

**Special  
Olympics**  
Ohio



Guest Speakers at the 2018 Fall Leadership Conference

**Catlin Layton**, *State Director of Best Buddies Ohio*

*Session: Keynote Speaker*



Catlin Layton is the Ohio State Director for Best Buddies International. Best Buddies promotes inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in three ways: friendship, leadership, and integrated employment. Across Ohio, Best Buddies has established more than 20 friendship chapters in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. More than 60 people have gone through the Best Buddies Ambassador Leadership Training to become advocates for themselves. Further, Best Buddies is working on engaging employers across the state and encouraging them to hire people with IDD.

Prior to her role with Best Buddies, Catlin has worked on four national political conventions, and at Western Reserve Land Conservancy in Cleveland, OH; Women in Government Relations in Washington, D.C.; and the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. In each role she has been responsible for operations, development, and program management.

A graduate of the University of South Florida, Catlin holds a B.A. in History and Political Science. She lives in Downtown Cleveland.

**James L. W. Houle, PhD**, *Sport Psychologist at the Jameson Crane Sports Medicine Institute*

*Session: "Scarlet and Grit" – OSU Sports Psychology*



Dr. Houle is a licensed psychologist at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center Jameson Crane Sports Medicine Institute. He holds a clinical assistant professor position in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health. He currently serves as one of the three sport psychologists for Ohio State athletics, as well as a sport psychologist for community athletes in the Columbus, Ohio area. Dr. Houle provides performance enhancement, mental health services for athletes, and consultation to coaches, staff, and administration.

Prior to Ohio State, Dr. Houle worked as a psychologist at the University of Maryland Counseling Center and served as the Counseling Center liaison to the University of Maryland Athletic Department. Dr. Houle provided performance enhancement, mental health services for student-athletes, and consultation to coaches, staff, and administration. He also provided mental health services, outreach, and consultation to the general student population. Dr. Houle was an affiliate faculty member of the Department of Psychology's counseling psychology doctoral program.

Dr. Houle received his Master's in Athletic Counseling from Springfield College where he worked with teams and individuals in both a mental health counseling and performance enhancement capacity. He received his PhD in Counseling Psychology at Auburn University. He worked in the athletic department as part of the Life Skills program, consulted individually with student-athletes, and conducted team seminars in sport psychology. Dr. Houle interned at the Texas A&M University Counseling Center, and was a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Counseling Center.

Dr. Houle was a gymnast for 18 years. Throughout his career he was a six-time national champion. He was a contributing member of the 2001 Ohio State national championship team, as well as the 2001 and 2002 Ohio State Big Ten Championship teams.

**Jenny Shrodes**, *Registered Dietitian & Certified Diabetes Educator*

*Session: Nutrition and Wellness*



Jenny C. Shrodes is a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator. Jenny attended The Ohio State University and has degrees in Television Broadcast Journalism and Medical Dietetics. She has worked in diabetes education for 15 years, currently at the Wexner Medical Center at The Ohio State University. Previously she worked with a local non-profit, Central Ohio Diabetes Association, in bariatric surgery at Nationwide Children's Hospital and in long-term care at First Community Village. Jenny believes in a comprehensive and practical approach to diabetes education combining classroom education with hands-on cooking instruction, grocery tours, stress management techniques and live activity/exercise options.

**Mary Jane Wellnitz-Timmons**, *Health and Wellness Professional, Exercise Physiologist, Health Educator*

*Session: Nutrition and Wellness*



Mary Jane is the Director of Wellness & Healthy Lifestyles for ARC Industries, a Health and Wellness Consultant. Mary Jane has developed a comprehensive Wellness, Best Practice Model for adults with developmental and physical disabilities, a 12-week evidence based curriculum, encasing exercise instruction and nutrition education. Outcomes from the curriculum that launched in 2015 reveal successes in weight loss, body fat loss, strength gains, increased flexibility, and higher self-efficacy. The unique components of the ARC Wellness & Healthy Lifestyles model are the local partnerships and community integrated events. *(cont'd)*

*(Mary Jane Wellnitz-Timmons cont'd)*

Mary Jane is now in her 16<sup>th</sup> year working at OhioHealth. As an Exercise Physiologist Mary Jane has been a part of clinical programs such as Cancer Wellness, Executive Health, and co-founder of GOAL, Group of Aspiring Ladies, an OhioHealthy Initiative for Women's Health. Mary Jane has provided exercise prescriptions for patients post Physical Therapy, with an emphasis on joint replacements, and for patients post Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

Mary Jane continues to work at Ohio Health in Neuroscience with the Delay the Disease program, an evidence based, exercise based program, working with People with Parkinson's. Mary Jane is a Master Trainer and Health Educator with this program. She has 20+ participants on a weekly basis and also travels nationally with the co-founders to present the Continuing Education Curriculum for the Delay the Disease program.

Mary Jane is a Certified Spinning Instructor, and has enjoyed teaching weekly for the past 8 years. Mary Jane also enjoys running, hiking, and most anything that involves 'moving'. Her greatest joy is her 2 children and family. Mary Jane also welcomes any opportunity to travel.

