



# ENDOWMENT *fund*

## Special Olympics Missouri Training for Life Campus

### A Place to Call Their Own for a True Home Court Advantage

#### Executive Summary

***“Athletics provide everyone, regardless of age and ability, a reason to push themselves beyond their comfort zone and into places they only dare to dream. ”***



Gary Pinkel, Mizzou Tigers Head Football Coach  
and Training for Life Campus  
Capital Campaign Honorary Chair

Special Olympics Missouri (SOMO) has been scoring big time since its beginning nearly 40 years ago. Thanks to bold moves by leaders, outstanding community support and the high spirits that come from empowering people to achieve personal success, today Special Olympics Missouri is one of the largest such organizations nationwide, serving thousands of people with mental disabilities. In fact, SOMO is the largest in the state to serve this exceptional population with one-of-a-kind competitive sports opportunities that combine health, fitness, social and emotional benefits. This success is about to be accelerated because of

SOMO's belief in quality of life and the amazing capabilities of people with mental disabilities. As the anchoring organization for people with special needs, SOMO is undertaking its most ambitious attempt ever to build, for the athletes, a place to call their own, on a campus setting that is inviting and invigorating.

The planned 56,000 square foot Training for Life Campus on 11 expansive acres is a great example of SOMO's passionate determination to serve current and future generations of individuals with mental disabilities with the best opportunities for personal development. Many new and exciting opportunities will be available within the Campus, including:

- Extended camp programs - several days in length for increased impact – plus the ultimate camp experience to qualify for National and World Games
- Opportunities for girls and boys as young as three to benefit from early intervention
- Health, fitness and training experiences for those of all ages and abilities

Indeed, when the Campus is fully built out, and opening day brings out the best in everyone, Special Olympics Missouri will have taken one giant leap that reflects the special partnership among coach, athlete and volunteer and their determination for achievement of the highest level.

## **Athletic Involvement =Personal and Community Achievement**

Changing lives, that's what we do at Special Olympics Missouri. And it's a miracle we've made such an impact with headquarters and training activities located at scattered sites throughout the state. While we currently have more than 1,250 coaches that train more than 15,000 athletes on nearly 700 Teams, playing 19 different sports, these are just a fraction of the 112,000 people in our state who qualify and would benefit from participation in SOMO programs. A professionally-designed, unified and centrally located facility will be a remarkable improvement in delivery of services for athletes, coaches and the nearly 20,000 volunteers who join in the life changing experience each year.

Sports and fitness activities provide us with opportunities to maintain and improve health, and are vehicles for friendship, teamwork, self-confidence and fun. When we participate in sports, all barriers disappear, so that age, race, socio-economic statuses – things that typically separate us – actually bring us together with the ambition to do one's best.

Did you know that more than half of Special Olympics athletes hold down jobs, compared to only 10% of those who don't participate? That's more than 7,500 people with mental disabilities purposefully and productively impacting the economy of our state. Indeed, the Training for Life Campus is an investment in the community that will resonate well beyond the field or court.

Central to this is the Healthy Athletes program. Healthy Athletes was born out of the sheer necessity to provide better medical care to people who, because of their disabilities, have higher health needs but ironically receive extremely poor and inadequate medical care. For example, nearly one-third of SOMO athletes have Down syndrome, a condition that comes with significant health issues, including heart problems, obesity and potentially shortened life spans.



Another one-third of SOMO athletes have autism spectrum disorder, a developmental disability that has seen an alarming 400% increase in diagnosis in Missouri since 1992. Autism presents itself in an unpredictably wide range, including non-verbal language, making acute medical diagnoses difficult until they become chronic.

Healthy Athletes offers a lifeline for people with mental disabilities through regular health assessments that identify problems early-on. This special service for Special Olympics athletes improves the overall health of participants so that they can experience the highest quality of life.

## Onward and Upward

No matter the sport, SOMO athletes, their coaches and volunteers aim for great heights. The Training for Life Campus will make that aim a reality by bringing together all services and activities in a positive environment that celebrates the human spirit. This undertaking, the largest in the four decade history of SOMO, will unite groups in the joyous celebration that comes from the thrill of determination, nerves of steel for competition, and the pursuit of victory - victory like that of the Missouri Bocce Team in their amazing defeat of Hong Kong at the last World Games.



