As the Guardians of the Flame, law enforcement volunteers contribute countless hours each year, generate ongoing awareness about our mission, and secure crucial grassroots resources. Members of law enforcement are also Special Olympics Georgia parents, coaches, volunteers, and Unified partners.

There continue to be opportunities to use our combined voices to make critical strides towards true inclusion in every community. Special Olympics Georgia is proud of our relationship with the Law Enforcement Torch Run and grateful for their support that makes much of our mission possible. Thank you for making a difference!





The JD Finish Line Youth Foundation is excited to support Special Olympics through the annual holiday fundraising campaign! Visit your local Finish Line now until December 31 to donate.

STAYING FIT AT HOME...



Hawks at Home offers opportunities to learn basketball skills and drills so you can stay on top of your game while staying home. Not so sure about basketball? Hawks at Home also includes instructional dance videos, STEM activities and coloring pages.

[Click here to learn more!](#)



Did you know we have a partnership with Anytime Fitness? Through our partnership, you can access weekly inclusive workouts airing live every Wednesday at 1 p.m. ET on [Anytime Fitness's Facebook Page](#). Make sure to stay connected with our social media to learn more about Anytime Fitness and their inclusive workouts that you can access from home.

GET INVOLVED WITH SOGA



Interested in joining the SOGA community? Here are all the ways you can get involved:

Interested in becoming a SOGA Coach?

Visit the SOGA website for general quizzes & resources on Coaching Special Olympics Athletes, Principles in Coaching, & Autism Spectrum Disorder
Visit our Learning Portal to get educated and certified in Unified Sports & Concussion Training
Coach's Code of Conduct
Online Recertifications

For Information on Coaches Clinics & Initial Sport Certification contact Liz Smith

Interested in becoming a SOGA volunteer?

Volunteer & Unified Partner Profile Form
Click here to learn about SOGA's volunteer screening policy.
Protective Behaviors Quiz
Background Screen

Sign up online for all Volunteer Opportunities



If you have any questions about volunteering please contact Courtney Payne or Hannah Creasey.



**THANK YOU,
VOLUNTEERS!**

ALTHOUGH THE 2021 INDOOR WINTER GAMES HAVE BEEN CANCELED, WE WANT TO THANK ALL OF THE VOLUNTEERS WHO WERE WILLING TO SACRIFICE THEIR TIME FOR OUR ATHLETES. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT EVENTS IN THE FUTURE!

Resources to help in the Crisis

LEARN MORE

eLearning Course

With the help of athletes and Program Staff, we have developed a 30-minute eLearning course for our Special Olympics community about COVID-19. This course is designed to cover the basic information about the coronavirus (COVID-19) including: what is the coronavirus, what are the symptoms, how does it spread, and how you can protect yourself. We encourage the entire Special Olympics community to complete this module at learn.specialolympics.org Please see [instructions](#) for accessing this course.

Young Athletes

Family Flash Cards. Fun and engaging flashcards featuring each of the individual activities and at home equipment modifications for families to use at home to run Young Athletes.

Young Athletes At Home. Guide for families and caregivers on how to run Young Athletes activities at home.

Young Athletes Videos. Videos demonstrating the individual Young Athletes activities.

Healthy Play at Home. Poster for families to track the various healthy behaviors they do at home.

Tips for talking to children about COVID-19 from [CDC](#) and [UNICEF](#).

Fitness

Fit 5 Resources Series

Staying Fit at Home: simple week-long calendar that athletes can follow to stay fit. Week-long calendar can be repeated as needed. Athletes can sign up on the link in the resource to receive newsletter with content from Health Messengers to for tips and ideas on how to stay active.

School of Strength: Launched in March 2020 across the Special Olympics movement, School of Strength is an interactive online platform that encourages athletes to participate in a fun and engaging training program that they can do in the comfort of their own homes. Developed in partnership with WWE superstar Becky Lynch, this series of videos, a fitness tracker, a coach's playbook and a caregiver toolkit all contribute to helping athletes focus on nutrition and fitness and getting the most out of their workouts.

eLearning for Coaches

The [online learning portal](#) has a number of free eLearning courses, now available for coaches, which are now available in a number of languages. In addition, you will find guidance created specifically for [coaches](#) to assist them during the COVID-19 crisis, including how to conduct virtual training sessions and how to activate with your athletes when you do not have access to technology. As more resources around virtual games become available, including best practices and tips, they will be made available on resources.specialolympics.org.

Virtual Games

Visit the [Virtual Games](#) section of resources.specialolympics.org to learn how virtual games are being offered in different programs.

COVID-19 STATEMENT

SOGA PROMOS



Thinking of selling or trading in that old car, boat or RV? Donate it instead! SOGA has partnered with CARS to turn your old vehicle, whether it's running or not, into much needed funds for our programs. CARS accepts most cars, trucks, trailers, boats, RV's, motorcycles, off road vehicles, heavy equipment, and most other motorized vehicles. CARS will make all the arrangements at no cost to you. They handle the title transfer requirements and will provide you with a written acknowledgement of your donation and tax deduction information. Click here for more information or to donate your vehicle. A helpful representative will contact you within 24 hours to schedule a pickup, or call CARS seven days a week at 1-844-404-SOGA (7642) to speak with a representative.



KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS® Kroger Community Rewards® makes supporting SOGA 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 Kroger Community Awards, and in the Community Rewards section, select Special Olympics Georgia (code SH080) as the organization you wish to support. Once you're enrolled, you'll earn rewards for SOGA every time you shop and use your Plus Card, and you'll keep earning rewards points for yourself! Enroll now for Kroger Community Awards (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. Questions or problems, contact

Thomas Ritch
770-414-9390 ext. 1121



Did you know that every time you shop at Amazon you can support SOGA athletes? Thanks to the AmazonSmile program, 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases will be donated to SOGA. Instead of going to Amazon's main home page, go to AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon that you know - same products, same prices, same service. If you click the link above, Special Olympics Georgia automatically will be selected as your charity. Now, every time you make a purchase from Amazon through smile.amazon.com you'll be supporting SOGA athletes! [Click here to start shopping.](#)

SPREAD THE WORD

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!

