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February Newsletter

Issue #2016-01

Spring Sports Registration Open

Registration for spring sports (Aquatics, Beginner Aquatics, Athletics, Bocce, Cheerleading, Equestrian, and Softball) is now open. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.](#)

REMEMBER: Participation in team sports requires a commitment as it is critical that athletes learn to operate as a team. Athletes who cannot make this commitment and wish to participate for recreational purposes have the option to participate in individual sports or individual skills for those team sports that have them. (e.g. softball)



IN THIS ISSUE

- Sports Registration
- 2016 Inspiration Walk
- Student Scholarships
- Towson Swim Clinic
- Polar Bear Plunge
- Concussion Training
- Volunteer Spotlight
- Athlete Spotlight
- Sponsor Spotlight
- Award Nominations
- SOMD News
- IW Sponsors

Outback Fundraiser

Come out and join us for a family fundraiser on Monday March 7th from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm. Dine in or Carry Out. You must bring the flyer for us to receive a 10% credit. [Click here for flier.](#)

Office Hours

The office will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, February 22nd and 23rd.

Mark Your Calendars: 15th Annual Inspiration Walk

Our 15th annual Inspiration Walk will take place on Saturday, April 16th at Centennial Park in Ellicott City. The Walk is our primary fundraiser

and critical to our raising funds needed to provide sports training and competitions for over 650 athletes. (Check out the 2015 Year in Review in the right sidebar.)

We are looking for corporate and business sponsors. Sponsors levels are:

Legacy Sponsor - \$5,000.00

Team Sponsor - \$2,500.00

Gold Medal Sponsor - \$1,000.00

Silver Medal Sponsor - \$ 500.00

Bronze Medal Sponsor - \$ 250.00

Team and Gold Medal sponsors will have their logo on the Walk t-shirt and Silver Medal sponsors will be listed on the walk T-shirt if received by March 20th. If you have any leads for sponsors or are interested in being a sponsor yourself, please send an email to info@somdhc.org.

Contributions can be made directly to our general donation page ([CLICK HERE](#)) or individuals can create their own fundraising page by [CLICKING HERE](#) and then selecting FUNDRAISE.

Incentive prizes:

Level 1: \$50 = 2016 Inspiration Walk t-Shirt

Level 2: \$500 = Level 1 + Inspiration Walk sherpa blanket

Level 3: \$1,000 = Level 1 + SOHO Fleece Jacket **OR** Fit Bit Flex

Level 4: \$2,000 = Level 1 + Gift Certificate for 2 Tickets to Toby's Dinner Theater **OR** Fit Bit Charge HR **OR** Night Out (dinner and movie for two \$150 value)

Top fundraisers as of May 15th, are eligible for prizes including 4 Orioles tickets, \$200 Wegman's gift certificate and more to be announced.

Watch your mail in early March for the Inspiration Walk brochures.

Student Scholarship Applications Now Being Accepted

Through the generosity of three families, Special Olympics Howard County will again award three scholarships to outstanding student volunteers who have been committed to the SOHO program

Volunteers Needed for Inspiration Walk

If you would like to be part of the Inspiration Walk planning committee, contact the office or email info@somdhc.org.

2015 Year in Review

We hosted over 500 events last year, including 416 practices, 24 competitions and league play days, 22 end of season parties, 11 monthly management team meetings & over 21 additional outreach and fundraising events.

We trained 681 athletes (including the Motor Activities Training Program and Unified Partners) in 19 sports programs.

Our sports programs were run by 37 coordinators, 110 coaches, and many other volunteers, including a large cadre of student volunteers.

Ten athletes were trained as Special Olympics Global Messengers and participated in 67 events around the state, spreading information about the Special Olympics movement and what it means to them.

We trained over 135 new volunteers at 11 volunteer orientations.

Whew, what a year!! Thank you volunteers for providing these fantastic opportunities for our athletes!

SOMD NEWS

[Click here](#) to view SOMD's January newsletter.