**Tara Williams**, *Special Olympics Ohio Board of Directors, Athlete Leadership*

*Session: Special Olympics Ohio Board 101, Athlete Leadership*



Tara started Special Olympics when she was in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 27 years ago. She has participated in gymnastics, swimming, track, volleyball, softball, basketball, golf, and tennis and currently participate in golf, tennis and basketball. Special Olympics has always been a huge part of her life growing up. It has helped Tara to become the person she is today! She loves the excitement in the athletes when competing, being a part of team sports, having a second family, and being a part of something bigger in her life than just regular every day activities. She feels it is a good feeling to know she belongs to something that is very important to her.

Tara works at Paul J. Ford and company it is an Engineering company out of Columbus Ohio, with a location in Florida. She is the project coordinator with the Retail and Building departments and also the companies Administrative Assistant.

**Bill Meerman**, *Special Olympics Ohio Board Chair*

*Session: Special Olympics Ohio Board 101*



Bill Meerman was elected to the SOOH Board of Directors in December 2017 and was unanimously elected to the position of Chairperson in September 2018. Bill has been involved with Special Olympics Ohio for the past 15 years as a parent of an athlete (Lena), a coach, and fundraiser for both Franklin County - Upper Arlington and Cuyahoga County – MBB local teams. He also served briefly as volunteer Area 12 Director in 2017. Bill and his family reside in Rocky River, Ohio, a Cleveland suburb.

For more than three decades Bill has served on non-profit boards including the Central Ohio Chapter of the American Red Cross Development Board, Texas Children’s Hospital Development Board, Association for the Developmentally Disabled-ADD (Board Member and Treasurer), and most recently as Board Member, Treasurer, and Executive Committee Member at Hattie Larlham. Professionally, Bill has more than 30 years of experience as a corporate retirement plan consultant and works as a Financial Advisor with Wells Fargo Advisors in Cleveland. He partners with a team of seasoned professionals who manage and serve an impressive book of high net worth and qualified plan clients. Bill is tasked with managing and growing their collective book of corporate retirement plans, providing vendor search, benchmarking and ongoing financial advisory services.

**Jabari Wilson, Special Olympics Ohio Pent-athlete**

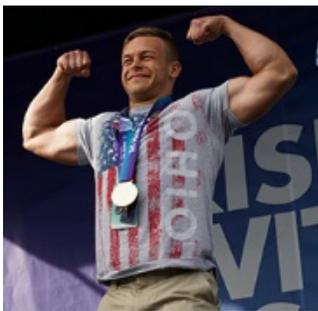
*Session: How to Achieve Your Goals*



Jabari joined Special Olympics Ohio when he turned 8 years old. The first sports he participated in were individual skills basketball, athletics, and individual skills softball. At age eleven he started playing on the school-age basketball team and, when he was seventeen, he led his team to a state championship. While in high school, Jabari ran athletics and played on the varsity football team. Before graduating he earned the football team's "Impact Player" award and the athletics team's "Sledge Hammer" award. His favorite events include the 100-meter dash and shot put. Jabari is currently training for the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi in March 2019. Jabari will be representing Special Olympics USA and competing in the pentathlon.

**Garrett Ford, Special Olympics Ohio Powerlifting Athlete**

*Session: How to Achieve Your Goals*



Garrett Ford is a powerlifter with the Special Olympics Ohio-Licking County program where he has trained with Coach John, Coach Tommy, and the team for the last four years. Garrett is an Athlete Leader and multi-year gold medal winner at the State Summer Games. He also competes in traditional powerlifting competitions. He works at Rural King in the shipping and receiving department and spends his free time lifting weights at Old School Gym in Pataskala, volunteering at a community center, and spending time with his family. Garrett recently had the opportunity to meet his personal idol, Arnold Schwarzenegger, at the Arnold Classic Sports and Fitness Expo in Columbus, Ohio thanks in large part to his selection for the Special Olympics USA Games in Seattle and to the support of Amazon. Garrett will be representing Special Olympics USA at World Games in Abu Dhabi in March 2019.

**Jessica Stewart**, *Special Olympics Ohio President and CEO*

*Session: SOOH Leadership Panel*



Jessica has spent 17 years with the American Cancer Society. In her most recent senior leadership position, as the National Director of Distinguished Partners Events at Global Headquarters, she was responsible for developing and managing strategy, as well as national core competencies, trainings, and resources to grow the \$55 million distinguished events property across the nation. In former positions, she managed division and Ohio-based teams of boards, volunteers, and staff, in fund development to deliver on the Society's critical mission. Jessica has received national recognition for her work in the areas of distinguished events growth and development, high-level constituent recruitment and engagement, advocacy initiatives, donor prospecting and cultivation, and the development of new fundraising platforms. Jessica prides herself on building relationships and partnerships to ensure a solid business foundation that supports the necessary and passionate work of the nonprofit sector.

Jessica started her position as President & CEO of Special Olympics Ohio on January 29, 2018. In collaboration with the Special Olympics Ohio Board of Directors, she is responsible for the strategic leadership, operational management, fundraising, and overall growth Special Olympics Ohio.

