Athlete Leadership
Leadership & Skills Curriculum Overview

**Athlete Leader**

**Certified Athlete Leader**

**Athlete Leadership**

**Leadership & Skills Curriculum Overview**

**Introduction to Athlete Leadership**

**Understanding Leadership**

**Core Modules**

**Understanding Emotions**

**Engaging with Others**

**Managing Time & Tasks**

**Leading Discussions**

**Unified Leadership**

**Advanced Leadership Modules**

**Personal and Professional Development**

**Special Olympics Roles**

**Core Modules**

**Athlete Representative**

**Sport Leader**

**Health Messenger**

**Event Coordinator**

**Global Messenger**

**Core Modules**

**Personal Skills**

**Professional Skills**

**Engaging the Community**

**Storytelling**
In **INTRODUCTION TO ATHLETE LEADERSHIP** athletes learn the three principles of athlete leadership, including Unified Leadership, and begin to explore what leadership roles they are interested in.

The **UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP** shares the definition of leadership, behaviors of great leaders, and introduces six basic leadership skills that are incorporated throughout other modules. These skills are communication, decision making, adaptability, relationship building, action focus, and continuous improvement.

In **UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS** athletes learn the importance of recognizing and managing emotions to build and maintain good relationships.

In **ENGAGING WITH OTHERS** athletes learn how to interact with individuals and teams more effective.

**MANAGING TIME AND TASKS** explores the importance of effective time management through establishing goals, prioritizing, and organized planning.

**LEADING DISCUSSIONS** focuses on collecting input from peers and engaging in and leading conversations as well as listening to feedback and comments and summarizing them into themes and common ideas.

**UNIFIED LEADERSHIP** provides an overview of Special Olympics unique approach to developing leaders. This module prepares athletes to be advocates and learn how to be a Unified Leader inside and outside Special Olympics.

The **SPECIAL OLYMPICS ROLES** modules are designed to provide athletes with an overview of what to expect from each of the leadership roles and learn knowledge and skills associated with that role.

The modules in the **PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** focus on life skills needed to succeed in any leadership role in Special Olympics, the community or the workplace.
Leadership & Skills Curriculum

Introduction

The Leadership and Skills Curriculum includes two core modules, a series of additional leadership modules, modules designed to prepare athletes for leadership roles within Special Olympics, and modules for athletes who would like to continue to develop personal and professional skills.

Core Modules

The Core Modules of the curriculum are designed to provide Athletes with the basic knowledge about Leadership and what Athlete Leadership looks like in Special Olympics and their local program. In Introduction to Athlete Leadership athletes learn about athlete leadership and begin to explore how they see themselves involved in athlete leadership.

The Understanding Leadership module builds on that by exploring Athlete Leadership principles and the Unified Leadership approach. In this module athletes will learn about the six basic leadership skills that are incorporated throughout other modules. These skills are communication, decision making, adaptability, relationship building, action focus, and continuous improvement.

At minimum we recommend that athletes complete these first two courses to gain a firm understanding of leadership and a framework to think of themselves as a leader who has the ability to influence others in Special Olympics and the broader community.
Advanced Leadership Modules

The Advanced Leadership Skills section includes five modules that build on the basic skills covered in the Understanding Leadership module. After completing both the core modules and advanced leadership modules, Athletes are recognized as a Certified Athlete Leader.

In Understanding Emotions, athletes learn the importance of recognizing and managing emotions to build and maintain good relationships. The lessons in this module will improve their skill at recognizing and managing their own emotions as well as teach them how to recognize and react appropriately to the emotions of others.

In Engaging with Others athletes learn how to make interactions with individuals and teams more effective. Managing Time and Tasks explores the importance of effective time management through establishing goals, prioritizing, being purposeful in planning your schedules and being held accountable in reaching your goals.

Leading discussions focuses on collecting input from peers, and engaging in and leading conversations, listening to feedback and comments offered in a group discussion and summarizing those into themes and common ideas.

Unified Leadership provides an overview to Special Olympics unique approach to developing leaders. This module prepares athletes to be advocates and learn how to be a Unified Leader inside and outside Special Olympics.
Activation in Special Olympics Roles

The Special Olympics Roles modules are designed to provide athletes with an overview of what to expect from each of the leadership roles and learn knowledge and skills associated with that role. These roles include: Event Coordinator, Sport Personnel, Global Messenger, Health Messenger, and Athlete Representative. After completing the Special Olympics Roles module, athletes can receive additional training and development as needed in order for them to prepare for the role. We believe that these modules are the start of a journey ensuring athletes are successful in Special Olympics leadership roles.

Enhancing Personal and Professional Development

The modules in the Enhancing Personal and Professional Development section will largely consist of content developed by Programs or partners. This provides Programs with the flexibility to take advantage of the unique opportunities within their local community while also providing training that is consistent across the organization. We believe that the Leadership and Skills Curriculum will begin to empower athletes not only to pursue meaningful leadership opportunities such as Athlete Representative but to also create new leadership opportunities for themselves with the Special Olympics Movement and community.