Keep up-to-date with the latest SOMD news and happenings. Read and subscribe to their monthly e-newsletter: IMPACT. [Click here.](#)

"Be Brave" Bravelets are available [here](#). For each Bravelets purchased, SOMD will receive \$10.00. Be Brave Bravelets are available in various materials and colors. (NOTE: For each Bravelets ordered on

as a volunteer and advocate of the athletes. High school seniors and college students are eligible to apply.

Interested students must complete an application, provide at least one recommendation from a Special Olympics sports coordinator, and write a 500 word essay about their experiences as a volunteer. Details about the scholarships and the application can be found on our [web site](#). Completed applications can be emailed to info@somdhc.org or mailed to Special Olympics Howard County, 8970 Route 108, Suite A-1, Columbia, MD 21045.

Applications must be received by April 1st. Questions should be addressed to info@somdhc.org or by calling the SOHO office.

Towson University Swim Team Conducts Swim Clinic with Special Olympics Athletes

Several SOHO aquatics team members joined other SOMD swimmers from around the state for three swim clinics hosted by the Towson University in the fall. The classes were instructed by students on the Towson University swim team, two Towson swimmers to one Special Olympics swimmer. Each class focused on a different stroke and swimmers also worked on flip turns and starts. On January 9th, the swimmers were invited to the Towson vs. McDaniel swim meet to put on an exhibition. The crowd gave their enthusiastic approval to both SOHO athlete Alex Barnes playing the National Anthem at the start of the event, as well as the Special Olympics swimmers who swam later in the meet. All the athletes received a commemorative medal from their instructors at the end of the season, came away with some good pointers on improving their swimming, and made some good friends.

Giving Tuesday - December 1st - SOMD will receive \$20.00.)

Practice with the Terps!

[Click here](#) for a link to the Special Olympic clip where Coach Turgeon talks about the basketball clinic attended by six of our athletes during his Johnny Holiday Radio Show.

Here are the important times to note. ~6 minute mark Coach Turgeon Arrives and 7:57 the interview starts and they talk about the clinic until 9:50 mark.

New Facebook Page

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.

Photos of Our Athletes

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

Volunteer Orientations

The next Volunteer Orientation will be held at the SOHO office on Thursday, March 3rd from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Newvolunteers interested in helping with summer sports (athletics, bocce, cheerleading, equestrian, and softball) should attend. Advance registration is required by contacting Janet at JanetandWalter@comcast.net. The next orientations will be Monday, March 28th and Thursday, April 21st.

Howard County Volunteer of the Year

Howard County is now accepting nominations for their 2016 Volunteer of the Year awards. Highlighting community dedication and service, the



Jason Kauffman with his Towson swim team instructors Sara Lacusky and Sean Patterson.

Howard County Plungers Raise Over \$70,000 for Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge

Howard County was well represented at the 20th Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge on January 23rd. County Executive Allan Kittleman was the ONLY County Executive to plunge, and not only did he plunge once, but he and his daughter, Mary, were Super Plungers, plunged once an hour for 24 hours, and raised over \$24,000! Police Chief Gary Gardner, and many Howard County Law Enforcement officers braved the icy waters along with a number of Howard County businesses. Teams Owen (Reynolds) United and Mike's (Waschak) Plunge Team together raised almost \$50,000!



Super Plungers Allan and Mary Kittleman, Wayne Luoma with Mia, Maddie and Paul Luoma who took part in the Family Plunge on Friday night.

program recognizes individuals and groups: Individual youth (18 and under), Individual Adult (over 18), Non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses or community groups providing volunteer support to local non-profit or governmental agencies. By filling out nomination forms on the county's Volunteer of the Year [website](#), nominators can also submit up to two additional endorsements from others familiar with the nominee's volunteer contributions. All nominations must be completed by March 4th. Consider nominating one of our great volunteers. If you need assistance or additional endorsements, contact info@somdhc.org.

SOHO Merchandise for Sale

We have a number of items in the office for sale.

