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January 2021 Newsletter - Issue #1



Check out Our 2021 Virtual Plunger Videos

Plunge 2021 represents the 25th Anniversary of the Special Olympics Maryland/Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge. Not only is this a Maryland state tradition but it is the largest Plunge in the world.

To keep this plunge tradition alive, despite the cancellation of the In-Person Plunge, individuals were encouraged to "virtually" plunge from home. Click on the names of our Howard

County Virtual plungers at the links below to see their videos and if you can, go to their fundraising pages to support your favorite video!

Plunger Video Link.../...Fundraising Link

- [Baker Family](#).../...[Support Bob and Stephanie](#)
- [Mike Trexler](#).../...[Support Mike and Stephanie](#)
- [Lexi Cucchiaro](#).../...[Support Lexi](#)
- [Reed Racette](#).../...[Support Reed and Calvin](#)
- [Thomas Smith](#).../...[Support Thomas \(aka WBAL commercial star\)](#)
- [Christine Towne](#).../...[Support Christine](#)
- [Clare Colleli](#).../...[Support Clare and Joey](#)
- [Mimi Goodman](#).../...[Support Mimi, Team Howard County Captain!](#)
- [Howard County Police/ Sgt. John Lloyd](#).../...[Support John and Liz](#)
- [Zach McKay and Michael Jacoby](#).../...[Support Zach](#)...[Support Michael](#)
- [Super Plunger Allan Kittleman](#).../...[Support Allan](#)

[Click here](#) to see all the plunges from around the state! and [here](#) to see the Super Plungers.

Donations supporting our team and those taking the plunge are still being taken on our SOHO Team page. Remember, SOHO will receive **70%** of all the funds raised **as part of the Howard County Team Page**. Help us reach our goal of \$10,000.

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 **Christine Towne** who won the December Scavenger Hunt correctly naming the five Orioles players that have been guests at our Inspiration Walks. (Al Bumbry, Brian Roberts, Jay Gibbons, Kevin Millar, and Aubrey Huff.) They were found in several articles throughout the newsletter.

This month's scavenger hunt question is: **What are the names of the mother and daughter team who ran Special Olympics Howard County in the mid-1990's?**

The correct answer **must** list both the names **AND** the articles they are found in. The first person to find the clues and email info@somdhc.org with the answer in the correct format will win a restaurant gift card.

New SOHO Website

Our new website is up and running. It is located in the same place -



Milkshake Plunge at EC Diner

SOMD CEO Jim Schmutz (seen in photo on the left) did one of his many plunges in Howard County at the EC Diner on Rt. 40 along with DJ Kopec and Spiro Korologos, from the EC Diner. They jumped into trash cans filled with water and shaving cream to look like milkshakes, then had the real EC Diner large milkshake dumped on their heads and then dunked their heads into the "milkshakes" again with a final complete dunking of one of the "milkshakes" over DJ Kopec's head. **You can see the entire event here.** Many thanks to DJ Kopec and the EC Diner for supporting our athletes as well as

Jim Schmutz who has been plunging for two months in various ways and places. We appreciate all you do for our athletes! Below, athletes Stephanie Baker and Jason Kaufman were there to cheer on the milkshake plungers!



Current Status of SOHO Sports Programs

SOHO Sports Currently in Session

Alpine skiing: The Alpine Ski Team has been walking around Centennial Lake every Sunday morning, and have been holding Zoom practices every Thursday evening. All of the athletes seem to love the little bit of interaction they get on Sundays, and a few of them even run around the lake instead of walking. We also have a pretty good turnout for our Zoom practices, where the athletes really love doing exercises, dancing to music, and answering questions regarding skiing and competition.

www.somdhc.org. The new format really showcases our organization, our athletes and all the volunteers who make this organization what it is. It features lots of information about our organization, sports programs, policies, resources and lots more. We appreciate any feedback. (Send to info@somdhc.org.)

Volunteer Orientations

For 2021, we are suspending virtual Volunteer Orientations until March. Anyone who is interested in obtaining volunteer certification should contact Janet Larrimore (janetlarrimore@somdhc.org) for further information.

Minute Clinic Discounted Sports Physicals for Special Olympics Athletes

All athletes must have a current medical before they can participate in a Special Olympics program, including any virtual sports program. Medicals last for three years. If you are unsure of when your medical expires, contact info@somdhc.org. Don't wait until the last minute to get 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** 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. 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.



Snowshoe: Ten athletes are participating in the 2021 snowshoe season. On Sunday mornings, athletes put on their snowshoes and practice racing on the grass. We've only had one "on snow" practice so far this season. We're hoping for more snow! On Wednesday nights, Coach Marissa Christensen leads the athletes in exercise

programs via Zoom.

Distance Running:

The Wednesday ZOOM meetings continue and are devoted to discussions of improving times, recognizing accomplishments, and encouraging active sport participation during the week.



