



Special  
Olympics  
Maryland



50  
YEARS  
1970-2020

## May 2021 Newsletter - Issue #5

### INSPIRATION WALK CHALLENGE: 20 Miles for 20 Years



- Because of some logistical issues, we will not be holding our 20th Inspiration Walk on Saturday, August 21st in conjunction with the Over the Edge (OTE) event near Symphony Woods and the Merriweather District. However, we could not let this important anniversary go without marking it in a special way so we are having an Inspiration Walk Challenge.

**We are challenging our athletes, families, and friends to walk 20 miles from July 1st through September 5th.**

#### How can you participate?

- Start walking! When you walk 20 miles, you will be entered into a raffle for one of three \$100 gift cards and many other prizes.
- Track your miles using the Strava app. (**Download the free Strava app** to your phone and join the club "**SOHO Inspiration Walk**") or track your own miles and email your miles weekly to [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org). Final numbers must be submitted by September 5th.
- Meet up with fellow athletes and walk together. Challenge other members of your sports to participate.
- Share your walking adventures on social media. Take photos or videos of your walk and post them on our **Facebook event page** and tag us on Instagram (**@special\_olympicsmdhoco**).
- Raise funds! You can donate directly to the **IW page on line** or set up **your own fundraising page** and get sponsors to support your 20 mile walk.
- Donations can also be made by mailing a check to the office (Special Olympics Howard County, 8970 Route 108, Suite A-1, Columbia, MD, 21045).
- Those raising \$100 will receive a commemorative t-shirt. (T-shirts will be available to pick up at the office in September.)

### Office Hours

The office is open from 4:00-7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on Thursdays. Individuals entering the office are required to wear a mask and to use social distancing.

### Newsletter Scavenger Hunt

Congratulations to Kenny Long who correctly answered our April Scavenger Hunt question: "Who was SOHO's first Volunteer Coordinator?" The correct answer is **Kathy Lindner** which was found in the Student Scholarship Winners: Where are They Now? article.

This month's question is "Where was SOHO's first office?" The answer **must** list both the name (acronym and full name) **AND** the article it is found in. **HINT:** *You will only find the acronym in the newsletter.* The first person to find the answer and email [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org) with the answer in the correct format will win a restaurant gift card. Also, no one can win two months in a row (in order to give more people the opportunity to win.)

### Volunteer Orientations

The next volunteer orientation will be held virtually on **Thursday, June 10th**, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. Anyone who

- Also, in honor of our 20th Anniversary, additional prizes will be awarded to the top 20 fundraisers!

Special Olympics provides great opportunities for all of our athletes. By participating in sports, SOHO athletes have increased physical fitness and sports skills, increased self-confidence and social competency, greater readiness for employment, improved friendships and family relationships. You can't put a price on the positive impact that Special Olympics sports has on athletes. We are very proud that we have been able to provide quality programs for our athletes **without cost to families**. All of our expenses for facilities, uniforms, equipment, competitions, etc. are covered through the generosity of individuals and businesses who believe in the program and its results. The Inspiration Walk is our annual fundraiser, critical to our program. Join the 20 Miles for 20 Years Inspiration Walk Challenge and support SOHO!



On August 20th and 21st, Special Olympics Howard County and the Howard Hughes Corporation will be presenting an exciting new fundraising event for SOHO this year. This Over the Edge event is challenging individuals to rappel down 12 stories of the tallest building in Howard County, the 6100 Merriweather Building in the Merriweather District in support of Special Olympics

Howard County. Friday night's event will feature a Heroes challenge to honor first responders.

Corporate sponsorship opportunities that will help defray the cost of the event are available. Contact Cole Schnorf ([cschnorf@manekin.com](mailto:cschnorf@manekin.com)) or Allan Waschak ([allan@allanhomes.com](mailto:allan@allanhomes.com)) for more details or check out our OTE page [here](#).

What's on your bucket list? How about going over the edge of a 12-story building? Here's your chance to check off that box and raise funds to support the sports programs that SOHO provides. Sign up now! \$100 will register your spot to participate. All rappellers must fundraise a total of \$1,000 to secure their spot at this thrilling event. *Be one of the first ten individuals to register with the coupon code "SOHO" and have your \$100 registration fee waived.* Challenge your co-workers, friends and family members to take that first step Over the Edge to support our athletes! If you don't want to rappel, but still want to support, **go to our director's page by clicking here** to help him get the nerve to go over the edge!!

is interested in obtaining volunteer certification should contact Janet Larrimore ([janetlarrimore@somdhc.org](mailto:janetlarrimore@somdhc.org)) for further information. Pre-registration is required.