- Special Olympics Charm Bracelet (\$15.00)
- SOHO Socks = \$12.00
- SOHO Coffee Mug = \$8.00
- SOHO Travel Mug = \$8.00
- SOHO Ice Scraper = \$3.00
- SOHO Lunch Bag = \$15.00
- SOHO Toiletry Bag = \$5.00
- SOHO Tie Dyed T-shirt = \$15.00-\$17.00

THANKS TO OUR 2015 INSPIRATION WALK SPONSORS!

PRESENTING SPONSORS

Corridor Mortgage
Lisa Higgins Hussman Foundation

LEGACY SPONSORS

Dwight & Diane Mikulis, Allan Homes, Pat & Maryanne Klima, Timbers at Troy Golf Course, Brunswick Normandy Lanes, Quest Fitness

TEAM SPONSORS

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Win Kelly Chevrolet Buick GMC

GOLD MEDAL SPONSORS

Anchor Construction Co., Columbia Office Properties Trust, DARCARS, Dominion Federal, Jarvis Steel & Lumber Co., just B Specialties LLC, Manekin LLC, Polakoff Real Estate Law

SILVER MEDAL SPONSORS

Berger & Taylor, O.D., LLC, Diamond Graphics, Environmental Systems, Mabey, Inc.

BRONZE MEDAL SPONSORS



Mike's (Waschak) Plunge Team

Concussion Training Required for All Coaches Starting January 1, 2016

Beginning on January 1, 2016, ALL Special Olympics coaches (head coaches and assistant coaches) must complete a concussion training certification process prior to starting coaching. The training helps provide a safer training and competition environment for our athletes.

To meet this requirement, coaches **must** complete one of two approved courses:

- * CDC Heads Up Concussion In Youth Sports (approx. 30 min). [CLICK HERE](#) for this online, self-paced course.
- * NFHS Concussion In Sports (approx.. 45 min)(www.NFHSLearn.com) This [COURSE](#) include s much of the same content/video as in the CDC course plus some supplemental material).

Completion certificates or notification of completion should be sent to coaches@somd.org with a CC: to info@somdhc.org. Be sure to include that you are associated with SOHO. This certification is valid for 3 years. Both courses are offered online and for free. If coaches have not completed this course prior to the season in which they coach, they **will not** be permitted to coach that season. Not only is this a Special Olympics requirement, but it is a requirement for any organization that is using Recreation and Parks fields.

Dembo Jones Healy Pennington & Marshall, P.C.,
J.E. Schenk & Assoc., Inc.,
Nightmare Graphics,
The Bob Lucido Team, Aquatics Specialties

HOSPITALITY SPONSORS

Body Armour, Canada Dry Potomac, Wegmans

A list of all our gift certificate and raffle prizes donors can be found on our web page at <http://somdhc.org/?s=inspiration+walk>

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 atbobbaker@somdhc.org if you can assist.

Medicals Must Be Current

Remember that all athletes must have a current medical on file in order to register and participate in any SOHO activity. These must be updated every three years. Medical forms can be found on our web site. (Click here.) Through December 31st, Righttime Medical Center is offering sports physicals for \$20.00, Tuesdays - Thursdays from 10:00 - 3:00. (Regular price is \$45.00.) Appointments can be made by calling 888.808.6483 or going to myRighttime.com.

COACHES RESOURCES

Special Olympics Howard County encourages all of our coaches to stay abreast of the latest training. SOHO will reimburse any coach that wishes to take the online training courses offered below.



Coaches Training

To date, 59 SOHO coaches have completed the training. Way to go!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Lavonne Smith



Since her son, Thomas, joined Special Olympics in 2003, we could always count on Lavonne Smith to lend a hand in all the sports in which Thomas participated. For the past ten years, she has undertaken "coordinator" duties in two sports, basketball skills and athletics (i.e., track &

field). Coordinators serve a vital role in our organization and Lavonne has demonstrated superb leadership skills planning for and executing two 12 week seasons each year. Her philosophy is for our athletes to have fun while learning the sport and anyone who has ever participated in the basketball skills program, will certainly agree that Wednesdays at Bonnie Branch Middle School is a blast!! Thank you Lavonne for all that you do for the athletes and our organization!!