Basketball 3x3PD: *On line exercise (former 3v3 PD athletes only.* The program is going very well with sessions two nights a week for 30 minutes. The athletes are working on strength, endurance and basketball skills. The coaches assign homework at the end of each practice which

the athletes work on their own between classes. Thanks to all the coaches and coordinator Gigi Sheltraw for all their efforts in keeping these athletes involved, working on their skills, and keeping fit.

Upcoming SOHO Sports

Additional in-person sports have not yet been scheduled. Depending on the pandemic/vaccine status as well as availability of training sites, some outdoor programs may be scheduled in the spring. Details on the status of additional programs will be included in our monthly email newsletters and on our website.

Amazon Smile

Did you know that you can donate to Special Olympics Maryland simply by shopping on Amazon? Sign up for Amazon Smile and 0.5% of your eligible purchases will be donated to Special Olympics. Simply **USE THIS LINK** to designate Special Olympics Maryland as your charity. Then be sure to use the same link every time you shop at Amazon. It's that easy to make a difference!

All About Maryland ABLE Accounts

Maryland ABLE is an investment tool for people with disabilities, designed to help beneficiaries save for their everyday needs, save and invest Maureen McCarthy in a tax-free account, and prepare for the future without losing federal, state or local benefits. For more information, visit the Maryland ABLE web site [here](#).

Charitable Deductions for Standard Filers

Only good through the 2020 tax year, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed in March, allows taxpayers taking the standard deduction to claim up to \$300 in charitable deductions on the 2020 Federal Tax Return Married-filing-jointly can deduct up to \$600. To qualify, donations must be given to a 501(c)(3) non-profit, such as Special Olympics Howard County,. Keep a record of your gifts.

For doors who itemize their deductions and directly write off gifts to charity, the current deduction cap of 60% of adjusted gross income has been lifted to 100% through the CARES Act.

Special Olympics Maryland Online Programs

CompFit: Additionally, SOMD is excited to launch **CompFit**, its competitive fitness program that can be done 100% virtually. The general program provides both a training and a competition experience for athletes interested in fitness. Participants will each select three fitness events from a list of 15, will train in those events and then compete based on the degree of improvement they have in the event. SOMD will coordinate competition sessions. Participants MUST have current medicals.

Coaches interested in helping us get this program going in Howard County should contact Janet at janetlarrimore@somdhc.org. More information will be forthcoming.

Basketball: SOMD will be posting weekly at home workouts for athletes, partners, and coaches. These workouts will consist of a variety of basketball related exercises. The workouts will be posted on the **Basketball Coach Resource Page** under the Virtual/At Home Materials section as well as on the **SOMD Basketball Facebook** page for those that have joined the page. Some of the workouts will be videos to follow along while others are typed up for individuals to follow with hyperlinks in it demonstrating the exercise. Athletes are encouraged to film themselves doing some of the exercises and post them to the Facebook page. If the athlete, partner, or coach does not have Facebook, they can email Melissa Anger (manger@somd.org) who will post it for them. Be on the lookout for the workouts every Friday morning!

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

February 6th: Mardi Gras/Masquerade
February 13th: Valentine's Day Dance
February 20th: British Invasion
February 27th: Cosplay and all things sci-fi and fantasy

Athlete Virtual Leadership and Social Clubs - Among the many activities are Meditation and Mindful Mondays, Cooking Lessons, Morning Coffee Chats, Sports Trivia, Being Internet Awesome, Warrior Fitness, Language and Culture (Hawaii), Karaoke, and many more. 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. (Enjoy the many postings of SOHO athlete Charles Gaines!) 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

Recreation and Parks Activities

Recreation and Parks:



Inspiration Walk Shirts And Incentive Prizes

The Inspiration Walk shirts and incentive prizes are available in the office. All those who donated \$50 are eligible for a IW long-sleeved t-shirt. Other incentive prizes are available for those that donated or raised \$1,000 or above. Items can be picked up at the office during office hours (10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Thursdays and 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Tuesdays. Send an email to JanetLarrimore@somdhc.org - in advance to let her know when you plan to arrive and what size shirt(s) you need so that she can have items ready for you. Shirts and prizes must be picked up at the office; items will not be mailed.

Helpful Hints If Your Athlete Needs To Go To Hospital

Are you worried about what would happen if your child/adult with special needs was admitted to a hospital while COVID 19 restrictions are in place? Would you be able to stay with them to advocate for their needs? The answer is YES. The state of Maryland has put guidelines in place allowing parents or guardians of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to stay at the hospital even though that privilege is not allowed to the general public.

[Click Here For Info](#)

Car Donation

Through the efforts of longtime coach and volunteer, Duke Silvea, Special Olympics can now accept car donations to benefit our program. If

February 5th: 6:30-9:30 pm: Sweet Heart Ball. Register [here](#). Click [here](#) to see all the Therapeutic Recreation Winter Classes which include Scavenger Hunts, Virtual Travel, Bingo, Book Club, Social Clubs and Supper Club.