## Softball

### Coordinators Needed

After 5 years serving as our Softball Coordinator, Lisa Emmerling is stepping down. Ideally, we would like to have two coordinators, one to cover the Senior Team and one to cover the Rookie Team. Even though we are not having a softball season this year due to COVID restrictions, we want to give everyone a chance to consider these opportunities. Please remember our policy that if a sport does not have a coordinator, we will not have that sport until someone steps up. Interested individuals should contact the office for more information. (Call or email [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org))



## Law

### Enforcement Torch Run

The Howard County Police will once again do a modified Law Enforcement Torch Run with our distance runners. The event will take place at Meadowbrook Park on June 9th at 5:00. Come out and support our runners and law enforcement officers!



## 2021 Outstanding Student Volunteer Award Winners

Special Olympics Howard County is a volunteer-driven organization that relies heavily on our student volunteers. Each year, through the generosity of four families, we are able to recognize some of those volunteers

with one-time scholarships. This year's awardees are:

**Alexandra "Lexi" Cucchiario:** A Mt. Hebron High School graduate pictured above, Lexi volunteered over 280 hours from 5<sup>th</sup> grade through her senior year in our swim program. She started volunteering at swim meets, then became a dryland coach and in her high school years, coached swim athletes on Sundays from March through June each season. She worked with some of the most challenging athletes, mentored younger volunteers, and swam as a Unified Partner on relay teams. In addition, she participated in the Polar Bear Plunge for three years and in her fourth year was a Super Plunger, plunging into the icy Chesapeake Bay hourly for 24 hours and raising \$11,000 for the Special Olympics athletes of Maryland. Lexi was selected to receive the **Jackie Burk Memorial Award for Outstanding Student Volunteer** (\$1,500) as well as \$500 from the **Schnorf Family Scholarship**.

**Jillian Lewis.** Volunteering over 70 hours in the swim program and over 113 hours with the soccer team, Jillian, a graduate of Howard High School, was awarded the **Allan Homes Scholarship for Outstanding Student Volunteer** (\$1,500) as well as \$500 from the **Schnorf Family Scholarship**. Jillian was a Unified Partner in both swimming and soccer, playing alongside the athletes and developing strong bonds of friendship with them. The coaches in both sports praised her for her character, enthusiasm, commitment, sportsmanship and strong leadership skills. In her essay, she noted that being away from the athletes during the quarantine confirmed just how much an impact Special Olympics and the athletes had made on her life.

**Brandon Werner.** Volunteering 80 hours in the volleyball and basketball programs, Brandon, a Glenelg High School graduate, worked with our athletes with enthusiasm, understanding and while helping them develop their skills and talents. Brandon was awarded the **Kathy Lindner Memorial Award** for Outstanding Student Volunteer and a \$500 scholarship.

## Plans for Summer Sports Not Finalized

Special Olympics recently went from phase 1 COVID protocols to phase 2 protocols. This allows larger groups to gather, but social distancing rules are still in place. Because of this, details for our two summer sports, golf and kayaking are still not finalized and will likely be limited participation.

Special Olympics International (SOI) is meeting at the end of this month to review all COVID protocols and will provide updated rules for the state programs to follow. We are hoping that these updated protocols will allow us to return to normal sports programming this fall. Stay tuned to the newsletter or website for the latest info.

## Athlete Medicals

Remember that all athletes must have a current medical before they can participate in a Special Olympics program, whether in person or virtual. It's a good time to ensure that your medical will be current once programs open up again. Medicals last for three years. If you are unsure of when your medical expires, contact [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org). Don't wait until the last minute to schedule your physical.

Thanks to a national partnership with MinuteClinic, Special Olympics athletes are eligible to receive a sports physical at a discounted rate of \$49.00. This **voucher (need to add link)** must be presented at the time of the physical. It is also important that the athlete bring the SOMD Medical form with them to ensure the proper paperwork is completed. To find the closest MinuteClinic and to make an appointment, visit [www.minuteclinic.com](http://www.minuteclinic.com). Please note, this is not an endorsement of MinuteClinic by Special Olympics Maryland or Special Olympics Howard County. We are just passing along a resource for athletes and their families.

