



Special Olympics Maryland



50 YEARS 1970-2020

## December 2021 Newsletter - Issue #10

Happy Holidays to all our SOHO family of athletes, families and volunteers!

### #GIVINGTUESDAY

Benefitting Special Olympics Howard County

November 30th is Giving Tuesday

We have one day for giving thanks (Thanksgiving); two days for shopping deals (Black Friday and Cyber Monday). #GIVINGTUESDAY is a day dedicated to giving back. On Tuesday, November 30th, please join others in celebrating generosity by contributing to either our Howard County athletes attending USA Games in Orlando, Florida, next June (click [here](#)) or to our Howard County Polar Bear Plunge Team (click [here](#).)

### Office Hours

Office hours are 8:30 - 1:30 Monday and Thursday, 1:30 - 6:30 on Tuesday. Individuals who are not vaccinated are required to wear a mask when entering the office.

### Volunteer Orientations and Volunteer Opportunities

The next volunteer orientations will be held (virtually) at 7:00 p.m. on y, November 29th and Monday, December 27. Anyone interested in obtaining volunteer certification should contact Janet Larrimore ([janetlarrimore@somdhc.org](mailto:janetlarrimore@somdhc.org)) for further information. Pre-registration is required.

Volunteers are especially needed for the winter program sports: bowling, basketball, alpine skiing, snowshoeing, and Young Athletes Program as well as several upcoming one day events. The **Basketball Skills program urgently needs coaches for the upcoming season.** We are also interested in volunteers to join the committee planning for our 2022 Over the Edge event.

### Coordinators Needed



Support our Howard County Athletes Competing in the Special Olympics USA Games June 2022, Orlando, Florida



### 1st Restaurant Night to Support USA Games Athletes

We will be having a number of fundraisers at local restaurant to raise funds to support our USA Games nominated athletes. **Our first restaurant night will be at Coal Fire (5725 Richards Valley Rd, Ellicott City, MD 21043) on Tuesday, December 7th.** This is an all day, dine in or carry out event. We will receive 20% of all the receipts from **orders submitting this flyer** (so be sure to bring it with you or have on your smartphone, whether you dine in or carry out.) Take a break from

cooking and join us in supporting our SOHO athletes at Coal Fire.

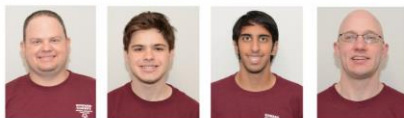


Alan Coe-way Golf

Gillian Eisenberg Swimming

Charles Gaines Athletics

Evan Jacobs Athletics



Kenny Long Powerlifting

Collin Saylor Tennis

Ryan Thibodeau Swimming

Mark Worley Athletics



Andy Young Bocce

Jack Healey Asst Tennis Coach Team Maryland

Scan here to Donate to our Team



## Join the SOHO Plunge Team

Are you ready to BEAR the cold at the 2022 MSP Polar Bear Plunge? This year, you can plunge **your** way, whether that's in-person at Sandy Point State Park or virtually! The Maryland Plunge will take place on February 5th, 2022. Not only is this a Maryland state tradition, but it is the largest Plunge in the world.



Let's keep this tradition alive by either plunging at Sandy Point or do a virtual plunge like many did last year. Join the SOHO plunge team **here** and get others to support you by donating to your efforts and those of your fellow Howard County plungers. Since we can't wait to see how you choose to Plunge, be sure to send videos of your virtual plunges to [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org). your way! Send videos of your plunge to [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org)

SOHO will receive 70% of all the funds raised as part of the Howard County Team Page. Help us reach our goal of \$5,000.00.

## Winter Sports Registration Deadline Approaching

Online registration on our **website** for Bowling Session 2, Basketball, Snowshoeing, Alpine Skiing, CrossFit and Young Athletes Program is open. Note that there is currently a wait list for Cross Fit. The deadline for registering for all Winter Sports is December 15th.

For those registering for Basketball for the first time, you must attend a basketball assessment first to determine placement in one of the various levels. That assessment will take place on Thursday, December 9th at Forest Ridge Elementary School at 6:30 p.m.

Proof of vaccination will be required for participation in all indoor sports (bowling, fitness, basketball). (See article on Return to Activities below.)

## Women in Sport Summit

Special Olympics Maryland is happy to announce the first-ever Women in Sports Athlete Leadership Summit on Saturday, December 11th, 2021.

Designed for all SOMD female athletes in mind, there will be multiple one-hour sessions on topics such as Nutrition, Body Positivity, and a round table on what more Special Olympics can do for female athletes. For more specifics on the agenda, click **here**.

<https://files.constantcontact.com/3db78eab001/a0eb5d20-86e4-47c9-9674-1df2f6f5be1b.pdf?rdr=true>

The day will be held at Aerotek Corporate HQ in Hanover, MD.