***"Is this a dream?"*** Harry Besleme, SOMO athlete and Gold Medal winner

***"Yes, it's a dream come true."*** Bob Stephens, fellow Unified Partner™ and Gold medalist

Athletes: Here, in their very own place, athletes will gain the pride and satisfaction of professional training on their own turf, plus extended athletic camps, graduation ceremonies, training in public speaking and the ultimate opportunity to qualify for National and World Games. A new program just for Young Athletes as young as three years old will also be available to offer a wonderful opportunity to positively influence youngsters just starting their life journeys with a mental disability. The expectation for personal growth at all levels has SOMO athletes all abuzz. Think about it, athletes of all ages enjoying....

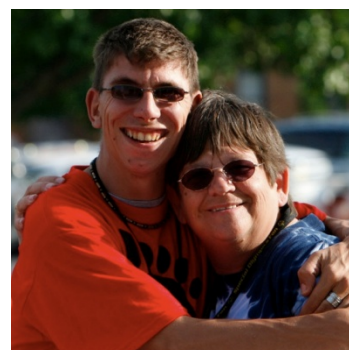
- Sports
- Training
- Health screenings

...a great experience.

***"We are not volunteers. We are recipients. People often tell me thanks for all the time I put in, and I just have to laugh, because I am running one of the all time scams in history. I am not volunteering anything. I am in total receivership. This is the greatest return on investment in the history of Wall Street. I often tell people that when it comes to me and Special Olympics, Bill Gates doesn't have anything when it comes to reaping a return on investment"***

Mark Bussen, St. Louis coach

Coaches: SOMO coaches see firsthand the sweat equity of their athletes in the pursuit of excellence. With a formal training facility, coaches will not only better prepare their athletes for the big game, but receive outstanding training themselves through multiple-sport certification during one single visit to Columbia, Missouri, less than a two hour drive from almost anywhere in the state. This will streamline the current process of coach certification, and provide them with the technology that today's coaches integrate for optimal training, like instant replay. Picture coaches....



- Mentoring
- Teaching
- Motivating

....setting foundations that last a lifetime.

***“For Andy, the social benefits of Special Olympics participation have given him the biggest boost. At first, Andy is very quiet, but he really warms up around the Special Olympics folks. There’s no stress – he’s accepted for who he is and through sports, he’s really proud of himself and what he can do.”***

Kathy Martinez, Kansas City proud mom of Andy



Families: Mental disabilities are conditions that last a lifetime, requiring lifelong intervention and support to achieve the highest quality of life possible. SOMO families know firsthand the difficulties of caring for their loved ones with disabilities and recognize the value of engaging these special people in productive tasks that strengthen the person and the family. The Training for Life Campus will also allow families to help their children become more independent and healthy, through the Healthy Athletes assessments and time on their own. Imagine families.....

- Supporting
- Cheering
- Sharing

....experiencing the pride of family.

***“Special Olympic Athletes know no boundaries when it comes to enthusiasm, desire and pure heart. The lessons these athletes learn from their sports experiences are carried with them to their workplace and we as employers learn from them. The lesson is not about winning it is about spirit and courage and never "accepting" defeat. One of the defining moments of this incredible passion was at a track and field race when one of the athletes fell in his lane and all of the others stopped, went back and helped him up before completing the race.”***

Marlene Gebhard, President, Shop and Save



Community: Because involvement in athletics makes for an overall healthier individual, the Training for Life Campus will make a direct impact on the health of the community by helping people with mental disabilities find and sustain employment. The additional fact that it’s designed as a “Green” facility is the icing on the cake. A “Hall of Heroes” recognition area will inspire each visitor with graphics, sound and

lighting that represents the power of sports. In addition, the campus setting will help to deepen the great partnership with the University of Missouri in many ways. While SOMO is already named “charity of choice” by the Big XII, plentiful space will allow for the enhancement of a multi-disciplinary internship program that attracts Mizzou students from five schools for practical career experiences and also the added bonus of building special ties with SOMO athletes. Coordinated efforts will also be made to share the facilities with groups that serve those with disabilities, such as the Association for Down Syndrome, Autism groups and other organizations like schools, Parks & Recreation Departments and group homes. Think of the entire community....

