Inspiration Walk a Big Success!

Despite the overcast skies and rain, this year's Inspiration Walk was a big success. The Raven's Michael Campanaro and U.S. paralympian Cortney Jordan joined Walk Chairpersons State Senator Guy Guzzone and County Executive Allan Kittleman in kicking off the walk. The crowd was pumped up having being led by Meg Cooperman in pre-walk dancing as well as meeting Star Wars and Frozen characters. Thanks to Wegmans, Canada Dry Potomac, Rethink Water, and Jersey Mike's who provided great food and drinks to all the walkers and Glenelg Country School, GymGuyz, Corridor Mortgage, Autism Society, Win Kelly, and Walter Larrimore for providing lots of activities and information to the participants.

This year's walk exceeded our expectations, raising over...
$135,000!! Thanks to all our sponsors and families that donated. Thirty-one families raised more than $1,000. The top 13 fundraisers raising more than $2000 are:

- Jason Kauffman $8,555
- Kayla Kosman $3,760
- Sam Emmerling $3,655
- Stephanie Baker $3,150
- Brandt Mackey $2,725
- Kirsten Smith $2,720
- Josh Jenkins $2,685
- Evan Davis $2,500
- Peter Schoenbrodt $2,275
- Glenn Donovan $2,153
- Daniel Larrimore $2,120
- Jane Ahn $2,000
- Reed Carter $2,000

Kayaking Begins June 17th

All athletes who registered for kayaking will be receiving an email from coordinator Cathy Vigus in the next week, but here are the general plans for this new sport.

- Swimming skills assessment will take place at Cedar Lane pool Saturday morning, June 17th. Beginners will need to be able to swim 25 meters with a life vest. Advanced need to swim 25 meters without a life vest.
- Kayak orientation and skills assessment will be held the next Saturday, June 24th at Cedar Lane pool.
- Practices will then commence at Centennial Lake on July 2 and every Sunday morning thereafter through the competition date on August 26th.
- Skills athletes will practice from 8-9:15 am and advance athletes from 9:15-10:45 am.
- Monday evenings from 6:00 - 8:00 pm will be the rain makeup time if needed.
- We still need volunteers. Contact Janet Larrimore if interested, janetlarrimore@somdhc.org

Summer Sports Registration

Registration for two of our summer sports have a wait list - Beginner Golf (Level 1) and Kayaking. Registration for Golf Levels 2 - 5 is open until July 6th, other two are still accepting waitlisted athletes. Click here to register.
Registration for fall sports (cycling, soccer, tennis, volleyball, powerlifting, and flag football will open June 25th. Watch our web page, Facebook and Twitter for announcements.

Bowling registration will open August 1st. There will be two sessions to choose from, Oct to Dec and Jan to Mar. Please decide which works best with your schedule as we try to accommodate the demand for more athletes to participate in bowling.

**Top Volunteers Honored at Inspiration Walk**

April was National Volunteer Month - a chance for us to thank the hundreds of volunteers that make our organization great. From the management team, to sports coordinators and coaches, to our student volunteers, and to parents - this organization could not do what we do without you. We thank everyone (albeit a belated wish!) for your commitment to provided our athletes with the best possible training and competition opportunities.

We always highlight a few individuals at the Inspiration Walk and this year, **Lavonne Smith** was selected as the **Volunteer of the Year**. Lavonne has served as the basketball skills and track and field coordinator for 12 years. Her dedication to the athletes, especially those just starting in a sport having limited skills, is unparalleled. She brings a smile to every practice, sharing joy with each athlete's achievement.

**Rick Baker**, our **Coach of the Year**, has been involved with Special Olympics for 12 years as a softball and soccer coach.

Our **Family of the Year** is the Parlock Family (Bob, Marissa, Bryanna and Allyson) who have been coaches in our cycling and snowshoeing program for 16 years. Both these programs have grown in numbers, and they have been an integral part in athletes in these sports achieving new personal bests.

