

**Special
Olympics**
Ohio



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**GREENBAUM
STIERS** strategic
marketing group

Revealing The Champion In All Of Us
2023 Annual Report



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A message from Jessica Stewart, Chief Executive Officer, and Megan Manuel, Board Chair

As we look back on the achievements of 2023, we are overcome with immense pride and gratitude for the outstanding efforts and dedication displayed by our Special Olympics Ohio community. Together, we have upheld our commitment to making a significant impact on the lives of our athletes, their families, and the schools and communities we serve. We continued to expand, streamline, and improve our programmatic reach and quality across the state of Ohio. This work has resulted in more equitable opportunities for our athletes to develop their skills, maintain their health, and build meaningful lifelong friendships.

With the launch of our aggressive three-year strategic plan, we are now positioned for greater strategic impact in alignment with the Special Olympics International global vision. For our athletes participating in our traditional sports offerings, we reached further to improve the quality of our local, regional, and state programs and events. We expanded our Unified Champion Schools programming, which promotes inclusion and respect among students with and without intellectual disabilities in over 163 schools in 69 districts across the state. We saw exponential growth of our Healthy Athletes program, nearly tripling our free health screenings, referrals, and education to Special Olympics athletes, Unified partners, and their families. We amplified our Athlete Leadership program, which empowers Special Olympics athletes to take on leadership roles and advocate for themselves and their peers. We launched Unified Leadership to teach leaders without disabilities to value and learn from people with intellectual disabilities to create community change. We expanded our statewide partnerships with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, The Ohio State University, and the YMCA, along with other critical stakeholders to enhance the quality and accessibility of services for people with intellectual disabilities.

We are continually humbled by our remarkable community of local leaders, volunteers, coaches, and officials. Their selflessness serves as a beacon of inspiration, illuminating the path toward inclusivity, empowerment, and positive change. It is through their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication that our collective mission is realized, touching the lives of countless individuals and enriching our community in immeasurable ways.

Looking ahead, we are incredibly excited for the further growth and accomplishments of 2024. We challenge you all to walk with us in our mission, and be inspired. Together, we can create a more inclusive world where every person is recognized for their abilities and celebrated for their unique contributions to this beautiful world.



JESSICA STEWART



MEGAN MANUEL

SPECIAL OLYMPICS OHIO SENIOR LEADERSHIP

JESSICA STEWART
President & CEO

SCOTT DODSON
Chief Financial Officer

JENN HENLEY
*Vice President of Sports
and Field Operations*

CHRISTINE HOYER
Chief Development Officer

KYLE MILLER
*Vice President of Inclusion
and Engagement*



Special Olympics Ohio 2023 Board of Directors

MEGAN MANUEL

Executive Committee - Chair

Warren County Board of DD-Superintendent

PHIL WEAVER

Executive Committee - Vice Chair

Price Waterhouse Coopers-
Public Accountant (Retired)

BERNIE OSTROWSKI

Executive Committee -

Treasurer/Development Committee

Plante Moran - Retired Partner

GEOFFREY KUNKLER

*Executive Committee - Past Chair/Development
Committee Interim Chair*

Carlile Patchen & Murphy-Partner, Attorney at Law

MARK FAZZINA

Governance Committee - Chair

Executive Search Partners-Principal

JACK GREEN

Program Committee - Chair

Adelphi Bank-Executive Vice President
Chief Lending Officer

JIM O'CONNELL

Program Committee Member

James J. O'Connell and Associates, LLC
(P&G - Retired)

TIFFANY HUNT

DEI Task Force

KPMG-Managing Partner Business Enablement
Operations

JOE MORBITZER

LETR Advisory Council Ohio

Bureau of Criminal Investigation and
Identification (Retired)

JANINE OMAN

Program Committee Member

The Ohio State University-
Senior Deputy Director of Athletics

REBECCA BAILEY

Development Committee

Columbus School for Girls-
Assistant Director of Development, Major Gifts

BOBBY REIDL

Athlete Leader Program Committee

Co-Chair Athlete Leadership Council

CHRIS WENZKE

Program Committee Member

Fisher Management Partners-Partner

BECKETT BROH

Program Committee Member

PRADCO-Senior Management Consultant

OUR MISSION DRIVES EVERYTHING WE DO

We are advancing the global inclusion movement through sports, health education, and leadership programs that empower people with intellectual disabilities throughout Ohio.

