It’s the Season to Give Thanks

We want to take this opportunity to thank all the people who make our organization successful. We have so many individuals who give selflessly of their time, talent, and treasure so that our athletes can continue to train and compete and achieve their personal bests. Whether you are a volunteer who works directly with our athletes or one who helps at competitions, you make it possible for us to be the strong, all-volunteer organization that we are today.

To our sponsors and donors - through your generosity, we are able to continue to provide a strong training program in 20 different sports - plus the Motor Activities Training Program and the new Young Athletes Program - throughout the year for over 800 individuals with intellectual disabilities. We are grateful and honored to be part of such a wonderful organization. Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Bob and Marilyn

Registration for Winter Sports Continues

**WINTER SPORTS:** Registration for winter sports (basketball, snowshoeing, alpine skiing and fitness) began on October 21st. To register, [click here](#). The registration deadline for all sports is December 18th.

**IMPORTANT:** If you do not receive a confirmation email within a few hours after registering, contact the office as soon as possible to ensure that your registration actually went through.

Way to Go, Clare!

Alpine Ski Coordinator and super volunteer, Clare Collelei, joined others in rappelling down a 16 story building in Bethesda to help support the athletes of Special Olympics Maryland. You can watch Clare [here](#) as she comes down the building (and even though the announcer kept calling her Chris (!), it's our Clare).
**Basketball**: If you are new to basketball, you must attend the basketball assessment night on Tuesday, December 4th from 6:30-7:30 at Oakland Mills Middle School which will determine to which basketball level program you will be placed.

**Fitness**: Fitness is limited to 20 participants and is now filled. You can still register, but you'll be placed on a waitlist.

What is a Coordinator?

When four parents sat down to build this organization over 20 years ago, one thing became very clear. They couldn't run the organization and manage the growing number of sports that were being offered. What came out of that early meeting was the concept of having sport Coordinators for each sport. The Coordinator would function as the sport manager and serve as the main point of contact for families and volunteers. The Coordinator would also:

- handle all communications regarding sport activities,
- develop the sport season calendar,
- plan competitions
- encourage parental involvement in helping with uniforms, planning end of season parties, and other activities,
- ensure that all athletes, volunteers, and coaches complete the required paperwork and are registered in sports database
- engage with other parents to delegate some of these tasks

A number of other SOMD county programs have successfully modeled this concept for their county.

This position was considered to be so essential to SOHO's success, it was decided that there would be a Director of Sports Coordinators on the management team to train Coordinators and most importantly, that if a sport did not have a Coordinator, that sport would be dropped.

Sports Coordinators can be parents or non-parents. A sport can also have Co-Coordinators who can share the tasks.

We have a number of Coordinator positions that are open and need to be filled prior by next spring:
- Flag Football
- Soccer - Player Development

If you have an interest in either of these positions, please contact Russ Young (russtace@comcast.net)

Invitation to Christmas Party

Clare and her co-worker, Donna, in front of the building they descended.

Volunteer Orientations

The next Volunteer Orientation will be held at the SOHO office on Thursday, December 13th from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Anyone wanting to volunteer should attend, especially those interested in volunteering for winter sports. Families who are new to our program, including families in the Youth Athletes Program, are strongly encouraged to attend a volunteer orientation. Advance registration is required by contacting Janet at janetlarrimore@somdhc.org or calling the office (410-740-0500).

2019 Volunteer Orientations are scheduled for:
- Friday, January 4th
- Tuesday, February 5th
- Monday, March 4th
- Tuesday, April 2nd
- Thursday, May 2nd
Athletes from Special Olympics Howard County are invited to the annual Champions for the Challenged Christmas party, co-sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council 11341 on Saturday, December 15th from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the Church of the Resurrection Parish Hall (3175 Paulskirk Drive, Ellicott City.) For more information, click here. Please RSVP as soon as possible.

Fall Sports Highlights

DISTANCE RUNNING: Five SOHO long distance athletes competed in the Marine Corps Marathon 10K the weekend of October 27th-28th along with delegations from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut. Athletes were treated to a spaghetti dinner the night before, a ride on Metro to the starting line, a support tent at the start, and special awards and food at the finish, all hosted by the Virginia delegation. Below is a photo of the athletes with their finishing time.

