



Special Olympics Howard County

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[Contact SOHO Today](#)



October 2025 Newsletter - Issue #6

Registration for Winter Sports Opens October 27th

Registration for the winter season of sports will open on Monday, October 27th. The winter season includes Bowling, Basketball, Alpine Skiing, Snowshoeing, Spirit Fitness, CrossFit, Swimming and the Young Athletes Program. Register from our [website](#).

New for 2026:

- To participate in winter sports, ALL athletes must have the new U.S. Athlete Registration Form (see article below).
- Swimming athletes will begin the practice season in January; weekly practices will continue up until Summer Games in June. All athletes interested in participating and competing in swimming must register with the winter season of sports.
- A new registration system has been implemented. For existing athletes, the system will automatically show current information and allow an opportunity for updates.
- To allow more athletes to participate and to reduce the length of wait lists, athletes may register for a maximum of 3 sports.
- Athletes who register for a sport that is at capacity will automatically be wait listed and will be notified if a spot becomes available.
- We will try to maximize participation for as many athletes as possible. This means that if you register for three sports, you may get bumped from one, in order to allow athletes that are only on waiting lists to also participate.
- **As always, participation is guaranteed for families that step up to coordinate or coach a sport.**

Important Changes to Athlete Medical Form - ACTION NEEDED FOR EVERY ATHLETE

The current athlete medical form has been discontinued and is replaced by the new [U.S. Athlete Registration Form \(click here\)](#). Important features of the new form:

- Physician signature NOT required for sports participation and competition within Maryland (note that Physician signature will be required for events outside Maryland (e.g., national competitions), but this is a very small percentage of our athletes)
- Medical questions are completed by parent/guardian/caregiver
- Waivers combined; only 1 signature needed
- Typed signatures are not accepted; electronic signatures such as DocuSign are accepted
- **All old medical forms will expire on 12/31/2025, but don't wait, download and complete the new form today**
- New forms should be signed, scanned and submitted to info@somdhc.org or sent to the office by 12/31/2025

Office Hours

Monday/Thursday 8:30 - 1:30

Tuesday 1:30 - 6:30

Volunteer Corner

Looking for a place to volunteer? Want to feel the joy of watching athletes with intellectual disabilities work hard and excel in the various sports? Need to earn Community Service Requirements for high school graduation or church requirements? Whether you are looking for a few hours a week or month or a larger commitment, whether you can help with administrative/office work, fundraising or want to work hands-on

- Thereafter, the U.S. Athlete Registration Form must be updated annually

Questions? Call the office at 410-740-0500 or send an email to info@somdhc.org



Bill Parlock Inducted Into Rec & Parks Hall of Fame

Long time coach Bill Parlock was inducted to the Howard County Recreation and Parks Sports Hall of Fame on October 14th at the Turf Valley Country Club. Bill started as an alpine ski coach in 1994 and continued with that sport until 2021. From 1995 to 2004 he was a swimming coach. And he has made a profound mark with our program as the founder of our Cycling program in 2000 and continues as our cycling head coach to this day. Bill's coaching style has always focused on the athletes having fun. He was selected as our 2014 Coach of the Year and in 2024, he received the SOHO Lifetime achievement award. [Click](#)

[here to view Bill's acceptance speech](#) at the HOF induction ceremony.

Goodsports Award Winners

In addition to Bill's HOF induction, the following five amazing Special Olympics Howard County athletes and volunteers received Goodsports awards at the Howard County Recreation and Parks Celebration of Sports banquet on October 14th:

- **Kathy Awkard** Sports Official (Basketball Official at our competitions)
- **Colby Kennedy** Youth Athlete (Exemplary sportsmanship at Bocce)
- **Felecia McLarin** Sports Administrator (Softball Coordinator, Athlete Leadership Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator)
- **Janice Falk** Sports Coach (26 years as a soccer coach)
- **Kayla Kosman** Adult Athlete (Excellent sportsmanship at Cheer/POMs)

Congratulations to all the SOHO award winners! Pictured below L-R is Janice Falk, Felecia McLarin, Kayla Kosman, and Kathy Awkard. Additional Rec & Parks pictures will be posted to SmugMug as soon as they are available.

coaching the athletes, Special Olympics Howard County can use you!

If you're ready to dive in, check out our website for all the details on how to get started as a volunteer: [Become a Volunteer](#). Parents are highly encouraged to attend an orientation to learn more about SOHO.

For further information, contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Felecia McLarin (feleciamclarin@somdhc.org) or the office.

SOHO Merchandise Store - 15% Discount in November

Want to show your Special Olympics spirit by proudly sporting SOHO gear? Looking for a gift for your athlete or family supporters? Check out the new Special Olympics Howard County online merchandise store! Items available include hoodies, jackets, backpacks, hats and much more. To order, [click here](#).

We also have some SOHO baseball hats for sale. They are \$10.00 each and can be purchased at the office. We also have some folding chairs and rain ponchos on hand. These items can be purchased at the SOHO office. Stop by during office hours to see samples of some items.

Mark Your Calendars!

2026 Summer Games at Towson University has been scheduled for **June 12-14**.

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



Barbara Baker Highlighted by HCPSS!!

Our organization is very fortunate to have super volunteer Barbara Baker on our team. Barbara is our longtime head coach for the Cheer/Dance/Poms programs, our Outreach Coordinator on the management team, and always helps out at our fundraisers, like going Over the Edge as the picture shows.

Check out the Howard County Public School System article on Barbara's journey by [clicking here](#).



15% Discount on SOHO Merchandise

The upcoming holiday season is a great time to give the gift of SOHO gear. For the month of November, there will be a 15% discount on all merchandise purchased from the Special Olympics Howard County online merchandise store ([click here](#)). Just **enter the discount code THANKS** during checkout. The discount will expire on November 30.

Fall Sports Competition Results

Results and pictures from the fall sports final competitions will be published in the November newsletter.

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.

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. If you have a car you would like to donate, please use this [link](#) and select Howard County as the recipient of the funds.

Photos of Our Athletes

You can enjoy photos of our athletes at practice, competitions and other events on our photo [page](#).

SOMD Annual Report

The Special Olympics Maryland 2024 annual report was recently released and can be [viewed 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.