OUR VISION FOR AN INCLUSIVE OHIO

We envision an inclusive Ohio for all, driven by the power of sport, through which people with intellectual disabilities live active, healthy, and fulfilling lives.



Impact

WHO WE ARE

19 Olympic-Style Sports

20,000 Athletes

121 Community-Based Local Programs

1,750 Volunteers

\$0 Cost to Athletes

CORE PROGRAMS



Special Olympics
Sports



Special Olympics
Unified Schools

Special Olympics
Healthy Athletes®



**ATHLETE
LEADERSHIP**

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

There are hundreds of opportunities to volunteer with Special Olympics Ohio! Start the journey to the most rewarding experience of your life. Just scan the QR code or visit sooh.org/volunteer.





Financials

REVENUES, GAINS AND SUPPORT	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Direct marketing, contributions & grants	\$6,221,075	\$3,618,376	\$4,235,635	\$8,231,323	\$12,090,383
Interest, gains & other revenue	\$541,554	\$923,760	\$762,286	\$(137,362)	\$1,571,198
Total revenue, gains & support	\$6,762,629	\$4,542,136	\$4,997,921	\$8,093,961	\$13,661,581

EXPENSES	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Program services	\$3,811,340	\$2,218,179	\$2,364,598	\$6,374,031	\$10,445,489
Fundraising	\$930,546	\$636,504	\$616,942	\$961,544	\$874,663
Management & general	\$796,927	\$910,239	\$620,482	\$882,802	\$1,134,698
Total expenses	\$5,538,813	\$3,764,922	\$3,602,022	\$8,218,377	\$12,454,850

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Increase in net surplus/(deficit)	\$1,223,816	\$777,214	\$1,395,899	\$(124,416)	\$1,206,731
Net Assets	\$7,448,482	\$8,225,696	\$10,315,553	\$9,497,179	\$10,703,910
Program Expense Percentage	68.8%	58.9%	65.6%	77.6%	83.9%



Global Youth Leadership Summit

The Special Olympics Global Youth Leadership Summit took place in Berlin, Germany, from June 16-20, 2023. This event was the first global gathering of young people with and without intellectual disabilities since the 2019 GYLS in Abu Dhabi. Notably, it was the first Summit entirely led by youth of all abilities, making it a Summit truly for the youth, by the youth.

Two Unified Pairs from Ohio, Anisha Chopra and Kali Ohlemacher from Sandusky, and Fatimata Sall and Mamie Joe from Columbus, were selected through a rigorous application process. Representing 25% of the USA Delegation, these young women showcased their commitment to inclusion, leadership, and the Unified Generation on a global platform. Their participation highlighted their dedication to building an inclusive future.

The Summit allowed these Youth Leaders to enhance their skills in project management, leadership, and inclusion. They engaged with experts, learned how to accommodate diverse backgrounds, and prepared to bring these lessons back to their communities. The Summit was a treasured opportunity, expanding Unified networks and fostering a deeper understanding of global perspectives.





Sports

We provide 19 Olympic-style individual and team sports that provide meaningful training and competition for 20,000 athletes throughout Ohio.

Alpine Skiing



Basketball



Bowling



Competitive Cheer



Athletics



Flag Football



Bocce



Gymnastics Artistic



Gymnastics Rhythmic



Equestrian



Snowboarding



Golf



Soccer



Power lifting



Showshoeing



Softball



Tennis



Swimming



Volleyball





Winter Games

The 2023 Winter Games marked the third year of indoor winter competition at Bowling Green State University. Over 800 athletes competed in basketball, basketball skills, competitive cheerleading, and swimming. The event also featured an opening ceremony, a dance social event, and free health screenings through the Healthy Athletes program, providing essential health education and resources.





