



Special Olympics



Regional Youth Summit

Proceedings and Stories

2–7 July 2006

Ames, Iowa



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2006 Special Olympics National Youth Summit

Overview

- A gathering for 20 young people with and without intellectual disabilities to talk openly about challenges faced and opportunities for expanding the Special Olympics movement nationwide.
- Participants represent nine U.S. states.
- Aged 12-19, the youth participants are middle/intermediate school or high/secondary school students. Students are paired — one Special Olympics athlete with a peer partner without an intellectual disability from the same school or community.
- Participants also will act as journalists at the 2006 USA National Games, reporting stories back to their peers, schools and communities.
- Youth participants will continue to serve Special Olympics as members of the Global Youth Advisory Council. In that capacity, students will fulfill a number of duties, from presenting at conferences and workshops to developing Web site ideas to writing stories for the “Get Into It Gazette” online newsletter.
- Youth Summit participants will serve as activists, encouraging their peers to accept people with intellectual disabilities. Each participant team also will hold a Youth Summit at their school.

Background

The 2006 National Youth Summit will be held in concert with the first-ever Special Olympics USA National Games. The inaugural summit took place in 2001 at the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Anchorage, Alaska, and was aired on Nickelodeon television (Nick News). The second Global Youth Summit was held in Dublin, Ireland, as part of the 2003 World Summer Games and attracted Nelson Mandela and stars Colin Farrell and Maria Shriver. This show aired on MTV in the United Kingdom. The 2005 Global Youth Summit at the World Games in Nagano, Japan, included more than 300 Japanese youth and attracted former U.S. President Bill Clinton; the summit aired on Japanese national television.

Key Dates & Summit Highlights

- July 1, 2006 — Formal Welcome Dinner
- July 2 — Reporting, Journalism and Photojournalism Workshop
- July 3 — “Compete.Empower.Unite” Youth Forum
- July 5 and 6 — Webcasts. Utilizing the latest technology, summit participants will interact with schoolchildren across the United States through live, real-time Internet broadcasts.
- July 6 — Unified Sports® Bowling Event

Youth Summit Mission

- Share their ideas and develop strategies with Special Olympics about ways to reverse negative, stereotypical attitudes about people with disabilities.
- Report on the athletes competing at the 2006 USA National Games and transmit these stories back to their peers, schools and communities.
- Discuss ways that organizers of Special Olympics can better meet the needs of today's athletes, volunteers, coaches and family members.
- Upon returning to their home states, expand on the opportunities for youth to become involved with Special Olympics through their schools and communities.

Key Facts

- Number of participants — 25 (19 students aged 12-19 and 6 adult chaperones)
- Number of states represented — six — Alaska, Kansas, New York, Virginia, Wisconsin and two teams from Iowa.

Contact Information

Website: www.specialolympics.org

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Who We Are

Program	First Name	Last Name	
Alaska	Clayton	Shauff	Athlete
Alaska	Kim	Dorner	Chaperone
Alaska	Christoffer	Kavanaugh	Partner
Iowa, Atlantic	Kylie	Boken	Athlete
Iowa, Atlantic	Deb	Thomas	Chaperone
Iowa, Atlantic	Mollie	Birchard	Partner
Iowa, North Fayette	Sharon	Duffey	Athlete
Iowa, North Fayette	Denice	Vandersee	Chaperone
Iowa, North Fayette	Erin	Vandersee	Partner
Kansas	Bryan	Anthone	Athlete
Kansas	Michele	Boeding	Chaperone
Kansas	Clint	Armestead	Partner
New York	Julie	Balamaci	Volunteer
Virginia	SharDéja	Ward	Athlete
Virginia	Sandra	Simms	Chaperone
Virginia	Sierra	Seaborne	Partner
Wisconsin	Jonathan	LeFlore	Athlete
Wisconsin	Doug	Norton	Chaperone
Wisconsin	Micheal	Grenzer	Partner

Declaration

WE BELIEVE that any society aspiring to be just must value the ideas, skills and contributions of all of its members, including people with intellectual disabilities. Intellectual disability transcends race, gender, religion, national origin, geography and political philosophy.

WE RECOGNIZE that through sports training and competition, people with intellectual disabilities are inspiring examples for hope, dignity and courage.

WE COMMIT to understand, respect and value all individuals, to improve attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities and to create real opportunities for and with them in friendship, education, employment, self-advocacy, health care and sports participation.

Cheer

The National Youth Summit is here,
So listen to us cheer!
We have something to spill,
Change the world we will!
Something we're here to do,
Is share our thoughts with you!

Stories

Alaska



Amy Deavin, from Pennsylvania, enjoys one of her favorite parts of the Games...the snowcone!

Making Her Way to the Top!
Christopher Kavanaugh and Clayton Schauff
2006 National Youth Summit Team
Special Olympics Alaska
June 6, 2006

As Amy Deavin sits on the bench sitting over her mountainous strawberry snowcone she tells us a little about herself. Amy is 25 years old and she lives in Pennsylvania. She has been involved with Special Olympics for 12 years. Some of the things that Amy likes are snow cones, meeting friends, Iowa State and hanging with the coaches.

As we were interviewing Amy she had just finished her first two bocce games for the fourth of July. She won the first game and admitted to loosing in a nail biting match against Arizona with a score of 12 to 11. Amy competes in a wide variety of other sports as well. She competes at the state level in softball (which is her favorite), bowling and basketball. In her spare time she has a full time job in food service!

What Amy is most excited about is something she just recently found out- she will represent the U.S.A. in China at next summer's 2007 Special Olympics World Games. She has her work cut out for her to get ready for the next level of competition. Amy is getting pumped up for her games of bocce in China. We wish her the best of luck!



(Left to right) Clayton Schauff, Jackie, Chris Kavanaugh

Healthy Hearing- Healthy Heart
By Chris Kavanaugh and Clayton Schauff
2006 National Youth Summit Team
Special Olympics Alaska
July 4, 2006

“As I watch athletes walk by all day all I can think is — This is Olivia one day.” Jackie from Knoxville Tennessee gets a tear in her eye when she talks about dreaming for her 6 year old daughter who has an intellectual disability. Her daughter in not yet involved with Special Olympics but it won't be long. What she has noticed is what an impact Olivia is having on her other daughter Natalie and her friends. Natalie stated that they really want to get involved with the movement too, hopefully as a Unified Partner. Olivia is outgoing and warm. She draws people to her and that is what makes people want to know more about her. But what her parents really want

for her is pretty simple but has a lot of heart behind it. They want her to be happy and to be a good person. Jackie believes that Special Olympics will be part of fulfilling this dream for her daughter.