- United
- Understanding
- Celebrating

....rallying for people with mental disabilities.

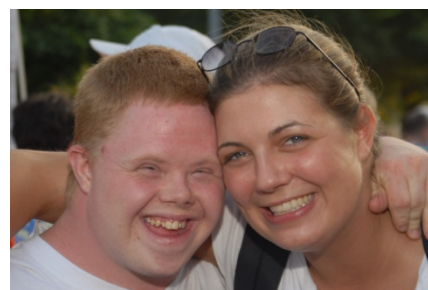


The new Training for Life Campus will stimulate the minds and bodies of people from all walks of life with the desire to do one’s best, overcome obstacles and succeed. We can make this a reality with your support. Your support helps us prepare for the future, and lightens the challenges we face when undertaking extraordinary, institution-changing projects like the Training for Life Campus. Because you, too, are willing to take chances, go out on a limb and give it your best shot, we hope you will support this exciting project and help to bring about powerful change to Missouri through SOMO.

By supporting the Training for Life Campus, we hope you will find great satisfaction in a number of things, including the pride of knowing that your name (or company name) will be linked with the achievements of the athletes and coaches whose work your gift supports. Every free throw, ace, drive, strike, long pass, goal, 3 point shot, and run for the finish line will resonate with your name and likely encourage others to consider making similar investments.

Your investment in the Training for Life Campus will result in many positive outcomes.

**First**, it will recognize your commitment to sports and to the betterment of the community. You will be helping those in need, which is a tradition held most dear by SOMO.



Wendy Dyer for SOMO, February 2009 [wendydyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wendydyer@sbcglobal.net)

**Second**, your support will make a tremendous difference to this organization. Though we're already recognized throughout the state as a charity of choice, your gift goes full throttle toward our aggressive - yet attainable – drive to build this fabulous facility.

**Third**, your support will serve as a catalyst to raise the philanthropic bar for others.

**Fourth**, and perhaps most importantly, your gift provides the capability to expand opportunities for aspiring athletes, budding and seasoned coaches, volunteers, and community outreach providers, **all of whom band together to make life worthwhile.**

The ultimate end and purpose of the Training for Life Campus is to provide a world-class experience to children and adults, women and men with mental disabilities ages 3 to 90 years of age, who aspire to broaden their horizons through athletics. Your gift is elemental toward this goal.

Many funding opportunities exist. Consider these possibilities to demonstrate your enduring passion for sports and service in our community.

#### Campaign Objectives:

Six primary features on the Training for Life Campus will markedly improve the quality of life for Missourians with mental disabilities.

1. Training for Life Camp
2. Healthy Athletes Program
3. Coach and Volunteer Training
4. Young Athletes Program
5. Athlete Leadership Program
6. National and World Games Qualifiers

#### Training for Life Camp

Extended camps are one of the most anticipated opportunities on the Training for Life Campus. Lasting several days in length, Training for Life Camp will be like no other program currently available for people with mental disabilities. The camps will provide the rare opportunity to work under the direction of



trained coaches and maximize each athlete's potential in their chosen sport, plus provide other added benefits, such as training in public speaking to expand participant's skill sets and greater likelihood of securing and keeping jobs.

#### Healthy Athletes

Historically, people with mental disabilities have received improper or inadequate healthcare due to many factors, including a higher tolerance for and

inability to communicate pain, as well as cultural incompetence of healthcare providers. Certain developmental disabilities place people at high risk of developing illnesses, such as heart problems and chronic infections, making accurate and timely diagnosis critical to long-term health. Healthy Athletes is an initiative embraced by SOMO since 2003, and when housed on the Training for Life Campus, will be ramped up to screen and test additional athletes to sustain optimal health. As an added bonus every \$1 spent for the Healthy Athlete Program returns \$5 in pro-bono services.

Offered completely free of charge to registered athletes, on-site services, as well as MedFest healthcare events, will include Special Smiles (dental health), Opening Eyes (vision testing), Healthy Hearing (hearing screenings), Healthy Promotion (motivate and encourage athletes to improve their nutrition) as well as FunFitness (assess and improve flexibility, strength and balance), and physical examinations, all provided through partnerships with licensed healthcare professionals at the Missouri Optometric Association, Missouri Dental Association, Missouri Physical Therapy Association and other providers.