We hope you join us. Registration is limited to female athletes only. Register **here**.



Sport Coordinators are critical to our program. If a sport does not have a coordinator, **we will not have that program until someone steps up.** Currently, we have several openings for the coordinator position, one of which will affect one of the basketball programs this winter.

(1) Coordinator for **5x5 PD Basketball (URGENT REQUEST - sport in jeopardy of cancellation!!)**

(2) For spring sports, we need a second **Softball** coordinator and a **Pickleball** coordinator.

(3) Next fall we hope to have a separate **Tennis Skills** program and need a coordinator to lead that sport. Interested individuals should contact the office for more information. (Call or email [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org))

In



## Memoriam

**Julie Gallagher** passed away in October. from pneumonia. She won over 50 medals in swimming and basketball. Her swim coaches (Becky, Tracy, Laura, Joanne and Clarissa) commented that Julie was an independent and dedicated breaststroker with a terrific sense of humor. When she arrived to practice, she would let the coaches know in her unforgettable voice what she would work on that day and followed through with it. She knew what her strengths were and was a valuable member of the swim team for many years. We will miss her.

## FALL SPORTS NEWS



**Tennis** (Our apologies to the Tennis team for not including them in last month's Fall Sports Wrap Up article.)

The Special Olympics Howard County Player Development Tennis team wrapped up their fall season in mid-Oct, 2021 with a final round robin friendly match play.

The 2021 team had a record number of participants with 20 athletes, 10 unified partners, and 15 coaches/volunteers. Coach Jack Healy led the team as they practiced at the Columbia Association's Wilde Lake Tennis Club and participated in the SOMD Towson University qualifier. Unfortunately, due to rain SOMD cancelled the final state game competition at Fallfest. However, the team is already looking forward to the 2022 season!

## Flag Football at University of Maryland

Every year, the University of Maryland invites Special Olympics to participate in their Regional NIRSA Flag Football Competition. It is always a great opportunity for our teams to play teams from other states. This year, Maryland was the only state to register due to Covid Protocols. After the Special Olympic Games, there is an all star game with two teams comprised of our athletes and the University of Maryland players. The weather this year was freezing cold, rainy and windy, however, it didn't stop us from having a great day filled with fun!



Columbia Swim Center

**Swimming:** Pictured are one group of Special Olympics Howard County independent swimmers enjoying a short break from their 30-60 lengths at the



**Vicki Follett**, Washington County Assistant Director, passed on November 10th after a nine year battle with cancer. Vicki was an integral part of our Special

Olympics Maryland family. Many of you have seen her coaching Washington County athletes who included her son, Lee. Vicki was a passionate advocate for individuals with disabilities and always ensured that athletes had a high quality experience competing and training in the sports they love. The impact she had on SOMD-Washington County and throughout the state is immeasurable and will be felt for years to come.

## Save the Dates

Mark you calendars for two important events in 2022:

Sunday, April 24, 2022: **Inspiration Walk and Festival**

Friday, September 16th and Saturday, September 17th, 2022. **2nd Special Olympics Howard County Over the Edge** event.

## Summer Games 2022 Date Update

The 2022 Summer Games at Towson University will occur on **June 17-19, 2022**. This is a little later than a typical year. SOMD has been working with Towson University to make this change due to the dates of the USA Games from June 5-12, 2022.

## Athlete Medicals and the New Communicable Diseases Waiver Required

Remember that all athletes must have a current medical before they can

## Updated SOMD Return to Activities Protocols; Vaccination Tracking

In order to create the safest environment for all participants, SOMD has implemented a vaccine requirement for participation in all indoor sports (Bowling, CrossFit, Powerlifting, Swimming, Basketball, Cheerleading, Volleyball), as well as flag football, soccer, and softball outdoor team sports. Other outdoor sports do not have a vaccine requirement.

**Who is included in the Vaccination Requirement.** When full vaccination is required to participate, it applies to athletes, unified teammates, coaches, all volunteers, family/staff/spectators who will interact with any participants during the program.

SOMD will be tracking the vaccine status of participants so that they can have an accurate understanding of vaccination rate for their programs and competitions throughout the year. In order to be considered fully vaccinated, valid proof of vaccination will be required - only a valid COVID vaccination card, vaccination certificate or documentation from a medical professional that indicates the vaccination date and type will be accepted. Copies of proof of vaccination should be sent via email to [janetlarrimore@somdhc.org](mailto:janetlarrimore@somdhc.org).

### What if I do not want to provide proof of vaccine?

Those who are not fully vaccinated may choose a sport or activity that does not require a vaccination for participation.

To read the full Return to Play Protocol, click [here](#).