For now Jackie is paving the way for her daughters' involvement in Special Olympics by being a volunteer in the Healthy Hearing Program for Special Olympics. The Healthy Hearing Program is federally funded and provides research and health care to people with intellectual disabilities. Jackie is an audiologist visiting Iowa for 4 days. She was selected by the director of the Senate to participate and certainly brings with her a passion that is contagious. It is evident that this is a personal mission for her and that the Healthy Hearing Program combines two things she loves being an Audiologist and volunteering for Special Olympics. We have a feeling this family will change the world!



Matt Manderfield from Neenah-Menasha Wisconsin is pumped up for his competition in power lifting at the Special Olympics National Games.

Pumped up with a Positive Attitude
By: Christopher Kavanaugh. Clayton Schauff
2006 National Youth Summit Team
Special Olympics Alaska
July 5, 2006

"I gotta stay off the dounuts," says Matt Manderfield during the power lifting competition on July 5, 2006. This is because when he's finished his twice a week workouts for power lifting and he's done with unified basketball practice he works full time at his family business the Manderfield bakery in Neenah-Menasha Wisconsin. His favorite sport is power lifting and that is what he is best at. He is here representing Wisconsin at the 2006 Special Olympics National Games. His personal best in his favorite lift, the squat, is 380lbs. which he hopes to break tomorrow on his way to take the gold! Powerlifting takes concentration, determination, endurance and strength of body and mind. Matt not only has these characteristics but he also has a great positive attitude.

Powerlifting is a series of three lifts performed three times each by individual competitors. The three lifts are the dead lift, bench press and squat. The technical skills involved are critical and not easy to spot from the audience which helps make it exciting the watch. In Special Olympics, athletes are divisioned by gender, age, and ability. Both men and women that compete in this event and are broken into divisions also based on their weight. The crowd is hushed as each lifter completes an attempt hanging in suspense. As the athletes raise the bar tension mounts, some even hold their breath, waiting to see what the judges determine. Whether or not they complete a successful lift determines their placement in the competition. Powerlifting is a sport to see and an experience in enthusiasm — Matt Manderfield is a great powerlifter with a positive attitude we won't soon forget.

Stories

Iowa, Atlantic High School



Youth Forum Inspires All to Get It Going
Mollie Birchard and Kylie Boken
2006 National Youth Summit, Team Atlantic High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 3, 2006

Standing behind the curtains watching the lights go on. A wave of brightness, and here we are. Tabitha, the global messenger speaking at this event, begins the program, and then we're off! She identifies the states one-by-one, beginning with the state of Alaska. Now you're probably asking yourself what this spectacular event is, so we'll just tell you, it is the 2006 National Youth Forum that is taking place at the first ever National Special Olympics games, being held at the beautiful campus of Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

During the Forum approximately twenty students offer their views on multiple subjects all revolving around the motto of the games, Compete. Empower. Unite. Joining us for the Forum were celebrities Tom Arnold, Actor, Writer, Producer, Eddie Barbanell, co-star of "The Ringer" and Tim Shriver, Chairman of Special Olympics. As the conversation fires up, one main topic seems to be the center point for the discussion, and that is diversity. All of the teams on stage share their opinions on the subject, and then the mic goes out for open discussion in the audience. One boy shares a story with us from his experiences working as a water boy for a local sports team. He was teased and harassed stating that it made him feel really sad. At one point he even shares that he had water spit into his face. This example shows a common attitude toward people with intellectual disabilities, and this is what we are here to change.

The National Youth Forum hopes to light a torch in every heart. To light this flame, we all signed a Declaration to pledge our commitment that upon returning we will all work in our schools and communities as one to make the world a better place.



Dolphins and Swimming, No Better Combination
Mollie Birchard and Kylie Boken
2006 National Youth Summit, Team Atlantic High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 4, 2006

When you think of water, what comes to mind? Maybe fish, or boats, possibly even scuba diving? Well those answers may be correct in some cases, but in this one, they're wrong. The correct answer now is swimming, and what better way to talk about that, than the aquatics competition taking place at the Special Olympics 2006 National Games?

One athlete, Kevin Swart, participates in the 100-meter freestyle race, and is part of team Oregon. Kevin who has a diagnosis of autism, which affects the functions of the brain, is seventeen and is a junior at Sprague High School in Salem. He swims three to four days a week throughout the year and has been swimming for six years. He started swimming because of Special Olympics and now participates in his high school swim team. Kevin says he swims because he "likes the feel of the water." He also states that if he were any fish in the world, he would be an autistic dolphin. As Kevin gets ready to swim he thinks to himself that he wants to try his best. As a result of swimming Kevin has won over 20 medals.

Swimming is a big part of Kevin's life as well as the 2006 National Games. As Kevin continues to compete we wish him the best of luck, and hope he can add to his collection of medals.



Competition, Entertainment, and a Bunch of Fun
Mollie Birchard and Kylie Boken
2006 National Youth Summit, Team Atlantic High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 4, 2006

The wind is blowing, the crowd is cheering, and then, the toss is up. Wham! The ball goes over the net, and it's good! Your opponent slams the ball back, and the pressure is on. You hit it, head on, dead center; it just barely makes it in, whisking past your opponent's head. You've won the game! For any of you out there that still don't know what game we're talking about, it's the wonderful sport of tennis.

One lucky guy who won his tennis match is Josh Nolan from Estherville, Iowa. He is twenty-six years old and has been participating in Special Olympics for nineteen years. Although we are here to tell you about his tennis experience, he also competes in a variety of other sports including basketball and golf. He states that his favorite sport is

basketball and that he once scored nineteen points alone in a district 3-on-3 game in his hometown. Josh has won ten gold medals, one silver medal, and one bronze. Today Josh's luck came into play as he tells us about beating his opponent from Colorado, saying that his Wilson brand racket adjusts to all situations. To go along with his favorite racket, is his favorite ball, a Wilson. Josh's favorite memory is getting chosen to compete in the National Games. Even though one of his goals is to become a National Champion this week, he states that "Winning isn't everything!" Other things that Josh likes doing is watching his favorite television show, American Chopper, reading books, and listening to music, especially his favorite band, 3 Doors Down.

Josh is an inspiration to us all with his enthusiasm. We hope he keeps that up and continues to have fun participating in all the activities that he is competing in this week.



“Flipper” Swims into Ames
Mollie Birchard and Kylie Boken
2006 National Youth Summit, Team Atlantic High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 4, 2006

We all know Flipper as the dolphin in the popular movie that came out in 1996, but have you ever thought about calling a friend or family member that? For one girl, that's what she is known by, and she wears the name proudly.

