



Special Olympics Maryland



50 YEARS 1970-2020

## May 2023 Newsletter - Issue #4

### Summer Sports Registration

Registration for Golf and Spirit Fitness is now open. [Click here](#) to register.



### 22nd Annual Inspiration Walk Wrap-Up

SOHO held its 22nd Annual Inspiration Walk on May 6th to a sea of pink shirts, in honor and support of our Assistant Director, Marilyn Miceli. Our new venue, The Meeting Place in Oakland Mills Village Center allowed us to offer a 1 mile, 2 mile and 3 mile route as well as plenty of space for field games and a photo booth. Walkers loosened up with an

energizing warm-up by Tim Murphy from Spirit Club (one of our walk sponsors) and positive words of encouragement from our County Executive, Calvin Ball and SOMD's Jeff Abel. Special thanks to Project Leader Mike Ord and his planning committee members (Barbara Evans, Mimi Goodman, Stellamarie Kosman, Janet Larrimore, Megan Larson, Tracy O'Connor, Dave Donovan and Bob Baker) for all their work in making this year's Walk a successful one. And thanks to all those who donated or raised funds to help us reach \$89,400! [Donations can still be made by clicking here!!](#)

County Executive Calvin Ball also assisted in awarding the **Volunteer of the Year, Coach of the Year, Family of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Awards.**



Our 2023 **Volunteer of the Year, Clare Colleli** is our alpine ski team coordinator, a position she has held since 2003. She has also chaperoned National Games athletes as well as during state games. Beyond the time she devotes to volunteering, she is also a tremendous fundraiser, doing 16 Polar Bear plunges, four Over the Edge events and 22 years of Inspiration Walks!!! Congratulations Clare!

### Office Hours

Office hours are 8:30 - 1:30 Monday and Thursday, 1:30 - 6:30 on Tuesday.

### 2023 Volunteer Orientations

Thursday, June 15, 2023  
Tuesday, July 25, 2023  
Wednesday, August 23, 2023  
Wednesday, September 20, 2023  
All begin at 7pm at the SOHO office.

Volunteers interested in Golf or in one day competitions should attend.

Contact Megan Larson at [meganlarson@somdhc.org](mailto:meganlarson@somdhc.org) for more information. Parents and siblings of athletes as well as students looking for service hours are welcome to volunteer!

### Join us at the Yard - Go O's!

We will be having a **SOHO Night at Camden Yards** on Friday, July 14th, when the Orioles will play Miami. And, there will be fireworks that night. We have 50 tickets so it's first come, first served so don't wait to purchase your

Our **Family of the Year** is comprised of four individuals who have volunteered in bowling, long distance running, track and field and CrossFit for the past five years. They also help out at fundraising events and wherever else we need them. Congratulations to the **Wood Family – Susan, Joel, Sydney and Nicky!!** Susan and Sydney Wood are pictured to the right accepting the award for their family.



**Jack Healey, our Coach of the Year** has been involved year-round since 2011, generously giving his time as a golf unified partner and coach in the summer, our head tennis coach in the fall, and a 5v5 basketball coach during the winter. He has been a tennis coach and a basketball coach at two National Games, most recently in Orlando, Florida for the 2022 Games. Congratulations Jack!

We introduced a new award this year - **the Lifetime Achievement Award** - for individuals who made exceptional service and contributions to Special Olympics Howard County over a significant period of time. **Allan Waschak** has been involved in our program since 1995. He was one of four parents who revived and saved our program from going dormant in 1998. He was our swimming coordinator, fundraising chairman and member of our management team for 26 years. While he has officially retired from the management team, he continues to raise over \$10,000 a year for our program. Allan, thank you for your years of service and commitment to SOHO!! The program would not be as successful as it is today without your involvement!!



ticket that are only \$27.00 each (in Section 67, Rows 2-5). To order your ticket, contact the office at 410-740-0500 and pay by June 12th. (Checks or charge accepted.)



## Sponsor Highlight

A special thank you to the **Linda Higgins Hussman Foundation** who has been a **Presenting Sponsor** of the Inspiration Walk since 2012, donating a total of \$160,000. We are extremely grateful for her continued support.