Summer Games

Special Olympics Ohio celebrated its 50th Summer Games on the Ohio State University campus in Columbus with over 3,100 athletes, coaches, and Unified partners from 89 local programs. Competitions included athletics, bocce, bowling, gymnastics, powerlifting, soccer, tennis, and volleyball. The event also featured the Healthy Athletes program, a dance, and an Olympic Village.





Fall Games

The Fall Games spanned elite venues across Ohio in September and October. Events included the State Equestrian Show in Springfield, the State Softball Tournament in Oregon, the State Golf Tournament in Cincinnati, and the State Flag Football Tournament in Geneva. Nearly 700 athletes showcased their skills and competed statewide.





Leadership Summit and Awards

The Leadership Summit and Awards Banquet at Nationwide Hotel and Conference Center recognized athletes, local coordinators, partners and volunteers. Keynote Speaker Loretta Claiborne, Chief Inspiration Officer for Special Olympics, Inc., moved the audience. The Saturday Leadership Conference featured breakout sessions on various topics, such as LETR, Development, Unified Champion Schools, Healthy and Young Athletes, Local Coordinators and Programming, and Training Volunteers and Coaches.



Loretta Claiborne

AWARD	RECIPIENT
Nation Banner School 1	Woodridge High School
Nation Banner School 2	Indian Hill Middle School
Excellence in Inclusion 1	Taylor Road Elementary School (School of Excellence in Inclusion)
Excellence in Inclusion 2	College/ Technical School– Medina CCC (School of Excellence in Inclusion)
Impact Award - Individual	Debra and Perry Schneider
Impact Award – Foundation	The Good Shepherd Foundation
Impact Award - Company	Sheetz
Impact Award - Service Club	The Ohio State Moose Association
Educator of the Year	Carmen Pinter of Northland High School
Guardian Award	Brandon Long
Local Coordinator of the Year	Toby Collins
Athlete of the Year	Matthew Medley
Coach of the Year	Jim Hartley
Community Partner of the Year	Leigh Fullencamp & Seeds of Caring
Unified Pair of the Year	Janel Travis and Shane York
Champion of Inclusion	TWIISTED Burger & Sushi
Volunteer of the Year	Dan Hill



Athlete Highlights

KALI OHLEMACHER

2023 USA Today Special Olympics Athlete of the Year: Kali Ohlemacher, a graduating senior from Perkins High School, was recognized for her achievements in school and representing Ohio. Along with her Unified partner Anisha Chopra, Kali attended the 2022 USA Games and the 2023 Berlin World Games, advocating for inclusion and planning Unified events.



MATTHEW MEDLEY

2023 Big 12 Conference Special Olympics Male Athlete of the Year: Matthew Medley from Tuscarawas County was honored for his achievements and leadership, receiving recognition at the Big 12 Championship in Dallas. Matthew is paving the way for other Special Olympics Ohio athletes by proving that people will do remarkable things, if they are just given a chance.



U.S. Youth Ambassadors

Following a rigorous selection process, two Ohio Youth Leaders, Kali Ohlemacher and Anisha Chopra, were chosen as U.S. Youth Ambassadors, marking a significant milestone for Special Olympics Ohio. Their two-year term involves leadership opportunities, professional development, networking, and advocacy for meaningful inclusion in schools.



National Banner Schools

In 2023, Indian Hill Middle School and Woodridge High School earned National Banner Recognition from Special Olympics North America for their exemplary work in Unified sports, youth leadership, and whole school engagement.



Unified Champion Schools

Unified Champion Schools® builds on Special Olympics' core values, principles, practices, and experiences to shape a generation that welcomes everyone. Through inclusive sports, youth leadership opportunities, and whole school engagement, UCS offers a combination of activities that equip young people with the tools needed to create and support school environments where students of all abilities feel that they belong.