COVID 19 Vaccine: Pre-Registration Survey Now Available in Howard County for Adults with Developmental Disabilities; COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall

The pre-registration survey is now available for adults with developmental disabilities to receive the COVID vaccine. (This is in addition to Howard County Residents age 75+, Howard County Residents 65-74, Educators & Childcare Providers, and Healthcare Providers that are also listed on the Howard County website.)

For those interested, please visit the Howard County Health Department website [here](#).

The Arc of Howard County will be holding a virtual **COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall** on Thursday, February 4, 2021, 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Dr. James Campbell of the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health, will be the presenter at the COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall. Stay informed about the COVID-19 Vaccine and its impact on the disability community, by registering for this free virtual event. To register, click [here](#). Send questions in advance via email to Natalie Dohner, ndohner@archoward.org.

Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarships

Despite the cancellation of many of our sports programs last year, we will still be awarding Outstanding Student Scholarships to those student volunteers who have dedicated many hours to our athletes as coaches, Unified Partners and volunteers.

There are several scholarships and students are encouraged to apply to scholarships under both groups (SOHO and Community Foundation of Howard County). Contact the SOHO office if you have any questions.

Scholarships under Special Olympics Howard County:

Jackie Burk Memorial Scholarship for Outstanding Student Volunteer (up to \$1,500) (Created in 2004 by Jack and Linda Burk in memory of their daughter, Jackie, a special friend and volunteer to Special Olympics Howard County.)

Kathy Lindner Memorial Scholarship for Outstanding Student Volunteer (\$500) (Created in 2012 in memory of Special Olympics Howard County's first Volunteer Coordinator)

The application for these two scholarships below can be found [here](#). You only need to complete one application to be considered for both the Jackie Burk Scholarship and the Kathy Lindner Scholarship.) Completed applications (to include all recommendations) must be received in the SOHO office (8970 Route 108, Suite A-1, Columbia, MD 21045) by March 3rd.

you have a car you would like to donate, please contact the office at 410-740-0500 or email 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!

List of Fun for Everyone

The "List of Fun for Everyone" is a weekly list of fun activities for athletes and their families. To get an updated list, simply write an email EVERY WEEK to "ListofFun4everyone@gmail.com" and you'll get an automated response. There is no email "group" that you need to join.

Photos Of Our Athletes

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

[Event Photos](#)

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](#)

Concussion Training

ALL Special Olympics coaches (head coaches and assistant coaches) must

Applications can be emailed to info@somdhc.org or put in the dropbox outside the office. See above for current office hours.

Scholarships under the Community Foundation of Howard County:

Descriptions of these scholarships, eligibility criteria, and applications can be found [here](#).

Allan Homes Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarship (Up to \$1,500)
Only for students who volunteered with the Special Olympics Howard County Swim Team.

Schnorf Family Special Olympics Volunteer Scholarship (Up to \$1,500)
For Special Olympics Howard County student volunteers in any sport or events.

SOHO Merchandise for Sale

No need to go out to stores. We are continuing our big sale on SOHO merchandise. Need a birthday gift? Want to thank a sponsor? Lots to choose from.

Ice scraper \$1.00
Sherpa blanket \$15.00
Navy short sleeved T-shirt \$10.00 (limited sizes)
Maroon long sleeved t-shirt \$10.00
Foldable umbrella \$15.00
Foldable Chair \$20.00
Small foldable stool with carry bag \$10.00
Seat cushions \$5.00
SOHO Face Mask **SPECIAL** - \$1.00 each
Tote Bag - insulated & foldable \$8

Don't miss out on these great prices and show your SOHO Pride with these items!! Contact the office (410-740-0500) or email info@somdhc.org to place an order.

Coaches Training Opportunities

Coaching Special Olympics Athletes (CSOA) -- SOMD is pleased to offer virtual training sessions for Coaching Special Olympics Athletes, a requirement for all Coaches. (*Due to the conversational and interactive nature of this course, we must have a minimum of 7 registrants at least 3 business days prior to the course in order for it to be held.*)

Saturday, February 27, 2021, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Virtual Session (limit of 20 participants). Click [here](#) to register for this session.

Principles of Coaching (PoC) - SOMD is pleased to host additional sessions of the Principles of Coaching course, 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, etc.). This free course 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. (*Due to the conversational and interactive nature of this course, and the need to send "hard copy" course materials to participants in advance of the session, we 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.*)

complete a concussion training certification process prior to starting coaching and once every three years.

[More Info Here](#)

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.

Saturday, February 13, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Virtual Session (limit of 20 participants). Click [here](#) to register for this course.

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 Melba McCarthy microphone so we can see and hear everyone during the course. Please also check in advance of the session that Zoom works properly for your computer (with webcam, microphone and speaker) as we will have limited opportunity to provide tech assistance during the session. (Zoom's online help has been good.)



The Lisa Higgins-Hussman Foundation



Special Olympics Howard County

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Contact SOHC Today