### Coach and Volunteer Training

SOMO's outstanding and comprehensive training curriculum, also offered completely free of charge, will be within an easy drive from most anywhere in the state. Training in one location will also allow multiple sport certification levels in all 19 available sports, making the certification process more efficient and effective. SOMO coaches are like no others – they log almost 70 hours of service per year and devote an average of six years of dedication to this special population, forming friendships that last a lifetime.

### Young Athletes Program

This new program to SOMO, only made possible on the Training for Life Campus, will address the growing needs of early intervention for people with mental disabilities. Reaching children as young as age three is especially timely, with the alarmingly high rates of autism spectrum disorder, a diagnosis that has increased nearly 400% in Missouri since 1992. New and innovative programming designed just for these youngsters will enhance their development and ability to function at the highest possible level, plus will set the stage for the next generation of Special Olympics athletes.



### Athlete Leadership Program

When Special Olympics began in 1968, the idea of people with mental disabilities taking part in Olympic-type sports training and competition was considered “freethinking.” And while some people mistakenly think “tokenism” when Special Olympics athletes hold down jobs and participate in leadership positions, enlightened people know that the “next age” has arrived. The Athlete Leadership Program trains athletes to explore opportunities for participation in roles previously considered “non-traditional,” “unthinkable,” “unheard of.” Through the combination of our guidance and their perseverance, Special Olympics athletes have proven their abilities as productive employees or volunteers providing meaningful service on Boards and Committees, as spokespersons, team captains, coaches and officials.

## National and World Game Qualifiers

The thrill of the competition is alive and well within Special Olympics Missouri. Local, area, district and state competitions allow athletes to test their muscle and reach for the Gold. But as any Special Olympics athletes will attest, the ultimate experience is to qualify for National and World Games. These very coveted spots are reserved for top athletes who finish first and represent Special Olympics in body and spirit.



National Games is a first-class sporting event scheduled every four years. A delegation of nearly 200 athletes and coaches from Missouri will be selected to participate in intense competition with 3,000 other athletes from each state, plus see inspiring performances by great athletes across the USA.

World Games occurs more often - every two years at points all over the globe, including the recent locations of Japan and China and the upcoming location of Greece. Typically, fewer than 10 Special Olympics Missouri athletes qualify and are able to travel abroad. But when they do, the results can be so exciting, like the dream that came true in 2007 when the Missouri Bocce Team defeated Hong Kong for the Gold. With the Training for Life Campus' increased emphasis on skill development, plus greater visibility, it is our expectation that more of our fellow Missourians will be able to compete at World Games with peers around the world,

bringing medals, honor and recognition back to their home state.

All six of these cornerstone programs –taking place under one roof - will dramatically speed up the pace at which SOMO can build **Ability** rather than disability. All programs will fully utilize the carefully designed areas, as follows:

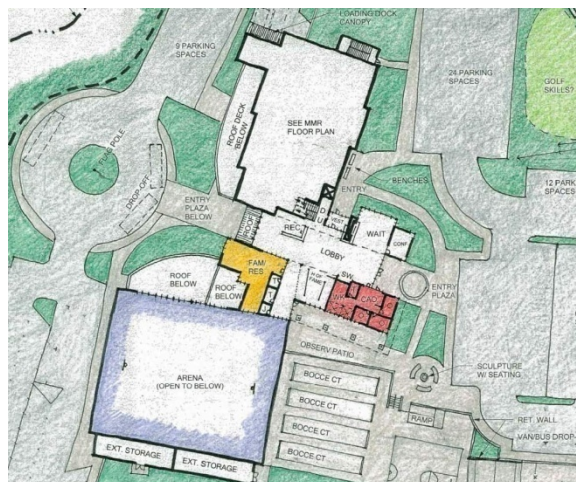
### Sports Skill Development

A magnificent 16,500 square feet dedicated to the art of sports skills. High grade flooring of this multi-purpose room will allow for comfort and style on two side-by-side competition courts for open court sports like basketball and volleyball. Space will feature all the trimmings of high-end courts, including:

- full-featured audio-visual
- multi-media capacity
- large screen availability
- instant replay
- energy efficient lighting to enhance the Game Day experience