Betsy Zahn, nicknamed “Flipper,” is twenty-six years old and comes to us all the way from Jacksonville, Florida. She has been competing in Special Olympics for three years, but has been swimming since she was three. She now swims for the First Coast Dolphins swim team at the University of Northern Florida. This year she competes in three different events at the aquatics building, they include the 50-meter freestyle, the 100-meter freestyle, and the 50-meter backstroke. She says she gets nervous before a race, but she also drinks a lot of Gatorade and gets focused. She also states that she got involved in swimming because she thinks everyone needs to know how to swim. She has won over six gold medals and got one huge break at the preliminaries for the 100-meter freestyle. On her last leg, she got a bit of a panic attack and didn't get her time, but the officials let her swim again to get her time in to qualify for the finals. Her best memory of the 2006 National Games so far is that she is meeting a lot of friends. Betsy says, “You have to treat people as an individual.” She also says that, “If you believe in yourself, you will succeed.” Her inspiration comes from the statement, “Follow your dreams and reach for the stars.” In Betsy's free time she likes to go to Daytona Beach and look for shark teeth.

Betsy has come a long way in swimming, so it's no surprise that everyone calls her “Flipper.” She also has a big heart, and a great sense of humor to go with it. Good luck Betsy!



Sherrisa stands, ready to make a move at any second.

An Over the Net Game
By Mollie Birchard and Kylie Boken
2006 National Youth Summit, Team Atlantic High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 6, 2006

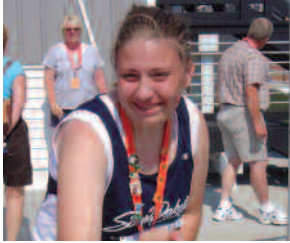
The score is tied, the whole crowd is cheering your name, and then, the serve is up. It's over, your opposing team misses, it's good, and you've one the game. Have you figured out what game this is yet? Well, it involves a white ball, six players on the court, a couple line judges, and official, kneepads, and a net. If you're thinking volleyball, you have won!

Twenty-seven year old Sherrisa Goodman, originally from Alaska, but now residing in Leon, Iowa, has been competing in Special Olympics for one year. This year at the National Games she is playing softball and bowling in addition to her favorite sport, volleyball. Sherrisa has a passionate love for volleyball, and has been playing since she was in middle school. Other things Sherrisa enjoys include spending time with her three dogs, her beautiful niece, her wonderful father, her three brothers, and tending to her garden. She is currently attending Southwest Community College in Osceola to become a veterinarian.

Sherrisa says that her teammates are her motivation and that, "Sharing unity and growth [is] the way to be an awesome team." She also explains that her teammates communicate with each other by calling "mine" if they are going to hit the ball, yelling "out" if the ball is going out-of-bounds, and screaming "help" if they need assistance getting the ball over the net.

Sherrisa says her team is very good at verbal communication, and that everyone is very supportive and positive towards one another.

A volleyball team must be very good at working together and it is clear that Sherrisa and her team do just that. We hope that the bond they have continues not only on, but off the court too. Good luck Sherrisa!



Ashley gets ready to run as she awaits her race.

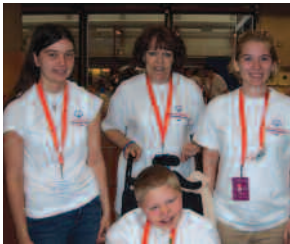
The Race is On
By Mollie Birchard and Kylie Boken
2006 National Youth Summit Team, Atlantic High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 5, 2006

Imagine, it's a hot, yet breezy day, the crowd is packed into the stands, and all eyes are on you. As you walk to your starting position you concentrate on your lane all the way down to the finish line. "On your marks," says the starter. You take your place at the starting line waiting for the bang of the gun. "Get set! Go!" You're off, with the wind blowing in your hair, the crowd roaring, and your opponents are quickly falling behind. You look up and there the string is, you hit it, and you've won, the crowd goes wild! Have you figured out which sport this is yet? If you guessed track and field, you are right!

Eighteen year-old Ashley Clark is from Canton, South Dakota and has been competing in Special Olympics for four years. In her state Special Olympics she likes to run the 200. When running track at the National games she runs the 400, the 4 x 100 relay, and she also does the running long jump. On top of track she also participates in basketball and bowling. Track is her favorite because it is fun to run. She shares that she gets very nervous before a race, but she runs hard and tries her best to get a gold medal. Her favorite part of Special Olympics is getting to know new people and making friends. In her spare time she likes to sit around the house and use her computer. "I like getting medals and stuff," she explains. Track is something very important to Ashley, and as she continues to compete we wish her the best of luck in getting more medals to add to her collection, not only in track, but in all of her other sports too.

Stories

Iowa, North Fayette High School



Reporters Erin Vandersee and Sharon Duffey hang out with Mrs. Wheeler, and Colby after the event.

**I Know What MATP Is Do You?
Erin Vandersee and Sharon Duffey
2006 National Youth Summit Team
North Fayette High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 4, 2006**

You are probably like us and wondering what MATP is. Don't worry we weren't sure what it was either until this morning. We ran into Ed Martin, an MATP official, from Glenwood, Iowa. He told us about the MATP program and got us interested in going to check it out.

MATP stands for Motor Activities Training Program (MATP) and is based on Iowa Special Olympics "Challenge Day." The Challenge Day was designed by a group of specialists, staff and clients of several Iowa human service agencies. It is designed to serve the most physically and intellectually challenged population, by providing Special Olympic events for those, who due to their disabilities, can not participate in other Special Olympic activities. All of the wonderful events are designed to help improve the athlete's motor skills, while simultaneously providing the athlete with an activity which is fun and entertaining. It was officially adopted by Special Olympics Iowa in 1994.

Iowa has a unique program. They have ten Challenge Days a year in different parts of Iowa, serving around 100 athletes at every challenge day. Iowa is the only state that has team competitions, with amazingly over 700 athletes involved in MATP.

Today the event started with a parade of athletes. The oldest athlete competing in MATP at the age of 75 is Blanche from Opportunity Living in Rockwell City, Iowa. She entertained the audience by singing "You Are My Sunshine." She has been competing in Special Olympics for the past 15 years. Then the games began with some of the athletes playing volleyball, basketball, pool, or darts.

Another athlete we talked to was Colby Wheeler from Des Moines, Iowa. At the age of eleven he is the youngest athlete on the Iowa National Special Olympics team. Colby has been competing in Special Olympics for the past three years and enjoys competing in every sport. According to Colby's mother he is just like any typical guy. He loves playing sports and flirting with his female fans.

Sports fans, if you ever get the opportunity we recommend that you go check out MATP. We are sure that you will find it interesting and the enjoyment of the athletes will put a smile on your face.



Shirley Messerli showing her strength during the bench press.

**Memorized by Messerli
Erin Vandersee & Sharon Duffey
2006 National Youth Summit Team
North Fayette High School
Special Olympics Iowa
5 July 2006**

One of the older ladies on the Iowa team is competing in — can you believe it — no other sport than powerlifting of course. Fifty-one year-old Shirley Messerli competes in both the bench press and the dead lift.

