



Dear Applicants,

Special Olympics, an international organization dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive, and respected members of society through sports training and competition, is announcing a new Special Olympics Coaching Fellowship between the U.S., Serbia, and Montenegro.

In the first year of the project, five American, three Serbian, and two Montenegrin Fellows will be selected to participate in the Fellowship. They will spend 10 days in Serbia and 10 days in Louisville, KY (USA). They will observe major sporting events and take part in classroom trainings and practicum led by staff as well as experts from the fields of volleyball and soccer (football). The year 1 training is centered around the sport of volleyball and the training in the U.S. will be held in conjunction with the 2012 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship and a Special Olympics demonstration at the event.

In year 2, five American, two Serbian, and three Montenegrin Fellows will be selected to participate. They will spend 10 days in the United States (5 days in Washington, DC and 5 days in Villanova, PA) and 10 days in the Balkans (5 days in Belgrade, Serbia and 5 days in Podgorica, Montenegro). They will observe major sporting events and take part in classroom trainings and practicum led by staff as well as experts from the fields of volleyball and soccer (football). The year 2 training in the U.S. is centered around Special Olympics Pennsylvania's Fall Festival which is the largest annual student-run Special Olympics event in the world. While volleyball and soccer (football) coaching will continue to be the focus of the training, additional emphasis will be placed on the involvement of youth in running and managing a sports program. Additionally, each of the 10 Fellows from both years will be required to complete a Fellowship Project lasting for 6 months.

The selection of applicants has been designed to maximize the diversity of the cohort to encompass differences including, but not limited, to ethnicity, race, sex, religion, socio-economic status, and disability (including candidates with intellectual disabilities). Particular attention will be placed on women's involvement. Ideally, in each year there will be at least two female Fellows, two Fellows from a rural area, and at least one Special Olympics athlete. The following individual selection criteria will be used to evaluate all applicants:

- Be at least 21 years of age at the time of applying for the program
- Show leadership potential, ability to work in a team, openness to learning, cultural sensitivity
- Have experience as a coach, though it is not required that the applicant have experience in soccer (football) or volleyball
- Have a minimum of 2 years experience with the Special Olympics program in their home country
- Genuine and proven interest in inclusive ID issues and sports
- Commit to volunteer to support the program for at least 6 months without remuneration

- Special Olympics athletes shall have completed Athlete Leadership training and either serve as a Special Olympics Board member or serve as an Assistant Coach
- An understanding of English is desirable, but not required
- Please note – a degree of higher education is not required to participate in this Fellowship

Special Olympics is honored to work with the U.S. Department of State and are excited about the opportunity to create a cadre of highly trained, advanced coaches to advance the sports of soccer (football) and volleyball in the U.S., Serbia, and Montenegro. We are pleased to note that the project is being leveraged to forge cross-sector relationships with the U.S. Department of State, the Ministries of Sport in Serbia and in Montenegro, and with national sports federations that will be sustained after the Fellowship exchange rotations. It is our hope that this experience and the resulting relationships that are created will advance policies and sporting opportunities that benefit persons with intellectual disabilities.

Please send applications to Marie Merritt at [mmerritt@specialolympics.org](mailto:mmerritt@specialolympics.org) (preferred) or regular mail to:

Marie Merritt  
Special Olympics International  
1133 19th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

For additional information or questions please contact Aldis Berzins at [aberzins@specialolympics.org](mailto:aberzins@specialolympics.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Todd', written in a cursive style.

Lee Todd  
Chief of Sports Training and Competition