![Photo of athletes with finishing times]

Left to right: Matt Weingram (59:28), Nicholas Howard (39:32), Julian Than (50:13), Bruce Worley (44:46), Mark Worley (44:16)

VOLLEYBALL: The volleyball program finished up its season on November 10th competing at Special Olympics Delaware Fall Fest at St. Andrews School in Middletown, Delaware. SOHO brought four teams - Sky Hawks, Ball Hawks, Net Hawks and Floor Hawks and one skills athlete. Coach Gary Carter's traditional team (Ball Hawks) defeated Unified teams to win the Gold Medal! The Sky Hawks, coached by Hillary Scott, took home the Silver in their division, and Head Coach Mike Carroll's Net Hawks received the
Bronze Medal and Coach Michael Saltzman’s Floor Hawks received 4th place ribbons. Many of their matches went to close tie breakers.

Individual Skills athlete Callie Seidl shown here receiving her Silver Medal.

2018 Volleyball Team

Congratulations to all the athletes and thank you to all the coaches and volunteers and especially to Coordinator Russ Young for making the season fantastic!

BOWLING: SOHO’s only Unified bowling team of Daniel Larrimore and John Nesky captured the Silver Medal at the Unified Bowling Competition in Gaithersburg on November 11th. Daniel and John also led all the athletes in the Athlete Oath at opening ceremonies.

On the same day at Normandy Lanes in Ellicott City, the SOMD Regional Bowling Competition, 96 SOHO bowling athletes competed with bowlers from Baltimore City and Harford County. Director Bob Baker and emcee Nick Stewart welcomed the 125 athletes and some 50 volunteers session. Athletes will learn how to speak in front of an audience, interact with sponsors and be part of the Special Olympics public outreach. We are hoping to have a training session later this fall or winter.

If interested, contact our Global Messenger Coordinator, Marian Williams-Cato at vze1ena92@verizon.net and you will be notified when the next training session will be held.

Sponsors

Are you interested in being a sponsor? Do you want to see your business listed in our monthly e-newsletter or on our web page? Contact info@somdhc.org or call 410-740-0500 to receive a sponsor information package.

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2018 Inspiration Walk Sponsors

PRESENTING SPONSORS
CarMax Laurel Toyota
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to the event. They were joined by SOHO athletes Molly Peter (who sang the National Anthem) and Chris Schoenbrodt (who presented the colors) and Delereec Cooper (Baltimore City) who said the Athlete Oath and Pledge of Allegiance. A big shout out to the UMBC Softball Team and other UMBC students who were rock star volunteers! Thanks to them and all the volunteers.

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

The Commission on Disabilities invites all Individuals with Disabilities, Non-Paid Caregivers, Education Professionals, Service Providers and Community Members to share their thoughts about the needs of people with disabilities in Howard County.

To take the survey, click here. For more information about this study, or to request the survey in an alternate format, contact Michelle Henry, mhenry@howardcountymd.gov or call 410-313-6431 (voice/relay).

Brave in the Attempt Talks Speakers Wanted!

Are you a Marylander with intellectual or developmental disabilities? Do you have a story to tell? Do you want to be a role model for future generations? Are you a case manager, service provider, or family member for an adult with intellectual or developmental disabilities who may be interested in sharing his or her story?

Special Olympics Maryland, the Maryland Department of Disabilities, and the Developmental Disabilities Administration are looking for speakers who want to participate in the 2019 Brave in the Attempt Talks on June 4th, 2019. They are seeking Guest Speakers to share their experiences and perspectives on what the idea of "FOWARD" (this year's theme) means in their lives.

Information and application can be found here. The deadline for applying is November 30th. Click here to see the recruitment video.

Parent Resources; Upcoming Events

THE INS & OUTS OF TRANSITIONS

Thursday, November 29, 2018 6:30-8:30 pm. there will be an information session on what parents of students with disabilities want to know about transitioning to middle school and high school.

Topics include:
Middle School academics (Are the grading standards different at the middle school level? When will my child work on IEP goals? What is double dosing? What are the guidelines in

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USA Games Sponsors

GOLD MEDAL:
Hayles and Howe

SILVER MEDAL:
John Beakes, Janet and Walter Larrimore, Zachary McKay, Withumsmith and Brown, Richard
communicating with the 7 teachers? What is Canvas and how do parents access this tool?)

Middle School social opportunities (Credits, scheduling, electives, assessments, and Bridge Plans are just a handful of the topics covered in this breakout.)

High School academics (Dances, sports, after school activities, safety, discipline and independence - high schools come with their own set of rules for navigating the social world of these mini cities. How will I understand how to help my student with all this?)