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT: Kathleen Anderson

On our web site, it reads "Eligible athletes are all children and adults, at least eight-years-old, with an intellectual disability, a cognitive delay,



[Coaches Guidelines](#)

Sports Rules

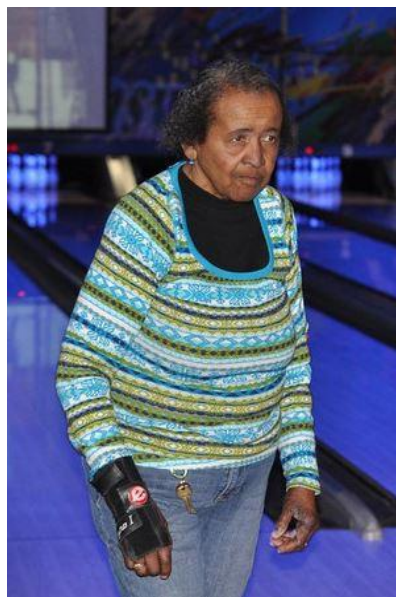
Newsletter Information

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.

Inclement Weather Policy

If Howard County Public Schools are closed, we will not have practice. Practice cancellations will be posted on our web page under Practice Announcements, on our Facebook page (see above for new location), on Twitter (see sidebar about following us on Twitter), and on the office answering message system. Coordinators should also send out an email to their sport's alias. If practices are not cancelled but you can't make it, be sure to contact your coordinator to let him/her know that you will not be at practice due to the weather (since everyone lives all over the county and weather conditions may vary.)

or a closely related developmental disability. There is no maximum age limit." This month, we honor our oldest athlete, Kathleen Anderson, who will turn 79 this year. Kathleen has been with our bowling program for 15 years. Each season, she brings a smile and joy when she arrives



at the bowling alley ready to practice and have fun with her fellow athletes. Thank you, Kathleen, for continuing to inspire us all!

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: Glenelg Country School

For the past 15 years, SOHO has had a very special relationship with the Glenelg Country School. The use of the school for our basketball program, which has grown over the years, includes having a two day basketball tournament for our skills, 3x3, player development (both 3x3 and 5x5) levels. Their in-kind donation of reduced costs for the use of the gym is valued at approximately \$2,500.00 a year. In addition, we have received annual monetary contributions from students' holding fundraisers within the school. GCS students have been active volunteers in many of our sports programs. We are extremely grateful for this partnership and thank the administration, Mr. David Weeks, and the student body for their support of our mission and athletes.

Volunteer, Coach, and Family of the Year Nominations Now Being Accepted

Nominations for Volunteer, Coach, and Family of the Year to be announced at this year's Inspiration

Walk are now being accepted. If you are interested in nominating someone(s) for any of these awards, please provide a short write-up that includes years of service, sport(s)/activity involved with, and exemplary attributes. All nominations should be mailed to info@somdhc.org no later than March 15, 2016. Past winners include:

Volunteer of the Year: Diane Mikulis (2012), Abby Penenburgh (2013), Gena Luoma (2014), Allan Waschak (2015).

Coach of the Year: Al Mineart (2012), Nancy Van Winter (2013), Bill Parlock (2014), Jack Burk (2015)

Family of the Year: Pinos Family (2014), Wrathall Family (2015)

Team Up For 1

Team UP for 1 (TU41) is an organization that connects athletes with disabilities with local sports teams and they are looking for participants from Special Olympics. [Click here](#) to check out the TU41 story on Stan "The Fan" Charles' PressBox TV show. They match children, ages four to 18 (and possibly up to age 22), with local high school and college sports teams, promoting a team 'adoption' which turns into team activities, MVP ceremonies and endless Team Up For 1 programs that create a bond between the child/family and the athletes/coaches on the sports team.



Will Frisinger at his MVP Ceremony after being adopted by Towson Golf

To date, two SOHO athletes have been "adopted" by area teams. Will Frisinger with the Towson University Golf Team and Nicky Mineart with the Chapelgate Academy Basketball in Marriottsville.

If you'd like a similar experience for your athlete, contact Charlielevine@comcast.net. [Click here](#) for further information about TU41.



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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