



Mary Davis

Chief Executive Officer, Special Olympics International

Mary Davis is the Chief Executive Officer of Special Olympics International. She has been a life-long leader within the Special Olympics movement, beginning soon after college as a local program volunteer and coach with Special Olympics Ireland. Davis has served in a series of leadership roles, helping create Special Olympics' first-ever Regional games, the 1985 Special Olympics European Games, working to build a powerful national Program as CEO of Special Olympics Ireland, and helping globalize the movement as CEO of the first Special Olympics World Summer Games held outside the US.

Davis leads an international team of 250 professionals throughout the world who are addressing inactivity, injustice, intolerance and social isolation by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities to be productive citizens in their communities, which leads to a more welcoming and inclusive society for all. The Special Olympics movement currently serves over 6 million athletes and Unified partners, holds over 100,000 competitions annually, and welcomes more than 1 million coaches and volunteers who help make grassroots operations possible.

Since 2009, Davis has served as the Managing Director and Regional President of Special Olympics Europe Eurasia, overseeing the growth and development of Special Olympics across 58 countries in Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

She is a long-term campaigner for the rights and inclusion of children and adults with intellectual disabilities, beginning her career as a teacher at St. Michael's House, Ireland – a leader in the development and provision of community-based services for people with intellectual disabilities in Ireland. She became National Director of Special Olympics Ireland in 1989 and served as Events Director for the 1985 European Special Olympics Games in Dublin. Davis has been appointed to many Special Olympics International Committees throughout her career and served as Chairperson of the International Advisory Committee for four years.

Mary Davis was the driving force behind the hugely successful Special Olympics World Summer Games when they were held in Ireland in 2003. She served as CEO of those Games, which were the first World Summer Games held outside the United States since

Eunice Kennedy Shriver founded the movement in 1968. It was the largest sporting event in the world that year. Davis was awarded Ireland's Person of the Year in 2003 for her work on the Games, and in honor of her dedicated years of service to Special Olympics Ireland. In 2004, then-President of Ireland Mary McAleese appointed Davis to her Council of State (advisory body to the President on legislative matters), where she remained until 2011.

Davis has many and varied interests, including golf, running and other outdoor pursuits such as canoeing and parachuting. She completed the Puma Marathon series, climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, ran the New York Marathon, and represented the Irish Government in a 2008 summit of Mont Blanc to celebrate the start of the EU Presidency in France. She also has a keen interest in antiques.

Davis is married to Julian Davis and has four children: Jonathan, Rebecca, Emma and Patrick.