Congratulations to this year's award recipients and **THANK YOU** to all our volunteers!

**Volunteers Needed for MATP Challenge Day - June 2nd**
We have a great event coming up and we could use some volunteers.

The Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) provides participation in Special Olympics for individuals with intellectual disabilities and disabilities requiring the greatest assistance and support. The program emphasizes training and participation rather than competition. The training is conducted during the school year and emphasizes mobility, fine motor skills, aquatics and use of adaptive equipment. A culminating Challenge Day, is held each year to highlight each participant's personal best.

This year's Challenge Day will be on June 2nd, with opening ceremonies to begin at 8:40am with special guests Tim Shriver, Chairman and CEO of Special Olympics and Dr. Michael M, new superintendent of HCPSS.

We are asking volunteers to come between 8:00-8:15 to sign in and help with opening ceremonies (parade of athletes) and then be ready to help with the carnival and events. Events will run until 2:00. Lunch will be provided (11:30-12:00). Volunteers are welcome for the full day or half day, whenever they are available.

Contact Janet Larrimore (janetlarrimore@somdhc.org) or the office (info@somdhc.org, 410-740-0500) if you are interested in volunteering.

Four Students Honored with Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarships

In recognition of their volunteer service, four students have been selected to receive scholarships from Special Olympics Howard County (SOHO). These scholarships are funded by endowments created by the generosity of three families.

Atholton High School graduate, Elizabeth Jordan, was selected as this year's Jackie Burk Memorial Scholarship recipient, and received a $1,500 award. She has been a volunteer for four years in basketball, serving as an on-court mentor who plays with the athletes. Elizabeth has also volunteered with bowling and cross country running. She plans to study computer science at the University of Maryland.

Two Allan Homes Scholarships were awarded to Marriotts
Ridge High School twin brothers Matthew and Spencer Leins. Each received a $750 scholarship. Both Matthew and Spencer have volunteered as coaches with the swimming program for the past four years. Spencer plans to study business, and Matthew plans to study mathematics, both at the University of Maryland.

The Kathy Lindner Memorial Scholarship, a $500 scholarship, was awarded to Rylie Chambers of Howard High School. For the past three years, Rylie has served as a soccer coach, earning her certification last year. She has also volunteered with basketball. She will attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania to study nursing. Congratulations to this year’s winners and thank you to all our student volunteers!

Spring Competitions

**SWIMMING**

SOHO hosted over 193 athletes (171 Special Olympics athletes and 22 Unified Partners) from Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties for our annual swim competition at Howard Community College on April 23rd.

In addition, 10 USAA officials donated their time to officiate the event and 57 teenage volunteers helped run the event.

Take confidential health-related surveys. These surveys are aimed at better understanding of the health of people with Down Syndrome across their lifespans. To learn more about DS-Connect, click here.

Photos of Our Athletes

You can enjoy photos of our athletes at practice, competitions and other events on our photo page. Click here.

New Facebook Page; Follow Us on Instagram

We now have a Special Olympics MD Howard County organization Facebook page. Our old page, Howard Maryland, is an individual page and we will now only be posting information to the new organization page. Please search for "Special Olympics MD Howard County" on Facebook and like the new page to get our posts.

We now have an Instagram account. Follow us at special_olympicsmdhoco.

SOHO Merchandise for Sale

Looking for a gift or just want to show your SOHO pride? We have some SOHO merchandise for sale in the office.

- Navy Fleece Jacket = $40.00
- Short sleeve T-shirt = $10.00
- Long sleeve T-shirt = $12.00
- Charm Bracelet = $15.00
- Pen = $2.00
- Fleece Blankets = $25.00
- Ceramic Coffee Mug = $8.00
- Travel Mug = $8.00
- Ice Scraper = $3.00
- Toiletry Bag = $5.00
- Tie Dyed T-shirt = $15.00-$17.00
- Golf umbrella = $50.00
- Collapsible umbrella = $40.00

Items can be purchased in the office.
Special thanks to all our stagers (Becky Lessey, Joanne Gales, Katie Fives, Clarissa Staggs, Maura Doughtery, and Shelby Lederman) and Howard Lessey, our head timer and data entry volunteers Colleen Donovan, Jennifer Phillips and Tricia Hyer. To view the event, see the great photos taken by Mimi Goodman and team photographer Marie McGing.

