



**Special  
Olympics**  
Maryland



**50**  
YEARS  
1970-2020

## January 2024 Newsletter - Issue #1

### Registration for Spring Sports Now Open

Registration for the spring sports of Athletics, Bocce, Cheerleading, Poms, Hip Hop Dance, Pickleball, Softball, Swimming and Spirit Fitness) is now open. [Click here to register.](#)

**REMEMBER:** Athletes that register for any team sport should review the [Policy on Participating in Team Sports](#) before the season begins to ensure that you can make the team commitment for attending all competitions, including State Summer Games which will be held on June 21-23, 2024.



### Brave the Cold - Join Our Polar Bear Plunge Team

Wondering what to do this winter? Thought about going Over the Edge but you'd rather have your feet on the ground? Well we have the activity for you. Please consider joining the Special Olympics Howard County Polar Bear Plunge Team and jump into the icy waters at Sandy Point State Park on **Saturday, February 3rd** to

support our athletes. Challenge friends and family members to join you in this annual exciting and fun filled event. There is plenty of dancing to live music, food, drink and lots of festival activities so don't miss out! If a cold swim is not for you, you can still support any members of our team, including the three Mustketeers (Captain Mimi Goodman, Clare Colleli, Tracy O'Conner) by donating directly to our [county page](#). SOHO will receive 70% of the funds raised. Shake up your winter doldrums, get outside and have some winter fun. Remember, ankles count!

Another way you can support the Plunge and be eligible for some great prizes is by purchasing a ticket for the **Plunge Pick'em Raffle**. Buy one or more raffle tickets (\$10.00 each), guess the number of bears in the pick up truck and maybe win a prize! We can't guarantee that you will win \$1,000, \$500, FOUR WINNERS of 52 weeks Chick-fil-A sandwiches, TWO WINNERS of a Chick-fil-A Gift Bag (\$80), and a Ravens autograph package... but with your guess you definitely have a chance! To see the truck and donate, click [here](#).

### Office Hours

Monday/Thursday 8:30 - 1:30  
Tuesday 1:30 - 6:30

### 2024 Volunteer Orientations

The next volunteer orientation is scheduled for **Thursday, February 15, 2024**. Additional volunteer orientations for 2024 can be found [here](#).

Individuals interested in volunteering with our spring sports programs (Athletics, Bocce, Cheerleading, Poms, Hip Hop Dance, Pickleball, Motor Activities Training Program, Softball, and swimming) or in any one-day competitions should attend an orientation as soon as possible in early 2024.

Contact **Megan Larson** at [meganlarson@somdhc.org](mailto:meganlarson@somdhc.org)

## It's Inspiration Walk Time

Mark your calendars for April 27, 2024 for our **23rd Annual Inspiration Walk**. The Walk will once again begin at the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center and travel around Lake Kittamaquundi and back to the Interfaith Center. Information will be coming out about how to register and raise funds for this annual event that brings our Special Olympics family out into the community for a fun morning of exercise and comradery! If you are interested in volunteering on the day of the event, contact Megan Larson ([meganlarson@somdhc.org](mailto:meganlarson@somdhc.org))



for more information. Parents and siblings of athletes as well as students who may be interested in being Unified Partners or looking for service hours are encouraged to attend.

## Level 2 Golf Coordinator Needed

As you have read in recent articles about our Sports Coordinators, if we do not have a coordinator(s) to lead a sport, that sport is in danger of being cancelled. Our long-time Level 2 Golf Coordinator, Jenn Mineart, stepped down after the 2023 season, and we are in need of a replacement. This position requires someone who is organized with good computer skills. We have a very strong Level 2-5 Golf program and would hate to see it dropped in 2024. We would also consider having two individuals serve as Co-Coordiators. Jenn will help train interested individuals. If you are interested in this position, please contact the office.

## Volunteer Student Scholarship Information

High school seniors and college students who have been committed to the Special Olympics Howard County program as a volunteer and advocate of the athletes can apply to four scholarships provided through the generosity of four families.

- **The Jackie Burk Memorial Scholarship** (up to \$1,500) was created by Jack and Linda Burk in memory of their daughter, Jackie, a special friend and volunteer to Special Olympics Howard County.
- **Allan Homes Scholarship** (up to \$1,500) was created in 2006 by Allan and Kathy Waschak. Formely open only to student volunteers in the swimming program, it is now open to student volunteers in any of our sports programs.
- **Kathy Lindner Memorial Scholarship** (\$500), created in 2012, this scholarship is in memory of Special Olympics Howard County's first Volunteer Coordinator.
- **Schnorf Family Scholarship** (up to \$1,500) was created in 2018 by Cole and Joan Schnorf to honor outstanding student volunteers.