Today she started off competing against three other women in the 75 kg (165.75 lbs) weight class with the bench press. Even though she was unable to complete her three attempts at pressing 27.5 kg, it didn't stop her. The audience was behind her and the other two ladies 100 percent. The other two ladies finished amazingly well. Hanna Parker from Alabama had a best lift of 30 kg and Amelia Hernandez of Illinois had a best lift of 35 kg.

Yet, this didn't discourage Shirley at all. She came back very strong for the dead lift by easily completing her first two lifts of 30 kg and 40 kg. It was then time for her third and final lift and she was more than fired up. With 55 kg on the bar she was ready to lift that bar to the sky. She went up, grabbed on to the bar, and raised it to her hips, and held it until the official said down. Shirley was all excited after her final stupendous lift! She let everyone know how excited she really was by her huge smile. Then for a closing exit she crossed her arms to show off her muscles to her fans.



Sharon Duffey, youth summit, interviews Candy Kiel and Anetonette Greer of Team Iowa.

**Competitors to Partners
Erin Vandersee & Sharon Duffey
2006 National Youth Summit Team
North Fayette High School
Special Olympics Iowa
5 July 2006**

Two Iowa girls join forces to go for the Gold in the Doubles Bocce competition. Candy Kiel from Oelwein Goodwill and Anetonette Greer from Waterloo Goodwill normally compete against one another for that gold medal at their state competition in Ames. Those tables were turned when they joined forces to compete in the National Special Olympics competition.

Candy Kiel told us that she was very surprised to hear that she was one of four girls chosen by Team Iowa to compete at Nationals. Although Candy knew Antonette Greer, they never had a chance to play together until their first pairing for competition.

Their skill on the court was phenomenal during their first match against Team Delaware. After an hour and a half long competition, Team Iowa defeated Team Delaware 9 to 12.



Christopher and Clayton from Alaska enjoy a blizzard in Iowa.

Alaska Experiences a Blizzard in Iowa
Erin Vandersee & Sharon Duffey
2006 National Youth Summit Team
North Fayette High School
Special Olympics Iowa
July 7, 2006

Who would travel over 1,000 miles and not sleep for over 24 hours to get here? The National Youth Summit Team from Kodiak Alaska of course. Kim Dorner has been teaching at Kodiak Middle School for the past five years and soon to be high school students Clayton Schauff and Christofer Kavanaugh have traveled to Iowa to help change the world.

Chris has been competing in Special Olympics since the age of eight. He truly loves all of the sports, but power lifting is his top favorite. Clayton and Chris have known each other forever. Clayton got involved with Special Olympics in fourth grade when Kim picked him to be president of their partner club.

They have really enjoyed their time in Iowa. Chris stated that his week has been full of nonstop fun. Clayton enjoyed Opening Ceremony and beating Michael in bowling. The boys were even able to experience a blizzard while they were here — one from Dairy Queen that is!

They commented that it was a little hard getting adjusted to Iowa's weather. It has been in the low 80s here, but when they left home it was only 40 degrees. When asked if they would come back to Iowa again they said "yes, absolutely."

Stories

Kansas

A Family Affair

By: Bryan Anthon and Clint Armistead

2006 National Youth Summit Team

Special Olympics Kansas

July 4, 2006

Tears of joy. Years of inspiration. Mountains of laughter. These are just a few of the many reasons why the Kanter's family-life revolves around Special Olympics. Sid, father, Nan, mother, and Michael, son, are all three actively involved in Special Olympics. For 18 years, Nan has led the charge for Special Olympics in the Overland Park, Kansas area.

"Special Olympics is my life." Nan states as she cheers on Michael playing tennis against a South Carolina athlete, "As we watched our son grow and enjoy the friendships he made through Special Olympics, we knew that this was an amazing opportunity that we need to be a part of."

A part indeed...now, Nan, the Blue Valley Supervisor of Special Olympics, oversees athletes participating in 13 activities. Michael enjoys having his parents as his coaches. "They watch me. They make me feel like a good person. Mom and Dad also give me support," Michael states. Glen Roswal, Technical Advisor for Tennis in these 2006 National Games, agrees that family support certainly motivates the athletes to work harder. He notes that tennis is a popular family sport.

These comments were stated after Michael's first match on Tuesday as his parents were there cheering him on. "I like my dad as my coach — he teaches me lots of good tennis tips," Michael said with a smile.

Sid Kanter, former tennis pro at Homestead Country Club, has been Michael's and the Blue Valley Blue Streak's tennis coach for four years. This has really been years of father and son moments that cannot be replaced. Sid summed it all up with, "We love Special Olympics...We travel together, we bond...it has made us a better family."



A spectator offers his Walking Taco for a photo op at a softball game.

Success Is In The Bag
By Bryan Anthonie and Clint Armistead
2006 National Youth Summit Team
Special Olympics Kansas
July 5, 2006

Weary-eyed and hunger-stricken from the hot Iowa weather, athletes, family members, volunteers, and officials seek much needed nourishment at the concession stands of North River Valley Park. Serving as the Softball Venue for the 2006 National Special Olympic Games, the Venue's concession stands spared no expense on the food by offering a Midwest classic: The Walking Taco. Also known as "Taco-in-a-bag" or a "Takeaway Taco", this delicacy has been common at ball games, cook-outs, and even movie theaters throughout the Midwest for a few years now. For those not from the central United States, the name may strike curiosity. The dish is simply an opened, crushed bag of Doritos filled with taco meat, shredded lettuce, cheese and any other topping you would like. Captain of Concessions, Roxanne Medley, said that the options are endless as one can exchange Doritos for Fritos or another flavor chip and numerous toppings are offered at the softball parks.

Jane Cunhay, a family member from Kansas, raves, "The clean-up is the best," as one can easily crunch up the bag and toss it in a receptacle. Others merely enjoy that the chow "tastes good and is fun to eat," Jeff Kopaska, Vice-president of Ames Slow-pitch Softball Association, noted as he served a spectator from Delaware his first ever Walking Taco, "We're spreading the joy."

That is one of the messages of Special Olympics: spreading joy. The unique aspect of having a national games is the ability to share new ideas, new friendships, new experiences, and new cultures. That is exactly what Ames is doing with the Walking Taco. The people at the games who have experienced the wonder will soon return to his or her hometown in Alaska, Connecticut, or maybe Florida and share the ideas, friendships, experience and, most importantly, the Walking Taco. Athletes and spectators alike will have the opportunity to share a concrete item for all to enjoy with friends back home. Surely the Walking Taco legacy will continue to spread across the nation until it has "walked" all the way to the coasts.



Aldis Berzins poses with NYS reporter, Bryan Anthonie, at Opening Ceremonies after signing an autograph.

All this is Amazing — Aldis Berzins
By Clint Armistead and Bryan Anthonie
2006 National Youth Summit Team
Special Olympics Kansas
July 6, 2006

He answered a reply for a job and little did he know he would find his heart. As Director of Information Technology for Special Olympics International, Aldis Berzins heads computer operations for the 2006 National Special Olympics in Ames, Iowa. While watching Berzins move a volleyball through his hands like a mother caring a newborn, one could see that his love of the game is still evident.