High School social opportunities

Work Study, Career and Community Connections and Project Search

- MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMICS
- MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES
- HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMICS
- HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES
- WORK STUDY, CAREER & COMMUNITY EXPLORATION, COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, PROJECT SEARCH

For further information please call the Family Support & Resource Center at 410 313-7161.

A Special Program for Parents of Children with Disabilities: January-February 2019

The Howard County Office on Aging and Independence and the Caregiver Support Program is excited to offer Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC), an evidence-based program designed with the parent's well-being in mind.

The six-week series of two-hour classes - January 15 through February 19, 2019 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. - offers parents opportunities to explore a variety of self-care tools in a supportive environment, designed to help you:

- reduce personal stress
- change negative self-talk
- communicate more effectively in challenging situations
- manage your emotions
- make tough caregiving decisions

Previous participants have found the learned program tools improve relaxation and exercise habits, as well as their physical and mental well-being. The tools also helped them better manage their emotions, increased confidence in their ability to meet caregiving demands, and improved their ability to seek out and utilize community resources.

The fee for the program is $30 (which covers all materials) and will be held at the Ellicott City 50+ Center (9401 Frederick Road, Ellicott City 21042.) For more information or to register, contact Kathy Wehr at kwehr@howardcountymd.gov or 410-313-5955.
Athlete Leadership Programs Scheduled

SOMD will hold an Introduction to Athlete Leadership course on Saturday, January 5th, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. This 2 hour course will give athletes and Unified partners a basic overview of the many offerings of the Athlete Leadership Program and will explain what options they have to be athlete leaders in their community not just to be public speakers. This includes:

- Understand the structure of Athlete Leadership
- Explore roles you might be interested in trying
- Develop a personal purpose statement
- Identity the next steps to start your Athlete Leadership journey

To register, email our Athlete Leadership coordinator, Marian Williams-Cato (vze1ena92@verizon.net) by December 1, 2018.

SOMD will also be offering an Athlete Leadership Technology Course in Social Media on Saturday, March 23rd, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the SOHO office. Social media is everywhere and many people are on many different social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. To become a better athlete leader you need to understand social media and how to interact with people in a responsible and authentic manner.

In this course we will cover the following:

- Why would you use Social Media?
- What are the different types of Social Media?
- What kind of Social Media do you use?
- Improve your use of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- How to create and maintain a Page
- How to create Groups
- Difference between Page / Groups
- Discuss Social Media Safety

To take the Social Media course, you must have completed the full day beginner Global Messenger courses.

To register, email our Athlete Leadership Program coordinator, Marian Williams-Cato (vze1ena92@verizon.net) by January 15, 2019.

Athlete Leadership Registration System *NEW

VolunteerHub is an exciting new system that will allow athlete leaders to see a schedule and sign up for a variety of athlete leadership opportunities that happen all the time including talking to the media, speeches, advocacy, state championships, special events, and local program events in their area! Just to name a few. It will also allow athletes to build a personal schedule of events and

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
offers immediate confirmations when you sign up. (To sign up, click here.)

Because it is a new system, new users will be asked to build a volunteer/Athlete Leader profile. It only takes a minute or two to fill out so even if you do not see an event for you now feel free to get ahead of the game and build your VolunteerHub account.

Join us now on VolunteerHub and take advantage of all the great ALP-ortunities ahead of you.

You DO NOT have to be certified in any athlete leadership classes to join this new system. Just interested in sharing your story and leading Special Olympics Maryland into the future.

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**Carnival Cruise to Benefit SOMD**

Don't miss the chance to join Carnival Cruise for their first ever 7-day cruise to the Eastern Caribbean aboard the Carnival Pride to benefit Special Olympics Maryland. (A portion of the proceeds from each cabin will be donated to SOMD.)

Departing on May 12, 2019, the weekly itinerary includes stops in Grand Turk, Half Moon Cay, and Freeport. Guests of Special Olympics Maryland will have access to additional, custom events all in celebration and support of the athletes.

If you are interested in booking this cruise, contact Janice Colbert directly at janice.colbert@yahoo.com or 410-446-7465. A limited number of cabins are available for this once-in-a-lifetime adventure.

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**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.

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**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.

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SOHO Office, 8970 Route 108 Suite A1, Columbia, MD 21045
Hours: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 8:00 - 1:00, Tuesday 1:30 - 6:30
Phone (410) 740-0500 | Fax (410) 740-2388 | www.somdhc.org | info@somdhc.org
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**Protective Behaviors Training**

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.