

Special Olympics
Ohio



**The Heart
Of It All**

Athlete Leadership News and Notes Volume 3 February 2018

New Training Date Announced:

April 21st, 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 .



Join the inclusion revolution and become an athlete leader!

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.

Meet our new CEO

After an extensive nationwide search, it's my pleasure to announce Jessica Stewart as the new President and CEO of Special Olympics Ohio. Her proven record of success in organizational management, fundraising and leadership, ensure that our more than 26,000 Special Olympics Ohio athletes and Unified Sports Partners will have a strong leader to advocate for them moving forward.

Jessica has spent the last 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 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.

Please join me in welcoming Jessica to the Special Olympics Ohio Team. The future looks bright.

Frank Bucci
Board President
Special Olympics Ohio



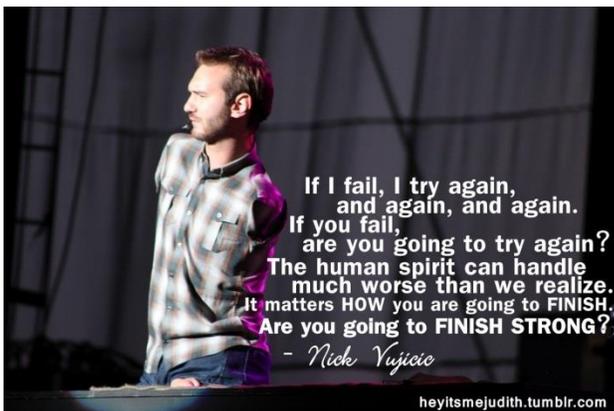
State Winter Games Recap

2018 State Winter Games Opening Ceremonies was athlete led with co-emcee's Shaye and Sharita Taylor. They also led us in an incredible version of the Star Spangled Banner! Arielle Bachrach did an outstanding job with the Athlete Oath and our new CEO Jessica Stewart welcomed our athletes and officially declared the games open!

During our event Bobby Reidl and Chrissy Motz volunteered their time to collect athlete surveys and pass out information about athlete leadership.



Moments of inspiration



Athlete Input Councils

Our first goal for our athlete leaders is to start an athlete input council. An athlete input council is a group of athletes that meet and discuss their Local program and the issues the athletes feel need to be addressed to make their program better. The councils can also be used to brainstorm to come up with ideas for fundraising. Without the Local Coordinator's backing our input councils will never have an impact, I am asking Local Coordinator's that are unsure of what an input council is or how an input council works to please contact Tim Etienne at Tetienne@sooh.org

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

State Basketball

Our State Basketball Tournament will be held in Tuscarawas County in March, we are very excited about the Athlete Leadership group from Tuscarawas, they will be leading our Opening ceremonies on Friday evening at Strasburg High School. You will also see them at every other facility assisting at the information tables. There will be an athlete survey that we would really like for you to fill out to give us feedback on our Basketball Tournament. It is your voice we want heard! Good luck to everyone participating in this years tournament!

Athlete Corner

Kassey Willis



Kassey is an athlete from Hamilton County in the Cincinnati area, and has participated in Special Olympics for 3 years. Her favorite sport is swimming, but she has also participated in bocce and this year hopes to add athletics and basketball to her sports. As an athlete leader, Kassey has spoken to many groups including our 2018 Fall Conference. She hopes, in the future, to be more involved with Special Olympics in fundraising, public speaking and even training new athletes for our leadership program. Kassey says that “Special Olympics

has allowed her to do things she only dreamed of!” One thing she loves about Special Olympics is that she can share her life story and experiences with her friends and they understand her struggles and triumphs.

For fun, Kassey loves to swim at the YMCA, go to Kings Island, spend time with her family and attend church. Her favorite quote is; Philippians 4:13 New International Version (NIV)

“I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”

Kassey comes from a big family with a lot of siblings. Her job is to help out at home, taking care of her siblings that have physical and intellectual disabilities. She also has 3 dogs and a cat. Kassey we salute you and all of your hard work to make Special Olympics Ohio a better program!

If you know of an athlete leader that you want to see hi-lighted please send written article to; Tetienne@sooh.org