After his successful career in men's volleyball, culminating with the 1984 USA Olympic gold and 1985 USA World Cup Championship, Berzins knew it was time to wind down his playing of the game and turn towards coaching for the San Diego State University women's volleyball team. "Coaching is like playing, only not nearly as much fun", he states. Another one of Berzins' coaching successes would be his hand in the success of the women's USA 1996 volleyball team.

Using his knowledge of volleyball, this computer guru helped teach Special Olympians to fine tune their skills necessary to spike at a volleyball clinic on July 5th at the Forker Building. "It's the best job in the computer world...I get a chance to design software to help athletes." He created a database called HASS (Healthy Athletes Software System) that will empower Special Olympics to track athletes and record their health issues so that Special Olympics will know which athletes needs assistance in specific health areas. Ron Vederman, of Special Olympics International, commented, "using HASS, we can discover the percentage of athletes by region or state that need to work on a certain health aspect, like tooth decay." Healthy Athletes will also be able to inform a health care provider in the athlete's hometown of the care that is needed for the athlete.

While Berzins' role as Director of IT is a large commitment, he hopes to be even more involved with coaching volleyball for Special Olympians in the future. Currently Berzins' three sons volunteer at Camp Shriver. Berzins is very proud that his sons have become involved in Special Olympics. Berzins leaves us with these words of advice about volleyball and life: "It's got to be fun...otherwise it becomes a job."



(Top, Left to Right) Reporter Clint Armistead, Tim Shriver and Reporter Bryan Anthonie rub elbows after a discussion at the youth forum.

(Bottom, Left to Right) Reporter Sharon Duffey, Eddie Barbanell, and Reporter Erin Vandersee pose for a picture after a luncheon with Iowa youth.

Youth Changing Attitudes

By Bryan Anthonie, Clint Armistead, Erin Vandersee, and Sharon Duffey

2006 National Youth Summit Team

Special Olympics Kansas and Iowa

July 7, 2006

Twelve students and six teachers from sea to shining sea came together in Ames, Iowa on July 1 with the idea to share stories about the 2006 National Special Olympics Games with the world. Little did they know the Special Olympians changed their lives forever. The eighteen people came with their own personal experiences about Special Olympics and each individual has been touched in a way that will empower them to change the world. "Watching kids from different states come together and click is the best experience I have had so far," stated Erin Vandersee from North Fayette, Iowa.

Through the National Youth Summit (NYS), each Special Olympian is paired with student from general education from their school/area to brainstorm ideas that reflect the spirit of the Special Olympic Games. Ron Vederman, SOI Director of School and Youth Outreach, and Nicolle Egan, Director NYS head the NYS. "We have had the opportunity to get to know each other like no other camp I've been to," replied Clint Armistead from Overland Park, Kansas, "We've been able to do reports on the Games, have conversations with Eddie Barbinell, from "The Ringer", participate in a Youth Forum led by Tim Shriver, and all signed a Declaration of Acceptance to show our commit to the Special Olympics movement."

In addition to newspaper reporting, the NYS joined together on July 6 for a Webinar. Each student had access to communicate through the Internet to people from across the country and share the movement along with ideas of how they all will give back to their communities about what they have learned this week.

The NYS' ultimate goal is "change attitudes...change the world." When the flame of hope goes out in Ames tonight, the Youth Summit's challenge begins. These students, assisted by their teachers, are truly the link that will keep the Special Olympians actively involved in their schools and communities. "I plan on talking to our athletic director and begin an opening ceremonies at the beginning of the school year. These athletes are incredible and they deserve recognition and honor just like the rest of us." Said Michael Grenzer from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The NYS challenges everyone here at the Games to go back to their hometown and implement what they have done here at the Games into their everyday life.



National Youth Summit Team completes a journalism session with staff from the Ames Tribune

Stories

New York, Julie Balamaci

Youth Summit Arrives and Sends a Clear Message

Julie Balamaci

2006 Youth Summit Volunteer

Edgemont High School

Scarsdale, NY

The 2006 Special Olympics National Youth Summit in Ames, Iowa has gotten off to a great start. Teams of three from six different high schools in the United States—including Kansas, Alaska, Wisconsin, Virginia, Atlantic Iowa and North Fayette Iowa — were chosen by their specific states, and all arrived on Saturday, July 1. The teams consist of one athlete, who is not participating in the games going on this week, one partner, who is around the same age as the athlete but does not have an intellectual disability, and a teacher, who is an adult and is a guardian figure for both the athlete and the partner. We are here to share our ideas and thoughts with each other and the nation on how we want to change the attitudes about people with disabilities. We had some opening activities the first day to help everyone get to know each other, and not only did they break the ice, but also they eliminated the possibility of doubts to have fun in this beautiful week of July.

Clint Armistead, who is a partner from Kansas, says, “I want to make changes and make a difference in my community. I think it’s great that I can learn things here and then take them back to my town.” An athlete, Jonathon LeFlore, from team Wisconsin, speaks for himself and his whole team when he says, “The Youth Summit Program is a good thing. It can really help people change their views on special education and people who have disabilities, and I am glad I am part of it.”

Sunday, July 2, the Summit started off the day with an overall introduction meeting to the Youth Summit. Also, the Ames Tribune and professors from Iowa State University will help us learn how to do journalism in order to keep track of our experiences in Iowa. The Director of the National Youth Summit, Nicolle Egan, has put together many activities for us to do. She has brought us together and helped us get settled in. When asked about some of the feelings she has about the 2006 National Youth Summit, she said with confidence, “This is one of five national Youth Summits in the world this year, and the first in the United States. The group of young adults selected to represent the United States is the future of Special Olympics and I think they will do a great job leading the Special Olympics movement this week and after they leave Iowa.” We are all very excited for Sunday night, because it is the opening ceremony for the games. It takes place from 7:30 PM to 10:00 PM in the Hilton Coliseum.

At the National Youth Forum to be held on Monday July 2, at 1:00pm at Fisher Theatre on ISU Campus our teams will be joined by 200 Iowa youth from around the state who have come together to discuss important issues related to changing attitudes people have about others with intellectual disabilities. Tom Arnold will be the celebrity emcee and the public is invited to attend.

All teams will write stories about the events going on in the games, some of the athletes competing in the games, and the other programs going on other than the games, for example the Healthy Athlete Program, which provides in-depth education on health care, and also will provide medical attention for each athlete. Christopher Kavanaugh, Alaska athlete, thinks this program will be “way fun.”

The object of the National Youth Summit is to change the attitudes of those who do not understand people with intellectual disabilities and all the abilities they have and can apply to the world. We are getting people more aware about the world around them. We have a Declaration that we will all sign at the Forum. We have no doubts this will be a once in a lifetime experience and will help us all learn and grow more accepting and aware.

