



Athlete Leadership News and Notes Volume 2 December 2017

New Training Date Announced:

January 6th, 2018 Special Olympics Ohio will be holding an Athlete Leadership Training in Tallmadge Ohio (Summit County) This training is targeting athletes in Areas 9, 10 and 11 but is open to anyone wanting to attend. There is no fee to attend the training and will start at 8:30 a.m. and run through 5 p.m. lunch will be provided.

If you are interested please contact Tim Etienne at the State Office Tetienne@sooh.org .



Athlete Leaders emceeding Opening Ceremonies for the 2017 State Basketball Tournament BGSU

2017 Review

Total Trainings- 5

Athlete Leaders Trained-46

Special Olympics Ohio Athlete Leadership Program

The goal of the Athlete leadership Program is to help persons with intellectual disabilities participate as productive and respected members of Special Olympics Ohio by offering them a fair opportunity to develop and demonstrate their skills and talents to transform Special Olympics Ohio through their input and direction. Our Athletes will also be trained to educate the public by highlighting their unique talents on and off the competition sites through public speaking and self-empowerment. By completing the training program and participating in the Athlete Leadership Program our Athletes will assume meaningful leadership roles, influence change within the Special Olympics movement, and create inclusive communities throughout Ohio.

State Swim Meet

We will have a table at the Swim Meet on Saturday December 9th to pass out an informational flier about Special Olympics Ohio Athlete Leadership, please stop by and talk to one of our athlete representatives.

Something to think about...

For those whom you encounter (and find out what you do for a living) who say, “I’m sorry, but they (the disabled) have nothing to do with me.” (The THEM versus US mindset)

The fact is: This is about ALL of us. The reality is we all become disabled due to aging, unless we die first. And some of us may become severely disabled due to injury or illness. ((Am I painting a rosy picture?:)) Bottom line: This is the one minority group we all get to join. What we do to improve quality of life for individuals with disabilities, we do for ourselves.

We have added a private Facebook page for our athlete leaders and mentors. This page is to help our athletes share experiences and celebrate the new friendships they are developing through athlete leadership. If you are interested you can ask for permission by clicking on the link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/332125123917034/>

If you are interested in learning more about Athlete Leadership please contact Tim Etienne at Tetienne@sooh.org



Athlete Corner

Chrissy Motz

By Kelly Maile / Reporter

Posted Nov 14, 2017 at 11:59 AM Updated Nov 14, 2017 at 10:01 PM

STREETSBORO — Chrissy Motz was worried she was going to get fired when her manager called a storewide staff meeting Tuesday morning. She was surprised to see her co-workers, teammates, family and friends waiting for her.

Motz, a Special Olympic athlete who works at Walmart in Streetsboro, was nominated by her coach for the Stand for Generosity award. She received two checks, each for \$500, for raising money for special needs athletes like herself.

Motz, a graduate of Streetsboro High School, was born with several intellectual disabilities.

“It’s a blessing in disguise because she’s not aware so she has no fear,” her mother Fran said. “She’s generous. She makes friends wherever she goes. She goes out of her way to do more.”

Since age 14, Motz, now 24, has raised \$25,000 for Special Olympics through a polar bear plunge. Each year, she sets and meets her goal—this year it’s \$3,000—and asks people to donate and plunge with her team, Portage Grin and Bear It. On Tuesday, she convinced Mayor Glenn Broska to plunge into Lake Erie with her this coming February.

She raises the money because “it does so much for people like me.” Motz recently began running relays in the state games whereas she was never able to run before.

It took a while for Motz to learn to crawl and talk, Fran said. Everything came a little harder for her than most kids her age. When Motz was 4, she struggled to keep her balance in ice skating class, but she found a way using adaptive equipment and was able to compete in her first Special Olympic event at age 8: speed skating with a walker on ice. It was then Motz wanted to make sure others with disabilities had the same opportunity.

Motz, who attended Kent State under a pilot program for people with intellectual disabilities, trains with her coaches Linda Ferlito and Diana Harrod at Kent Roosevelt High School.

“Chrissy has been our fundraiser of all fundraisers,” Ferlito said. “Everything we do is based on donations. To buy a hotel (room) for kids at the state games and running shoes and entry fees is expensive. All the money she raises just keeps going to that.”

Motz has earned several gold medals over the years in race walking, swimming, speed skating and figure skating. She gives her medals away to people who she thinks deserves them.

Motz gave up her spot in the state games this year at Ohio State University so other athletes can have a chance.

“It’s not just raising money, it’s her whole being,” said Harrod, who works with Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities. “When I’m having a bad day she always makes it better. She picks you up and takes you to a better place. How can you be sad when you see Chrissy bouncing in with that smile.”

Her coaches taught Motz to run, but they don’t think she is aware of all she teaches them—that despite a disability, everyone can give back and make a difference in more ways than one.

Motz participates in the Law Enforcement Torch Run to benefit Special Olympics. She was able to run the torch in the stadium for the summer games last year. She also helps officers in the “Tip a Cop” event, which is held at the Red Robin restaurants and helps to raise money for Special Olympics of Ohio.

“She has come a long way since the days of not crawling to actually starting to run without falling and from delayed talking to being able to talk to others,” Fran said. “You will know Chrissy by her smile, generous spirit and loving heart who gives all of her time and herself.”

It was an emotional moment for her teachers from Streetsboro, teammates and coaches to see her receive the award. Motz will donate one of the checks to benefit Special Olympics Ohio.

If you have articles that you would like to submit for this newsletter please send them to; Tetienne@sooh.org