## Congratulations to Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarship Winners



## Brave in the Attempt Talks Showcase Two SOHO Athletes

On Tuesday, June 20th from 6-8 p.m. at Jim Rouse Theatre and Performing Arts Center (Wilde Lake High School, 5460 Trumpeter Road, Columbia), SOHO athletes **Clara Scholz and Charles Gaines** and four other athletes from Montgomery, Calvert and Prince George's counties will present a Brave in the Attempt Talk. These talks use a groundbreaking personal story-telling platform in a "TED Talk" style format to

encourage those with disabilities to serve as mentors and role models for others. Speakers will discuss topics from their own life experiences, lessons learned, and leading the way now and in the future.

This year's theme is Lead The Way. Reserve your free spot by clicking [here](#). Show your support of Clara and Charles by attending this inspiring event!

## 24th Annual Softball Invitational

On May 21st, SOHO and Presenting Sponsor Howard County Youth Program (HCYP) held the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Softball Invitational at Kiwanis Wallas Park. Traditional and Unified teams from 11 counties as well as skill athletes competed in the same park that will host this year's SOMD Summer Games Softball Competitions for the second year.

Many thanks to HCYP Director of Baseball Brad Smith, Director of Softball Bob West and Facilities Director Mike Bender for ensuring there were great fields on which to play. Also thank you to Hospitality Sponsor Outback Steakhouse store manager Heather Ronning for providing lunch for the 385 athletes and 35 volunteers as they have for the past 14 years. Our second Hospitality Sponsor, Mike Parker and Champions for the Challenged, who have been with this tournament for all 24 years, provided the water. Mike also threw out the first pitch to kick off the games!

Thanks to the Howard County Police Department Honor Guard who have been part of our tournament since its inception. We couldn't put on this event without all the volunteers who come throughout the day to help work the fields, pass out lunches and cheer on the teams. **Special thanks to Tournament Director, Zach Decker**, for all the planning and executing such a great event as well as his son, Danny, who served as the Field Marshall.

Below are photos of our two SOHO teams and individual skills athletes.



Asher Albert



Owen Cleveland



Zuri Taitt



Owen Lewis

### Jackie Burk Memorial Scholarship: Owen Cleveland (*Howard High School*):

Owen volunteered in Athletics (2022), 3v3 Player Development Basketball (2022), 3x3 Traditional Basketball (2023) and Distance Running (2022), totaling 120 hours. Owen brought out the best in the athletes, was dependable and exhibited a genuine joy when engaging with the athletes.

### Allan Homes Scholarship: Owen Lewis (*Howard High School*):

Owen volunteered 142 hours in swimming and soccer from 2019-2022 and in 2023 volunteered in softball. Owen noted how his volunteering taught him to find the best in people as he learned that everyone has their own unique challenges.

### Schnorf Family Scholarship: Asher Albert (*River Hill High School*):

Asher volunteered 140 hours in Athletics (2022-2023), Basketball (2022-2023) and Tennis (2022). He was enthusiastic and dedicated to helping athletes acquire new skills, and he influenced other volunteers who followed his lead when learning innovative and positive ways to



interact with athletes of all ages and abilities.

**Kathy Lindner Memorial Scholarship : Zuri Taitt (Reservoir High School):** Zuri volunteered in 2021 and 2022 in our volleyball program coming to the bi-weekly practices directly from her own high school volleyball team practice. The coordinator praised her energy and commitment to the athletes as she helped them develop their skills and talents.

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## Maryland ABLE Updates

Maryland ABLE will host "Updates to the Maryland ABLE Program" on Wednesday, May 24th at 6:00 p.m. and Thursday, May 25th at 10:00 a.m. Both sessions are virtual events. This webinar will cover the new IRS regulations for opening and managing an ABLE account, increased contribution limits, and information on the ABLE Age Adjustment Act. Register [here](#) for Wednesday and [here](#) for the Thursday session.