Podcasting Pioneer a First at the Special Olympics Youth Summit

Julie Balamaci
2006 Youth Summit Volunteer
Edgemont High School
Scarsdale, NY



Julie Balamaci conducts a podcast interview with Joni LaDew, Education Specialist, State Farm Education Leadership Team

I'm a city girl, from New York. I've never been anywhere in the United States but along the east and west coastlines. Coming out to Iowa was difficult enough for me, and then I remembered that I had a job to do. I am the assistant of Nicolle Egan (the director of the Youth Summit program). She introduced me to something called podcasting. What I have to do is hold interviews with anyone who I think would add to the experience of the Youth Summit group by talking about how the youth today can get more involved in programs like Special Olympics. I then record the interviews on a regular mp3 player and after that must put them onto the computer so they can be edited if needed. The final step is sending them to a technological genius somewhere who truly understands this novel phenomenon, and who can put them on the internet so anyone who wants one can have access to one of my interviews.

I speak for all the members of the Youth Summit when I say that we have been under a great amount of pressure to be at certain places at certain times, or meet a specific deadline for the articles we have been assigned to write in the past couple of days. But my job is a little different. The other Youth Summit-ers have to find interesting topics to write stories about, while I have to hop from event to event and hunt for people to harass by sticking a microphone in their faces and saying, "OK, TALK!" I have to think of all the right questions to ask, and talk to all the right people, because my interviews will be posted on the internet! It's not just something that can be printed one day and thrown out and forgotten about the next, and it's not something that a person can easily edit other than cutting out parts and making it shorter. People who have iTunes, which is the medial player for iPods, can very easily download the interviews once they are posted.

Although I am making this task sound tedious and completely not fun, it has been quite an experience. Actually, Nicolle left a note for me today that instructed me not to do any more interviews today, and I was upset. I've been on a roll; I've initiated over 10 interviews in the past two days. I was really enjoying myself once I stopped getting so nervous. I got to feel like a journalist and journalism has always been a field of interest for me, not to mention the fact that both my aunt and uncle were journalists. This past winter I wrote for my town's newspaper on the girls' varsity basketball team at my school, so I guess I was prepared for this task.

The Youth Summit overall has been such an amazing experience for me in so many different ways. I was a little apprehensive at first because I had no idea of the kinds of things we would be doing. Now, I don't want to leave, I have made a plethora of great friends, and Iowa is so nice because I am away from all the noise and rushed way of life that I am so used to in New York. I also got to learn new things, like how to hold interviews and use my social skills to start conversations with people. I've met with a range of different people, from state farm insurance representative Joni LaDue, to a gold-medal winning athlete Loretta Claiborne, to an the mother and father of a daughter in a wheelchair who was competing in the MATP games. I have been fortunate enough to get many different perspectives on current events and issues that Special Olympics is helping and hoping to change. I have faith that these interviews help more young people want to get involved with the Special Olympics by making the information they want to hear more easily accessible.

Stories

Virginia



Worlds Oldest Sport

**By Sierra Seaborne and SharDeja Ward
2006 National Youth Summit Team
Special Olympics Virginia**

Bocce, an ancient Roman sport, was played out by two teams on July 4, 2006. The fireworks were sparking before the game as the two teams did their pre-game warm-ups. Renee Anchordoguy at the age of 43 has one of the most unique warm-up stretches, putting her head between her legs and bending over several times. Her teammate, Jack Wadleigh, is 66 years old and wears a serious face throughout the game. He looks as if he is imagining that there is no one else in the room but himself, his teammate, opponents, referees, and the court. Renee and Jack represent the hot desert of Arizona.

Their opponents were 34 year old Malinda McCarty and 18 year old Beth Pasterkamp from the cool air Colorado with Coach Joan Sharpe.

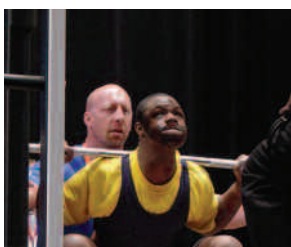
Arizona got first roll of the pallino, which is a little round ball used to determine the rest of the game. The first roll was a perfect shot right down the middle. The crowd started cheering and screaming for their crowd. Colorado fought back and became closer; however the next three rolls were unable to win the 1st point.

The second roll took an interesting turn. Arizona had the point but it got snatched out of their hands by the Colorado team. After the first two rolls was already tied 1–1. At the beginning of the third game all of the balls were grouping in the middle of the court. The third game was so close that the referees had to bring out the measuring tape. Arizona took a commanding lead, winning 3–1.

In the fifth game Colorado did not allow any of Arizona's balls in the vicinities of the pallino. The athletes' faces showed remarkable expressions when they scored or point or missed a point. They did not care if they won a point or lost one; they were still happy. Sometimes the athletes had concentration written all over their faces, and this was intimidating to the opposing team.

On the seventh roll Colorado's Beth Pasterkamp got the pallino right down the middle and then one of Arizona's athletes rolled the ball down the middle and it kissed the pallino perfectly. Watching the spectators cheer on the teams was very inspiring. Pasterkamp even did a dance when she walked off the court.

To win at bocce, you must score 12 points. Half way to 12 the score was tied at 6 all. Arizona began to break away from Colorado and then proceeded to take the lead. Their efforts triumphed over Colorado's, and Colorado was not able to overcome them. This close match ended with a final score of 12-7.



Tyrone Jones, Special Olympics Virginia powerlifter, prepares to complete his lift.

Triumph of Strength

By Sierra Seaborne and SharDéja Ward

2006 National Youth Summit Team

Special Olympics Virginia

July 5, 2005

"My son is a true gentleman, he has dedication and he works hard for his state" said mom of 28 year old Samuel Zimmerman, a power lifter from Virginia. Mrs. Zimmerman screams, and cheers for her son every time he goes up to lift. Along with Zimmerman's mother, his father was right there along side her.

Zimmerman is a resident of Reston, Virginia. He has been involved in Special Olympics for 3 years. He was won Local and State Power Lifting Awards. He enjoys listening to music, dancing, and reading magazines. His favorite celebrity is Julia Roberts.

His national games coach is Mike Canaday. There are four other Virginia athletes participating in power lifting. Zimmerman said "As a National Games athlete, I am looking forward to having fun and winning."

His coach Mike Canaday has been participating with Special Olympics for eight years. His hometown is Fredericksburg, Virginia. Canaday said "Can't is a word that is not in the Special Olympics vocabulary. We stress that all your coaches believe in you, so all you need to do is believe in yourself."

Alongside Zimmerman was his friend Tyrone Jones, a native of Virginia Beach, Virginia. He is involved in power lifting and soccer. He has been involved for four years. He is 19 years old. When asked what his favorite lift he said is, "I like them all" and he also said, "He is looking forward to a good summer".