163 Unified Champion Schools® across 69 school districts in Ohio

In 2023, we offered leadership, recreational and competitive sports, skill development, and inclusion opportunities across Ohio:

10,891
Unified Sports
experiences

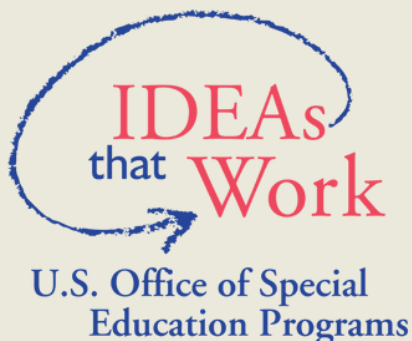
66
Whole School
Engagement events

95
Inclusive Youth
Leadership teams

Capitol Hill Day

Unified Champion Schools® is a program supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs through their "Ideas That Work" initiative. With the support of other donors, Special Olympics Ohio pledges to match the federal grant funding dollar-for-dollar to bring UCS opportunities to Ohio's schools.

Each year, Special Olympics sends a delegation to Capitol Hill. Special Olympics Ohio's 2023 delegation, including Kali Ohlemacher and Anisha Chopra, lobbied Ohio's Senators and Representatives for continued support of UCS and Healthy Athletes. Their advocacy at Capitol Hill was a testament to their leadership and commitment.



Healthy Athletes

Special Olympics
Healthy Athletes®



Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® provides free health screenings and education, removing anxieties for individuals with intellectual disabilities. In 2023, over 2,500 health screenings were completed in Ohio, addressing disparities and promoting overall athlete health.

Special Olympics Ohio is proud to offer our athletes all nine of the Healthy Athletes disciplines:

FIT FEET - Podiatry



Special Olympics
Fit Feet



FUNFITNESS - Health Physical Therapy



Special Olympics
FUNfitness



HEALTH PROMOTION - Prevention & Nutrition



Special Olympics
Health Promotion



HEALTHY HEARING - Audiology



Special Olympics
Healthy Hearing



MEDFEST - History & Physical Exam



Special Olympics
MedFest



OPENING EYES - Vision/Eye Health



Special Olympics
Lions Clubs International
Opening Eyes®



Lions Clubs International
FOUNDATION

STRONG MINDS - Emotional Health



Special Olympics
Strong Minds



SPECIAL SMILES - Dental Health



Special Olympics
Special Smiles®



HEALTHY YOUNG ATHLETES - Pediatric Screening



Special Olympics
Healthy Young Athletes





Healthy Athletes

Data gathered across the US at Healthy Athlete screenings found:

23% of athletes have never had an eye exam

46% of athletes over the age of 20 are obese. Special Olympics athletes are 2x as likely to become obese versus individuals without intellectual disabilities.

26% of Special Olympics athletes need new prescription for glasses

52% of Special Olympics athletes have gait abnormalities

25% have untreated tooth decay

46% have at least one skin or nail condition



Young Athletes

Special Olympics Ohio's Young Athletes program introduces basic sports skills to children aged 2-7, fostering early childhood development.

In 2023, Special Olympics Ohio made great progress in establishing Young Athletes across the state. In total, 13 new programs were initiated in the community and in schools. The At-Home Young Athletes program was launched with over 175 participants joining in 6 months. A new family engagement initiative known as a Family Health Forum was introduced for families of children in Young Athletes. Professionals in their respective fields were invited to speak on various topics including safety, nutrition, diabetes, and parenting. Overall, this year has seen the most growth for Young Athletes and has set high expectations for the years to come.



Athlete Leadership



Athlete Leadership empowers Special Olympics Ohio athletes to serve as leaders. In 2023, the program saw significant growth with in-person training, Unified Leadership deliveries, and meaningful leadership roles for athletes within the organization.

Athlete Leadership gives our athletes a voice in how they lead and where they lead. The training and experiences these athletes receive result in increased knowledge and transferable/functional skills which will support success in their chosen leadership roles. As athletes grow and succeed, they will share their new-found abilities with teammates, coaches, families and their communities, making for a richer, more inclusive Ohio.





