Overview of the Golisano Health Leadership Award:

The Golisano Health Leadership Awards recognize health champions - leaders and organizations - that are making a significant contribution to equal access to health, fitness and/or wellness for people with intellectual disabilities. The awards will also promote awareness for the progress and extraordinary efforts toward fulfilling the goals, values, and mission of Special Olympics health program. This is the highest Special Olympics honor for health partners.

There are four primary goals for this new internal award system, which include:
1. Recognize those who are making a significant contribution to increasing access to inclusive health, fitness and/or wellness in the communities in which people with intellectual disabilities live.
2. Raise overall awareness of the issues of health disparities experienced by people with intellectual disabilities.
3. Inspire, motivate and recognize stakeholders, while engaging the broader health-focused Special Olympics audience to seek to replicate areas of success and key initiatives and partnerships.
4. Create a prestigious health award program made possible by Tom Golisano and the Golisano Foundation with Special Olympics that honors the organizations’ commitment to equitable health services for people with intellectual disabilities.

Information for Special Olympics Programs Nominating Health Leaders for this Award:

- Only Special Olympics Programs receiving 3-year Healthy Community grants and the 14 Programs that piloted Healthy Communities in 2012-15 will participate in the Golisano Health Leadership Awards.
- For awards presented at the local level: Programs are encouraged to host at high-profile Special Olympics events, such as an Opening Ceremony for a major Games or when other annual awards are shared. Programs receiving 3-year Healthy Community grants in 2016 already received $3,000 in funds designated for this award - $2,000 toward the ceremony and promotion of the event and a $1,000 donation to the Program made in the honoree’s name made possible by Tom Golisano’s gift to SOI for the Healthy Community initiative.

Eligibility for Nominated Health Leaders

- Programs receiving a three-year Healthy Community grant will recognize one honoree. Programs may recognize multiple health leaders but only one will have the designation of the Golisano Health Leadership Award.
- The 14 Special Olympics Programs that piloted Healthy Communities may recognize an honoree (optional).
- Regional Honorees at World Games – Up to seven selected honorees, with the possibility of one from each Region, will be recognized at World Games.
- Criteria: Honorees will be selected based on their involvement in work related to year-round health efforts that align with Healthy Community recognition. Nominees will be selected based on the following criteria: 1) Expanding Healthy Athletes, 2) Impacting follow-up care and/or wellness programming, 3) Increasing financial sustainability of the health program, and 4) Advancing the health rights of people with intellectual disabilities.

Process for Recognizing Honorees at the Program Level

- A cross-departmental Program team that includes an athlete leader will select the honoree.
- A completed nomination form that demonstrates how this honoree contributes to the advancement of Healthy Community-related efforts is needed by 1 October (Reminder: Honorees will be selected based on the following criteria: 1) Expanding Healthy Athletes, 2) Impacting follow-up care and/or wellness programming, 3) Increasing financial sustainability of the health program, and 4) Advancing the health rights of people with intellectual disabilities.
- At the global level, a cross-departmental team that includes at least one athlete leader as well as representatives from the Golisano Foundation will select the regional honorees based on the nomination forms shared by participating Programs. Informational interviews to learn more about the recognized health leaders may be requested. Upon selection, the Regional President for each Region will be asked to notify the Program and selected honoree. The up to seven global award recipients will be invited to World Games with travel expenses covered.

Timeline:

- 1 October 2016 – Programs share the health awardee information with Special Olympics, Inc. at healthawards@specialolympics.org.
- By 1 December 2016 – Programs recognize selected awardee as part of a local event and/or celebration.
- 1 December 2016 – Special Olympics, Inc. and Regions announce seven honorees to attend World Games.
- March 2017 – Golisano Health Leadership Award Celebration, Austria.