Zimmerman and Jones are in the same weight. As we watched the referees call their names to come lift every one had different facial expressions. Some seem to have a look of concentration, some had smiles and some you could not read there expressions. Everyone is given 60 seconds to attempt there lifting, and they were given three chances and the best score is taken. Jones' first lift was a squat his best weight was 203.75 lbs. (92.5kg). Jones waits for Canaday, his coach, to get him in the correct position to squat and while that is going on the crowd calls his name.

The coach runs to the box where they must stand while the athlete is lifting. Jones waits for referees to signal a lift and Canaday points to the ceiling for Jones to lift the bar and he goes down to a 90 degree angle and then comes back up. Zimmerman best lift was 187.25 lbs. (85 kg). On his second lift he could not get back up from the squat.

Next lift was bench press. Jones tried his hardest to bench press but he was not successful in any of his attempts. Before Jones' first attempt he walked out with the look of concentration on his face. He was signaled to start then press but the volunteers had to lift the bar off of him. Jones came back out with a smile on his face; then he sat down to get ready and tries but could not get the bar back up. Zimmerman's best was 148.75 lbs. (67.5kg). Zimmerman pressed his first bar with ease as the crowd cheered him on. Zimmerman came out for his second attempt but it failed and the bar slipped right out of his hands. After Zimmerman's third lift he and coach Canaday gave a secret hand shake.

The last lift was the dead lift. Zimmerman came out with his head high and lifted the bar up with the majority of the judges' vote, for a good lift. Jones best lift was 292 lbs. (132.5 kg). Jones came right out and lifted the bar and walked right off the stage with confidence. Jones' second lift was different because he looked his coach right in the eyes. Zimmerman best lift was 187.25 lbs. (85kg.). As Canaday got Zimmerman ready he walked out smiling to the audience while the crowd was going crazy. As his mother looked on, she was screaming "Lock it." The crowd went wild saying "Go Sam".

Lifting for the Gold

By Sierra Seaborne and SharDeja Ward

2006 National Youth Summit Team

Special Olympics Virginia

July 6, 2006

Gloria Jefferies is an 18 year old power lifter who has been involved with Special Olympics for 4 years. She attends Hanover High school in Richmond, Virginia and after high school plans on attending a two year college in order to pursue a music career.

Jeffries has won major awards, some of which include 2003 Power Lifting Rookie of the Year, State Champion in female teens 131, 137, 148 lb. weight class, and SOVA Power Lifting State Record Holder.

Jefferies' main interests are writing music, singing, skateboarding, rollerblading, roller skating, and swimming. Her favorite sports celebrity is Hulk Hogan., and her favorite actor is Johnny Depp. When she is at home she loves McDonalds Big Mac's. She loves to watch MTV (Music Television) when she is at home and bored. Other sports she has also been involved with during her 6 years in the Special Olympics are soccer, cheerleading, and weight lifting. Jeffries was introduced to Special Olympics by one of friend's fathers. Jeffries is very much supported by her own father, Wilbert Jeffries, and also her awesome coach Michael Canaday.

In a recent interview, Jeffries proudly announced that she has more siblings, and that she is not the only child in her family. Jeffries also quoted that "As a National Game athlete, I hope to meet new people. I am looking forward to reaching my goals in power lifting." Her favorite type of music is country. Whenever Jeffries is not doing any sports she is playing with friends or talking on the phone.

Jeffries eats 2 salads and a Rice Crispy Treat before she lifts. She had to eat that food in order to gain some weight to make her weight class. She also listens to country music before lifting. She feels that those things she does before lifting help her to be ready to compete to the best of her ability. She also said "Never let the bar bounce or fall on your chest or you will lose all points for that lift.". At the 2006 Special Olympics National Games she won 4 gold metals. She placed first in the dead lift, which is a weightlifting exercise where one lifts a loaded barbell off the ground from a stabilized bent-over position, according to Wikipedia. She has also placed first in the bench press and squat. Bench press is a weightlifting exercise in which you lie on your back on a bench and press weights upward. The other gold metal is from overall competition, and Jefferies beat her personal best by 35 pounds.

Jeffries really enjoys being in Iowa. She said that Hootie and the Blowfish was her favorite part of opening ceremonies. She also says that her coach treats her like his own daughter and so does his family. She ultimately came to Iowa to win the gold, meet new, people, and have the time of her life.

Stories

Wisconsin



Ike Walters clears the bar to increase his lead to 70 points.

A Golden Dream Come True
By: Michael Grenzer and Johnathan Leflore
2006 National Youth Summit Team
Special Olympics Wisconsin
July 6, 2006

It's the second day of the pentathlon finals and Ike Walters of Wisconsin is leading by thirty — two points with the high jump and 400 meter run left and Walters says his fans are motivating him. There is no guarantee of victory because competitor Mark D. Cannon of Texas is strong in the high jump.

With most of the athletes out of the high jump competition, it is time for Walters to step up. The bar is at 1.55 meters; both Walters and Cannon cleared the bar. The bar is at 1.6 meters and both athletes missed the height on their first attempt. Cannon steps up and misses his second attempt, now Walters gets ready to jump. He goes into the air and sails over the bar and the crowd goes wild. Ike said that it felt like a burning rush in his body when he cleared the height. Cannon steps up for his final attempt and scratches.

With just the 400 meter to go, Walters leads by seventy points. With a 400 meter left that he typically does under sixty seconds, his chances to win are high. The gun goes off, and Walters darts to the front of the group. With just 200 meters to go, Cannon is gaining on Walters. As they round the final turn, Walters is looking strong and holds off Cannon at the finish line. Walters wins!

After the awards ceremony, Walters was asked what the competition was like; he said "it was like two tigers rushing at me". He then stated that when he was competing in the pentathlon, he felt like a celebrity. After the high jump, Cannon felt confident that he could win. While walking away, Walters was asked what the gold medal felt like and he stated "the medal was heavy around my neck".



Richard G. shoots darts for the first time.

No is Not an Answer

By: Michael Grenzer and Johnathan Leflore

2006 National Youth Summit Team

Special Olympics Wisconsin

July 4, 2006

The announcer counts one one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand and everyone stops, the ball is passed and then a shot is made. The fans along with everyone on the court cheers. That was a Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) basketball game.

MATP is an adaptive sports program that has activities that are designed for the severe and profoundly challenged athletes. MATP was founded in 1993 by an Iowan named Kathy Irving. Iowa is the only state that has MATP team sports.

Two of the team sports that were played at the National Games of MATP were basketball and volleyball. One of the unique things about basketball was that the ball was made of a soft foam material and is smaller than the official size basketball. Another difference is the height of the basketball hoop stood four feet high. In volleyball, the net used is tennis net. The ball used is a large balloon or a punch ball without the cord.