ATHLETICS
Over 100 athletes from Carroll, Montgomery and Howard counties didn't let the drizzling rain dampen their spirits as they competed at our annual track and field competition at Wilde Lake High School on May 4th. The event is sponsored by SOHO and Wilde Lake High School thanks to WLHS Athletic Director Brian Rau, Beth Johnson (who runs the concession stand and handles the athletes’ and volunteer lunches) and the many WLHS student volunteers who served as escorts and timekeepers.

Thanks to the Minearts who handled staging, Cole Schnorf (head timekeeper), Alex Barnes (co-emcee for opening ceremonies) and especially coach Shirley Duhaney and coordinator Lavonne Smith for putting together a great and very organized event.

SOFTBALL INVITATIONAL
Twelve counties plus Baltimore City and 386 athletes attended our 20th annual Softball Invitational on Sunday, May 21st at Kiwanis Walls Park. Another 100 volunteers came throughout the day to help this year's tournament our largest ever. We presented HCYP, the co-sponsors of the event who have generously given us use of their fields on the third Sunday in May for the past 20 years, with a commerative banner for the park.

In addition, SOMD “Be Brave” Bravelets and other items (necklaces, watches, pillows, scarves) are available here. For each Be Brave item purchased, SOMD will receive $10.00.

In Search of Word Press Help
We are in need of someone that has Word Press web site development skills. If you have some knowledge in this area and would like to donate a few hours of your time, we could certainly use the help!! Please contact Bob Baker at bobbaker@somdhc.org if you can assist.

COACHES RESOURCES
Special Olympics requires that all of our coaches be certified by taking training classes at least once every three years. SOHO will reimburse any coach who wishes to take any of the online training courses offered below.

- Coaches Training
- Coaches Guidelines
- Sports Rules
- Protective Behaviors Training
State Senator Ed Kasemeyer joined us for the second year to give a warm Howard County welcome to all the participants. We also presented Howard County Police Chief Gary Gardner with a plaque recognizing the Police Department’s dedication and involvement with all 20 years of the event.

A special award was presented to Lt. Ed Sprinkle, who has been a member of the Honor Guard at every tournament since it began. For the 10th year, Outback Steakhouse provided lunches to all athletes, coaches, and volunteers. Wegmans and Champions for the Challenged supplied water and snacks. We thank tournament coordinator Dave Fagan, volunteer coordinator Linda Hoyt, Field Marshall Zach Decker, Global Messenger and co-emcee Kenny Long, as well as Rick McCauley and all the wonderful umpires who donated their time, for a fabulous day.

Protective Behaviors Training is required for ALL volunteers (coaches, unified partners, Area leaders, general volunteers, etc.) and needs to be renewed every three years. It is typically completed at the same time volunteers update their volunteer applications. Taking the protective behaviors "course" and quiz is fairly quick (10 minutes or so depending on reading speed) and SOMD is sent a notification from SOI for anyone who completes it online.

Concussion Training
ALL Special Olympics coaches (head coaches and assistant coaches) must complete a concussion training certification process prior to starting coaching and once every three years. Click here for more details.

Newsletter Information
If you are an athlete, parent or caregiver, we highly recommend that you do not Unsubscribe from this newsletter. You will miss valuable information about seasonal sports registration, policies, highlights, activities and other relevant information. Please add info@somdhc.org and bobbaker@somdhc.org email addresses to your address book so that this letter does not go into your Junk Mail folder. If you have any suggestions or questions about the newsletter, please let us know at info@somdhc.org.