The deadline for submitting applications for the **2024 Outstanding Student Volunteers Scholarships is March 29, 2024**. Applications can be dropped off at the office (8970 Route 108, Suite A-1, Columbia, MD 21045) and placed in the mailbox or emailed to [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org) and must be received by March 29th. For further information and application, click [here](#).

## Winter Running Program

Weekly winter running practices are now underway at Howard High School track under the lights. Ten athletes and plenty of volunteers are participating.



## Round Up at Clarks' Ace Hardware

Clark's Ace Hardware is once again making SOHO their Round-Up Partner for February at both their Ellicott City location and Columbia locations. They are also going to donate proceeds from the sale of World's Finest Chocolate Bars.

## Upcoming SOMD Athlete Activities

**February 8th: 2024 National Girls and Women in Sports Day (7pm-9pm).** Register here:  
<https://smd.zoom.us/j/88109340638?pwd=Dk9nwSs0y9QNh6gHIY3tXcAc2yoZs5.1>

**February 21st, 2024 DD Day at the Legislature.**

**March 14, 2024 Introduction to Leadership, 7pm-8pm.** Register here -  
<https://smd.zoom.us/j/85040515633?pwd=VNH38DuHLZ35ntGJtvTZplpJet7Hjm.1>

**March 21st, 2024 Understanding Leadership (7pm-8pm)**  
<https://smd.zoom.us/j/82577457687?pwd=w4Ry6kNI7gz3cWaDDLeJyB0ueJUSG.1>

**April 12th, 2024 GAME NIGHT LIVE! (SOMD) at SOMD HQ**  
To register yourself or a team contact Jason Schriml at [jschriml@smd.org](mailto:jschriml@smd.org)

## 2024 Athlete Leadership Cruise-Book Now

The 2024 Carnival Athlete Leadership Cruise dates have been set. for October 13th-20th, 2024. The cruise will depart from Baltimore and make three stops in the Bahamas, Nassau, Half Moon Cay, and Freeport.

Three Ports of Call and Three Athlete Leadership Training Days. Click [here](#) to see the itinerary. **The cruise is booking up fast.** Call Janice Colbert for pricing and to reserve your spot. She can be reached at [janice\\_colbert@yahoo.com](mailto:janice_colbert@yahoo.com) or 410-446-7465.

## Discounted Sports Physicals

Special Olympics North America has renewed the partnership with MinuteClinic, and, will once again be offering discounted sports physicals at a discounted rate. This [voucher](#) must be presented at the time of the physical AND athletes and families should bring the Special Olympics Maryland registration packet with them to ensure the correct paperwork is completed and can be submitted to their area program.

### \*New\*

There is also a [voucher](#) for discounted Women's Health Services through Minute Clinic for Special Olympics athletes.

**Reminder:** Athletes are not required to use MinuteClinic, but those who do not have a primary care physician may find this discount helpful.

**REMEMBER:** All athletes must have a current medical at the start of a sports season before they can participate.

## In Memoriam

SOHO lost a special friend and long-time volunteer and supporter. **Rich Maier** passed away in November 2023. Rich was a volunteer with the 3x3 Player Development basketball program from 2012-2017 and with bowling from 2013-2019. Our sincerest condolences to his family.

## Medical Support Needed - Find Out More

Do you have a medical or nursing degree? Are you an EMT? We are in need of medical support staff to assist at competitions. You would be asked to attend a competition two to three times a year to provide medical assistance, if needed. If you think you may be interested, contact our Medical Coordinator, Jackie Miller, at [chitchat1955@gmail.com](mailto:chitchat1955@gmail.com).

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 OVER THE EDGE SPONSORS

### PRESENTING SPONSOR AND ROPE SPONSOR

Howard Hughes Corporation

### LANDING ZONE SPONSOR

ARCO Design/Build

### TEAM BUILDER SPONSORS

Allan Homes Foundation  
Cushman Wakefield  
KO Public Affairs  
Manekin LLC  
Pioneer Services

### FEARLESS LEADER SPONSORS

Bohler Engineering  
BrightView Landscape Services  
Columbia Association  
Dembo Jones  
Downtown Columbia Partnership  
Environmental Systems Associates  
Gula Tech Adventures

H&R Retail  
Mackenzie Commercial  
Real Estate  
Shipley and Horne  
Stewart Title  
Tenable

---

## Car Donations Benefit SOHO

Through the efforts of longtime coach and volunteer, Duke Silvea, Special Olympics can now accept car donations to benefit our program. Since the beginning of this program, we have received **\$19,981.00** in donations! 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!

---

## Photos of Our Athletes

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

---

## 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).

## Special Olympics Howard County

8970 Route 108, Suite A-1  
Columbia, MD 21045  
Phone (410) 740-0500

Contact SOHO Today