Jessica holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Toledo and relocated to downtown Columbus, Ohio from Toledo in April of 2016. She has two grown children who reside in Cincinnati and Columbus. In her spare time, Jessica enjoys spending it with her family and friends, singing, and international travel adventures.

**John Wysocki**, *Special Olympics Ohio Vice President of Sports and Programs*

*Session: SOOH Leadership Panel, How to Achieve Your Goals, What's the Next Sport at State Games?*



John Wysocki has been on the SOOH staff since July 2017 when he was hired on as the Director of Coaches and Training. He was named to his current post as VP of Sports and Programs in March 2018. He oversees the sports and program staff which deliver our mission of providing year round sports opportunities to our athletes and supporting their coaches, volunteers, and Local Coordinators from the state office. John's emphasis in his role is process improvement, increasing quality of our programs, growing our athlete participation, and managing expenses.

John started as a powerlifting coach for Licking County Special Olympics in January 2013 and went on to become the Head Coach for all sports within their organization, where his youngest daughter Gabby is an athlete and his spouse Carrie serves as the Local Coordinator. John's athletic background is primarily within the sport of CrossFit which he began while serving in the U.S. Navy. He was a Command Fitness Leader and Leading Chief Petty Officer for his Naval Intelligence Unit at Wright Patterson AFB in Fairborn, Ohio and business owner and head coach of CrossFit Newark. John is a combat veteran who served two tours in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (2008 and 2011). Prior to being called into active duty for the U.S. Navy, he was an Operations/Claims Manager and Human Resources Internal Investigator for State Farm Insurance in the Ohio Regional Office and a Senior Intelligence Analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington D.C.

**Rob DuVall**, *Special Olympics Ohio Vice President of Marketing and Development*

*Session: SOOH Leadership Panel*



Rob joined Special Olympics Ohio in 2017, bringing with him nearly 20 years of experience in Non-profit Development and a unique perspective on corporate engagement and philanthropy. He is thrilled to be a part of the team shaping the future of Special Olympics Ohio!

**Bill Hatfield**, *Special Olympics Ohio Director of Sports and Competition*

*Session: What's the Next Sport at State Games?*



Bill Hatfield has been a part of Special Olympics Ohio for 20 years. He and his wife, Missy, have been long time supporters of the Special Olympics mission. Bill met Missy while she was volunteering for the Wood County Special Olympics Swim Team, while he was a Sports Coordinator at Bowling Green.

Bill graduated from Bowling Green State University with a Bachelor's of Science in Sports Management. He currently resides in Cleveland, Ohio with Missy and their two children, Breyden and Sydney.

**Kate Burdett**, *Special Olympics Ohio Director of Marketing*

*Session: Social Media Best Practices*



Kate Burdett has been a part of the Special Olympics Ohio family for five years and is very excited about the next 5... or 50! As SOOH's Director of Marketing, Kate is responsible for all of the public impressions made by this fantastic organization. From outlets like traditional print and broadcast media to web and social media presence, Kate makes sure that the athletes and activities of Special Olympics Ohio shine for all to see. And if you have a logo question, Kate can probably answer it!

**Katie Lee**, *Special Olympics Ohio Director of Coaches Education and University Programs*

*Session: Coaches Certification*



Katie moved to Columbus, OH from Louisville, KY in 2016 and obtained a Master's of Science in Sports Management at The Ohio State University and worked as a Graduate Administrative Associate for Competitive Sports within the Department of Recreational Sports. She also holds a Bachelor's degree from Western Kentucky University in Recreation Administration and has been an active volunteer with Special Olympics Kentucky and Special Olympics Ohio since 2014. Katie served as the Sport Programs Intern in the summer of 2017 and implemented the first Unified Sports league into the Intramural program at The Ohio State University. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, being active in the gym and outdoors, traveling, and of course attending Special Olympic events.

**Josh Messersmith**, *Special Olympics Ohio Director of Health and Unified Strategies*

*Session: Healthy Athletes*



Josh is from McCutchenville, Ohio and graduated from Heidelberg University in 2016 with a Bachelors Degree of Science degree in Business. Before working for SOOH, Josh was an assistant Local Coordinator for Wyandot County for 4 years and the Local Coordinator for Delaware County for 1 year. Josh is a member of the Arc of Wyandot County and on the Mohawk Local School District Board of Education. As the director for Health and Unified Strategies, Josh is tasked with expanding Health awareness across Ohio and expanding interscholastic unified programs. In his free time Josh enjoys spending time with his family and traveling.

**Megan Modene**, *Special Olympics Ohio Athlete Leadership and Volunteer Manager*

*Session: Athlete Leadership*



Megan attended The Ohio State University and graduated in 2015 with a degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences. She comes to Special Olympics Ohio from the Center of Autism Spectrum Disorders, Nationwide Children's Hospital. She has served on various event committees and coordinated volunteers for the Down Syndrome Association of Central Ohio. In her spare time, she enjoys visiting her family with six siblings, boating, volunteering, spending time with friends, and baking. Megan is responsible for managing the organization's vital role of volunteer engagement in support of the sports mission, as well as overseeing the entire scope of the Athlete Leadership Program throughout Ohio.