Some of the other sports that severe and profound athletes cannot play without assistance include darts, golf, and pool. Dennis Mason and Stephanie Corey-Patterson both have developed some brilliant adaptive equipment for the MATP athletes.

When Stephanie was asked why she assists in making the adaptive equipment, she said "I don't take NO at all". Dennis added that he wants the athletes to be able to do the same activities those athletes without severe and profound disabilities.

The pool cue that assists the athletes playing pool is a spring loaded and is triggered by a squeezable lever. Golf has three different pieces of equipment. These include a driver and two different types of putters. The driver and one of the putters are pulled back into position and when the athlete squeezes the lever, it swings forward striking the ball. The other putter is a portable battery operated device that when a button is pushed, it putts the ball towards its target.

These are the kinds of adaptations that allow athletes to compete in recreational activities.



Coach John Avery game winning out.

And The Crowd Roars

By: Michael Grenzer and Johnathan Leflore

2006 National Youth Summit Team

Special Olympics Wisconsin

July 5, 2006

The bases are loaded, Mike is at the plate and the pitch sails in. CRACK! The ball goes into an opening in left field and the crowd roars. Mike races to second base, forcing in two runs to tie the game in the third inning. By the end of the third inning, Wisconsin's male softball team is leading Delaware four to two.

Wisconsin has the advantage in this game because the Wisconsin fans overpower the Delaware fans. The Wisconsin fan section has family and friends supporting them with dance routines and cheers. It is not only the fans that are cheering wildly, but Coach John Avery of the Wisconsin Wolves.

This game was not only exciting for the fans of both teams, but for anyone that ventured over to the diamond. Other teams that were in the area waiting to play were also excited watching the game.

As the game went into the top of the sixth inning, Wisconsin was down by one crucial run. It was a must score scenario with two outs and bases loaded. Mike steps up to bat and draws a walk to tie the game. The fans and Team Wisconsin roar and celebrate with high fives and dancing in the aisles. Wisconsin then holds Delaware scoreless in the bottom of the sixth inning to force an extra inning.

In the top of the seventh inning, the fans chanting "Go Wisconsin!". The Wolves were able to score two runs to take a seven to five lead. It is now the bottom of the seventh, and Delaware has the bases loaded with two outs. Delaware's big hitter steps up to the plate and smashes a hard grounder to shortstop Craig Becker. Becker snatches it off the ground and tosses it to second base for the game winning play.

After the game, Craig was asked what he was thinking as the ball was coming to him. He said "just to get the out". Coach John Avery said he could feel the crowd behind team when the pressure was on during the sixth inning. When Coach John was asked what part of the team won the game, he stated "all seventeen of them".



Special Olympics Get Into It® Fact Sheet

SO Get Into It Description

A service-learning curriculum developed to introduce Special Olympics and explain intellectual disability to youth and encourage them to become involved in the movement.

SO Get Into It Goals

The overall goal of SO Get Into It is to increase the participation of children and youth with and without intellectual disabilities in Special Olympics by establishing school-based Special Olympics programs and activities. This encompasses several related goals:

- To develop new constituencies and leaders for the Special Olympics movement;
- To promote greater understanding and acceptance of similarities and differences in others among school-age youth;
- To involve school-age youth in a variety of activities centered on Special Olympics, including participation in Special Olympics sports and events that will enable them to play a positive role in their schools and communities.

SO Get Into It is made up of four lesson plans compatible with curriculum standards in areas of language arts, social studies, history, health and physical education and other areas:

- **Awareness:** Learning how stereotypes are formed and can be hurtful
- **Understanding:** Overcoming unfair treatment, adversity and discrimination
- **Inspiration:** Goal setting with Special Olympics athletes as role models
- **Action:** Encourage students to make a difference in school and community with Special Olympics

Highlighting the Special Olympics Athlete

SO Get Into It highlights Special Olympics athletes and their compelling stories of overcoming odds and living their dreams.

- *“Attitudes”* (Grade level K-2): An introductory, fast-paced four-minute video set to music consisting of inspirational footage from the 1999 Special Olympics Summer World Games. Achievements of Special Olympics athletes are highlighted.
- *“The Loretta Claiborne Story”* (Grade levels 3–8): A 90-minute-long Disney movie about Special Olympics Pennsylvania athlete Loretta Claiborne, set mostly during her school days. It focuses on goal-setting, achieving dreams, overcoming barriers and celebrating differences.

- *“NICK News Special Edition: A World of Difference”* (Grade levels 3–8): This 21-minute show was filmed in March 2001 at the Special Olympics World Winter Games and focuses on youth with and without intellectual disabilities discussing their friendships, celebrating their differences, and seriously discussing the changes that need to be made in public perception of those with intellectual disabilities.
- *“Changing Attitudes — One Person at a Time”* (Grade levels 6–12): A 46-minute video filmed at the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games and Global Youth Summit in Dublin, Ireland, with part one highlighted by youth from the Summit speaking with Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa about overcoming obstacles (18 minutes). Part two focuses on the young people in a forum with celebrities such as Colin Farrell and Samantha Mumba discussing ways that all can be an inspiration and a leader in their schools and communities.
- *“Life in the Shadows”* (Grade level 9–12): This 10-minute video, much of it in black and white, describes the long-standing practice in the United States of institutionalizing people with intellectual disabilities. It illustrates the current trends leading toward more community-based involvement and acceptance for people with disabilities.

Global Reach

- SO Get Into It has been distributed at no charge since 2001 to more than 15,000 primary through secondary schools, reaching 2.5 million students in more than 60 countries. The curriculum has been translated into 18 languages, including Arabic, Bahasa, Chinese, French, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Karakalpak, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Spanish and Turkish.

The SO Get Into It curriculum kit also includes the following teacher resources:

- Activity cards for action-oriented involvement with Special Olympics
- Fact sheets on Special Olympics, intellectual disability, Unified Sports®, Partners Clubs®, and other related topics
- Web-related resources and links relevant to the lesson plans
- Special Olympic athlete bios and stories with pictures
- Local Program contact information

Special Olympics is an international year-round program of sports training and competition for individuals with intellectual disability. More than 2.25 million athletes in over 150 countries train and compete in 30 Olympic-type summer and winter sports. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to develop fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy as they participate in the sharing of gifts and friendship with other athletes, their families and the community. There is no cost to participate in Special Olympics.

Mision and Athlete Oath

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities*, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community

“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.”

Links to National Youth Form

To View the Forum and the Webinar go to the links below. Pass it on!

Monday, July 3, 2006 Youth Forum:

<http://breeze.extension.iastate.edu/p77787124/>

Thursday, July 6, 2006 National Youth Summit Webinar: <http://breeze.extension.iastate.edu/p54571002>

Thank You

Thanks to The Mattel Children's Foundation for their generous support of SO Get Into It.





2006 USA National Games Youth Summit Team



Special Olympics

www.specialolympics.org