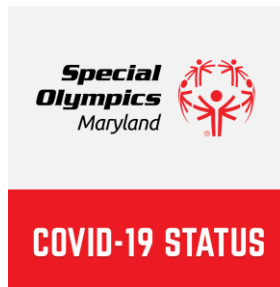
## Returning Fall Sports Uniforms

This is a reminder that all fall sports uniforms should be returned to the office as soon as possible. The uniform should be washed and hung to dry (do not put in dryer) and returned to the office in the original plastic bag in which it was issued. Make sure the uniform is completely dry before placing in the bag. Uniforms can be dropped off at the office any time. When the office is closed, uniforms can be left in the secure black mailbox outside the door.

## Holiday Merchandise Sale

Looking for some SOHO merchandise for a holiday gift? We are having a holiday sale on some items. Supplies are limited so don't delay. Contact the office or stop by to pick up any of these items:

- Long sleeved SOHO maroon T-shirt - \$15.00
- Short sleeved SOHO navy T-shirt - \$5.00 (limited sizes)
- Folding chair with bag - \$15
- Baseball style blue hat - \$10
- Key chain with light - \$2
- Cushion seat - \$5.00
- Thermal Shopping bag - \$5.00



participate in a Special Olympics program, whether in person or virtual. 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.

All athletes, volunteers and coaches must sign a Communicable Diseases Waiver (CDW) before participating in sports. The form can be signed in advance by reading the fact sheet and signing page 3. The **signed waiver** can be emailed to [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org). The CDW will need to be re-signed every 3 years. Those who already signed the CDW do not have to sign it again until 2024.

## Coaches Training

### Principles of Coaching

SOMD is very pleased to announce that coaches can now complete the Principles of Coaching course online on their own schedule via the version of the course available through CoachTube. The course is free and combines both videos and activities that coaches engage in on their own and can be completed in one or more sittings. Coaches who complete the course and pass the course test are provided with a certificate that they can send to [coaches@somd.org](mailto:coaches@somd.org) for course credit and to earn their Advanced Coaching Level status. Specific instructions will be available shortly on the Coach Education & Development section of the **SOMD Coach Coach Resource Page**

To get the most current information about scheduled coaches training as well as certification status reports, go to the Coach Resource Page (link above).

## Car Donation

Through the efforts of longtime coach and volunteer, Duke Silvea, Special

Sherpa blanket - \$15.00  
Small foldable stool with bag - \$5.00  
SOHO Thermal Bottle - \$10.00  
Foldable umbrella - \$10.00

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## Is Anyone Up For Pickleball?

It certainly is a funny name for a sport but Pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports in the U.S. Pickleball is a paddleball sport that combines elements of badminton, table tennis, and tennis. Two or four players use solid paddles made of wood or composite materials to hit a perforated polymer ball, much like a wiffle ball, with 26–40 round holes, over a net.

Why are we talking about Pickleball? We are looking at adding Pickleball as a local sport for our spring season. As with any new sport that we consider adding, we must have someone who is interested in being the Coordinator. Bob Sans, a local Pickleball enthusiast, has agreed to be the coach, but he will need volunteers to help. Are you a Pickleball player who is interested in volunteering to help get this program started? If so, please contact Janet Larrimore at the office.

If you would like to know more about Pickleball and how it is played, You can watch several You Tube videos or on the USA Pickleball [website](#). You can also watch some local Pickleball players at the following sites and times:

Saturdays: 10-12 at the Ice Rink Courts for Beginners  
10-21 at Thunder Hill Elementary for Novice 2  
12-2 at Locust Park for Intermediates  
2-4 at Locust Park for Advanced

Sundays: 9-11 at the Ice Rink Courts for All Play (every level plays together)  
11:30-1:30 at the Ice Rink for drills

Remember, if you want to see this sport added to our program and are interested in volunteering, contact Janet.

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## Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarships

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 Award** for Outstanding Student Volunteer for Special Olympics Howard County (\$1,500) was created in 2004 by Jack and Linda Burk in memory of their daughter, Jackie, a special friend and volunteer with Special Olympics Howard County.

The **Kathy Lindner Memorial Award** (\$500), in memory of Special Olympics Howard County's first Volunteer Coordinator, was created in 2012.

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.

[Event Photos](#)

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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](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 **Allan Homes Award** for Outstanding Student Volunteers in the swim program (up to \$1,500) was established in 2005 by Allan and Kathy Waschak. Allan was a member of the SOHO Executive management team, Fundraiser Co-Chairperson, and Aquatics Coordinator.

The **Schnorf Family Scholarship** (\$1,500) was created in 2018. Cole Schnorf is a member of the Executive Management Team and Fundraising Co-Chairperson.

Information about applying for these scholarships will be in the December newsletter and posted on our website.



**The Lisa Higgins-Hussman Foundation**



*Waverly Woods  
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**Special Olympics Howard County**

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Contact SOHC Today