### Sports Leadership Training Center

A “Hall of Heroes” will be a 1,200 sq. ft. highlight in the Training Center to motivate and inspire all who enter, whether athlete, coach, family, surprise guest, dignitaries and donors alike. Beautifully adorned



with tile, hardwood and carpeting, the Hall of Heroes will depict exemplary performances of people engaged in the spirit of sports. Framed around double parlors, the Hall of Heroes will also bring to life multiple uses of this area, including:

- meeting space
- media interviews
- gathering areas
- resource library
- screening room
- computer lounge

Athlete and volunteer training will be adjacent, in a 3,600 sq. ft. area of seminar-style seating with 150 person capacity to view training events. This space will also feature full audio-visual and multi-media capacity, plus large screen video conferencing throughout. Hospitality bays will be included for ADA, and in fact the entire Campus will exceed ADA requirements with seamless application and design integration, with access to kitchen and restroom facilities, plus a separate and secure entrance.

#### Health and Fitness Center

Athlete and volunteer physical training and conditioning will be available in a 2,000 specialized space with 20 training stations for cardiovascular, leverage, platform and free weights, plus stretching and warm-up/cool-down stations. The Center is free of charge to registered athletes, coaches and volunteers, with Club Membership possibilities for the community at a nominal fee, creating a truly inclusive environment.



#### SOMO Headquarters and Inventory Depot

Having operated at scattered sites throughout the state, centralizing all administrative efforts where all the action is will have an amazing inclusive effect throughout the organization. Better monitoring and evaluation of programs is expected, as is increased synergy amongst all staff, resulting in great experiences for everyone. An efficiently designed 7,100 square foot space will house all SOMO headquarters staff, Central Area staff, plus provide a professional meeting environment for the statewide governing Board, volunteer committees and the following:

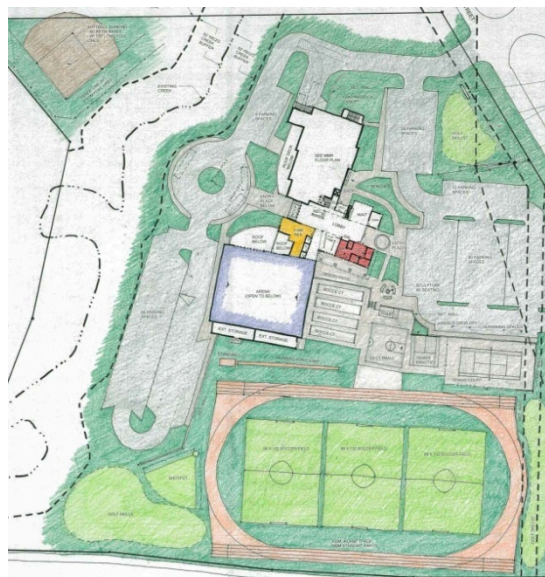
- Catering Kitchen
- Formal Conference Room
- Visiting Professional Office
- Fan Club Office

- Three Bull Pens for Volunteers, Fans and Interns
- Torch Run Office

Storage – essential to any thriving organization but difficult without a central location – will be handily managed in its own 6,000 square feet area, complete with truck loading capabilities for the 400+ events each year..

#### Outdoor Multi-Purpose Courts and Playing Fields

Surrounding the facility on the 11 acre Training for Life Campus will be a beautifully designed outdoor area, with courts for seasonal play and professionally styled fields, that make outdoor play a great experience. This multi-purpose area will provide a home for three 5-on-5 soccer fields, a softball diamond, 4 bocce courts (Italian lawn bowling), flag football, track and field and golf. SOMO is also planning a specially designed course for participants with limited athletic abilities so that they, too, have the chance to enjoy the challenge of competition.



An outdoor Tribute Park will be built to honor and recognize athletes, families, volunteers, sponsors and law enforcement – all who play a key role in the success of Special Olympics. Dedication bricks, patio blocks, gardens and more will serve as a constant reminder of all those who make the Special Olympics experience a reality.

#### Community Outreach

To amplify all of the wonderful opportunities that will be made available on the Training for Life Campus, and in the spirit of generosity and partnership, SOMO will welcome other non-profit organizations, companies, schools and service providers to make maximum use of the facility for their own meetings and program delivery.