Plans are underway for our 3rd Annual Over the Edge event on September 23rd. If you want to face

your fears, you can register and start your fundraising [here](#). If you are a company interested in being an OTE sponsor, contact Cole Schnorf ([cschnorf@manekin.com](mailto:cschnorf@manekin.com)). If you are interested in volunteering, contact Megan Larson, [meganlarson@somdhc.org](mailto:meganlarson@somdhc.org).

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## Medical Support Needed

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. Special



## Bocce Competition

Our Special Olympics Howard County Bocce Qualifier was held on Saturday, May 20th, at Cedar Lane (West) Park where we hosted Special Olympics Montgomery County Bocce Athletes/Unified Partners. Each county had a total of 22 Athletes/Unified Partners competing. The following day, Sunday, May 21st our Howard County Bocce Athletes/Unified Partners

traveled to Landon School in Montgomery County to participate in the Special Olympics Montgomery County Bocce Qualifier. The weather on both days was beautiful and everyone had such a great time that both Counties have decided to make these Qualifiers an annual event with each other. Next stop, Special Olympics Maryland Summer Games!!

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## Cheer/Dance

On Saturday, May 13th, SOHO Cheer and Dance teams participated in the SOMD Cheer/Dance Regional Qualifier at Urban High School in Ijamsville, MD. We had a total of 48 athletes participate in four teams; Cheer Hawks, Pearl Hawks(Poms), Diamond Hawks (Hip Hop), and Royal Hawks(Hip Hop). Everyone did such a great job and really enjoyed participating and cheering on their teammates and other county teams. Everyone agreed that they loved singing and dancing to the music that was played between all the routines. Great Day!! Enjoy this [video](#) from the competition. There are some great shots of our teams.

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## Update on Kayaking Program

We regret to announce that we will not have a kayaking program this summer. First, our coordinator, Kyunghye Na, stepped down. SOHO policy is that without a coordinator, we do not run a program. However, we also lost our long-time coach, Cathy Vigus, and to top that off, the county's ability to provide us with kayaks was not available this year.

We have been informed that Recreation and Parks will be offering an adaptive paddling program with a capstone trip experience on Thursday starting in July. There will be a summer session (July 13th-August 10th) and a fall session (August 24th - September 21st). Further information will be in a future newsletter and on the Recreation and Parks web site.

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Olympics will provide supplies. If you can help, send an email to [info@somdhc.org](mailto:info@somdhc.org).

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## 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 **\$14,328.00** 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!

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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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## Summer Games Dates Set Through 2025

SOMD has made the decision to shift Summer Games to the weekend immediately following Fathers' Day for at least the next three years:

- June 23-25, 2023
  - June 21-23, 2024
  - June 20-22, 2025
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## Newsletter Information

If you are an athlete, parent or caregiver, we highly recommend that you do not Unsubscribe from this



## Gatorade's Boys Basketball Player of the Year Chooses SOHO for Donaton

The Gatorade Play It Forward initiative works in conjunction with the Gatorade Player of the Year program to empower student-athletes to provide resources to sports organizations in their community. Through the Gatorade Play It Forward program, Player of the Year award winners have the opportunity select a youth sports organization to receive a \$1,000 grant to help the next generation of athletes reap the benefits of sport.



Mount Saint Joseph High School senior, Amani Hansberry, was recently named Gatorade's Boys Basketball Player of the Year in Maryland. Amani wanted the monetary award to go to SOHO, the organization his fellow MSJ student, athlete Ory Docal plays with. We thank Amani for choosing SOHO for this award, and wish him all the best when his plays for the University of Illinois next year.

This is the third time SOHO has received donations from this program. In 2020, Rachel Richardson was selected as the Gatorade District of Columbia Volleyball Player of the Year and in 2022 Antonio

Camacho-Bucks, who volunteered with our swim program in 2019, was selected as the Gatorade MD Boys Cross Country Player of the Year. Thank you to all these student athletes for supporting our athletes.

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).

## 2022 OVER THE EDGE SPONSORS

Our deepest appreciation to our Over the Edge Sponsors.

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### Special Olympics Howard County

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[Contact SOHO Today](#)