## Coaches Training and Resources

**Coaching Special Olympics Athletes (CSOA) - a requirement for all Coaches.** (There must be a minimum of 7 registrants at least 3 business days prior to the course in order for it to be held.)  
**Saturday, July 10, 2021, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** Virtual Session (limit 20 participants) Register [here](#).

**Principles of Coaching (POC) -** A required course for all coaches wishing to take teams/athletes or serve as a coach to any competition above the state level (including USA Games, World Games, NITs, NIRSA events,

## Adult Sibling Support Group

Are you an adult sibling of a brother or sister with a disability or special needs?

Have you ever felt overwhelmed by the need to support your brother or sister?

Have you ever struggled to find appropriate resources for your loved one?

Would you like to connect with other adults who share the same challenges and concerns?

A new Adult Sibling Support Group (21 years old+) has started and is open to those who have siblings with any disability. It's led by Virginia Rodino who has a brother with autism. They are meeting monthly via Webex right now to discuss mutual support and resource sharing. It is free to attend but a one-time registration is required. For further information, contact [virginia.rodino@gmail.com](mailto:virginia.rodino@gmail.com).

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## Volunteer Highlights

This month, Cross Country Coordinator, Ann Worley, wanted to highlight some of that program's volunteers.

**Adam Yoe:** Ann noted that from the time Adam started volunteering, he easily developed rapport with the athletes. Ann and Coach John Worley were impressed with Adam's leadership abilities and confidence in directing practice. He has been a great contributor to their ZOOM meetings and can relate to everyone, often encouraging some of our quieter athletes to share. It is apparent that Adam is passionate about coaching these athletes and, as a result, they really look up to him. Ann notes that Adam is an asset to their team!

We'd also like to highlight distance running volunteers, **Susan and Joe Wood** (and family). Both Susan and Joel work full time and their two children - **Nickey and Sydney** - are as dedicated to the SOHO organization as their parents. Susan and Joel are regular contributors to the distance running ZOOM meetings and are quick to volunteer for anything that the program needs. They truly demonstrate (and encourage their children to understand) what caring for others is all about. The Distance Program really appreciates all this family does for the program!

SOHO is always accepting comments from volunteers about why they volunteer. that we can share with others Comments can be sent to [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org).

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## Special Olympics Maryland Online Programs

**SOMD Saturday night dances** .To register, **CLICK HERE**. Dances run from 7-8:30 p.m. May dance themes are:

June 5th: Summer Games - Beach Party

June 12th: Sports Theme. Represent your favorite team and sport.

June 19th: Safari and Jungle

June 26th: World Music Night. The hits from international artists from around the world.

etc.). It is intended for coaches with a minimum of two years coaching experience and, along with appropriate sport-specific training, serves to certify a coach as an Advanced coach. (SOMD must have a minimum of 7 registrants at least 5 business days prior to a virtual PoC course in order for it to be held.)

**Saturday, June 5, 2021, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.** Virtual Session (20 seats available. Register **here**.

Important Note on all Virtual Training Sessions: Given the interactive nature of these courses, if a course gets changed to a virtual training session, participants **MUST** be able to join the Zoom meeting with a webcam, speaker and microphone so we can see and hear everyone during the course.

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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.

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## Car Donation

Through the efforts of longtime coach and volunteer, Duke Silvea, Special Olympics can now accept car donations to benefit our program. If you have a car you would like to donate, please contact the office at 410-740-0500 or email [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org). We will come and pick up your car, ready it for sale, and provide you with a tax deduction for the amount the car is sold for at auction. Please help us by donating an unwanted vehicle!

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## Photos Of Our Athletes

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

**Athlete Virtual Leadership and Social Clubs** - Descriptions of events and registration information can be found [here](#).

**Virtual Movement:** This is an online community of athletes, staff, and volunteers sharing what they're doing to stay active, stay healthy, and stay connected while we can't have in person programs! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. Don't have Facebook? No problem! Visit this [website](#) for archived workouts, social clubs, and a calendar of events. Don't miss the virtual block party section!

**YAPpy Hour:** Grab your Young Athletes and join in for the half-hour virtual practices based upon SOMD's Young Athlete Program (YAP) curriculum! We guarantee you'll leave #YAPpy Mondays at 4:30 PM Wednesdays at 4:30 PM Friday at 10:00 AM

## Event Photos

## 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](mailto:info@somdhc.org) and [bobbaker@somdhc.org](mailto: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](mailto:info@somdhc.org).



The Lisa Higgins-Hussman Foundation



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