Community Fundraising

Special Olympics Ohio's community collaborations and peer-to-peer fundraising events ensure the expansion and impact of their programs. The Polar Plunge raised over \$603,400, while the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Cleveland Plane Pull also garnered significant support. It takes the whole community to make this happen. We are grateful for the committed individuals, families, and organizations who come together for a more inclusive Ohio by participating in events throughout the year.

POLAR PLUNGE

The Polar Plunge® is our largest fundraising event benefiting Special Olympics Ohio. In order to participate, individuals or teams commit to "Freezin' for a Reason" and collect pledges from friends, family, and colleagues to take the icy plunge!

This year we hosted seven plunges throughout the state, while still offering a Plunge My Way option, and raised over \$603,400.





Community Fundraising

LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS OHIO

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® is the largest public awareness vehicle and grass-roots fundraiser for Special Olympics. Known as “Guardians of the Flame,” law enforcement members and Special Olympics athletes carry the Flame of Hope throughout the state of Ohio and into our Summer Games Opening Ceremonies in unison each year.



Along with the support of hundreds of local law enforcement, athletes, community members and local partners, we hosted 68 Torch Run legs in 2023 and raised \$80,000!



CLEVELAND PLANE PULL

Returning after a three-year hiatus due to COVID, the Cleveland Plane Pull united the community in a powerful, one-of-a-kind fundraising event, challenging teams of 15 people to pull a United 737 aircraft twelve feet across the tarmac! Joining our Presenting Sponsor, Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, over 500 people hit the ropes at the IX Center, raising over \$71,000 for our athletes.



The Power of Partnerships

Special Olympics Ohio thrives on collaboration and community support. Whether through joint initiatives, shared resources, or volunteer efforts, our partnerships have enriched the lives of our athletes and supported the growth of our critical programs. We look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts in the years to come as we work together to build a stronger, more vibrant Special Olympics Ohio.

KEY PARTNERS





Partner Spotlight



The Special Olympics mission is supported and celebrated throughout Ohio with the help of some truly special community partners. Sheetz has been an exemplary supporter of the movement for inclusion for many years by providing impactful financial contributions, volunteer support at fundraising events and sporting competitions, and opportunities for athlete leaders with every new store opening. In 2023 alone, Sheetz proudly donated nearly \$130,000 in support of our mission. We are honored to shine a light on the powerful impact they had on our Special Olympics Ohio athletes in 2023.

In addition to in-store fundraising, Sheetz provides us the unique opportunity to be involved in each Ohio store grand opening celebration, during which we are presented with a donation of \$2,500 in support of our mission. In 2023 alone, approximately 60 Special Olympics athletes participated in at least one store opening, showcasing their leadership skills and inspiring others with their stories of determination and resilience. As Sheetz continued to grow across the state in 2023, at least 24 Special Olympics community-based programs had the opportunity to see the impact of this partnership firsthand. Our athletes were able to attend 27 store openings in 2023, and we look forward to many more in the future!

Beyond the store openings, Sheetz has been a longtime supporter of Special Olympics Ohio sports competitions and Polar Plunge events. Countless Sheetz employees take the time to volunteer at events across the state to help provide opportunities for our athletes to compete in the sports they love. Additionally, to ensure our athletes' health and wellness, Sheetz graciously donates \$15,500 worth of healthy drinks and snacks to fuel our athletes at regional and state competitions. This support illustrates the Sheetz team's dedication to promoting healthy lifestyles within the Special Olympics Ohio community.

The partnership between Sheetz and Special Olympics Ohio exemplifies the power of collaboration in creating positive change. Together, we are breaking down barriers, fostering inclusion, and empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to achieve their full potential. Special Olympics Ohio is proud to be part of the Sheetz family and looks forward to continuing this impactful partnership in the years to come.



Our Mission

The mission of Special Olympics Ohio is to advance the global inclusion movement through sports, health education, and leadership programs that empower people with intellectual disabilities throughout Ohio. By providing year-round sports training and competition for 20,000 athletes throughout the state, we offer everyone the opportunity to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a community where they belong.



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

– SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE OATH

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