



Hanna Garises, SO Namibia

Africa Representative

Hanna Garises became involved with Special Olympics when her son, Garere, who was born with Down syndrome. In 2010, she became the family coordinator in Namibia and established the first family committee for her local program, actively recruiting volunteers for the local program.

In her position, she is working to help change perceptions of people with intellectual disabilities throughout her community, as well as working with families to encourage them to accept and not be ashamed of their children. Additionally, she promotes the values of Special Olympics and the opportunities it provides children to grow physically and emotionally, while creating a greater sense of pride and belonging. During her first term as Global Family Leader, she was a key presenter and organizer for the Special Olympics Africa Family Leadership conference and Family Health Forum held in conjunction with the Unity Cup. She has agreed to continue the work for another term.

Hanna aims to recruit more young athletes and to reach out to intellectually disabled people that are not in special schools, particularly in disadvantaged communities. She hopes to bring about a change in how families in these communities see and experience their children with intellectual disabilities throughout the Africa Region.

Contact: soafricafamily@gmail.com