

Call to Action: How You Can Help as Individuals or Corporations

Special Olympics is honored to be an important part of making the world a more inclusive and unified place for all and giving more people with intellectual disabilities a chance to live up to their potential.

There are many ways for you to get involved and support Special Olympics, if you have suggestions or questions, please feel free to reach us at:

soea@specialolympics.org

2023
EAST ASIA
Annual Report

OUR MISSION

Special Olympics provides 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.

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MESSAGE FROM AN ATHLETE LEADER



I am Wenli Chen, an athlete from Special Olympics Chinese Taipei. Due to my battle with scoliosis, my height is only 150 cm, but this has not stopped me from loving and excelling in various sports, as well as from bravely exploring different possibilities. I work as a manager at a car wash shop, where I interact with customers every day. I enjoy jobs that involve socializing with people, as it allows me to share my incredible journey with Special Olympics over the years. Telling my stories makes me feel honored and purposeful, and I hope that my story can inspire others and encourage more people to join the Special Olympics movement.

I believe I was the first student at my school to discover the competition information on the Special Olympics website, and I proactively approached my teachers to form a team for the competition. Facing teams from different schools, I was both excited and nervous, but I encouraged my teammates to be brave, strive for victory, unleash our full potential on the field, and demonstrate our unity and determination.

Special Olympics has become deeply integrated into my life. It has made my life more fulfilling and exciting. In addition to participating in local basketball and floorball competitions, I also represented Special Olympics Chinese Taipei in regional events in East Asia, where I met teams from different countries and territories. While improving my sports skills, what brings me even more joy is the opportunity to make new friends with Unified partners who share the same passion.

Even more fortunately, in 2023, I had the privilege to represent SO Chinese Taipei as a leader at the Special Olympics Global Youth Leadership Summit in Berlin, Germany. Alongside youth leaders from around the world, I participated in workshops, exchanged ideas, and launched inclusion initiatives. There, I felt deeply that I was part of the larger Special Olympics family. I also made my pledge to continue promoting Special Olympics to raise awareness among those who were unaware of its significance, helping people understand that individuals with intellectual disabilities could contribute as much as anyone else.

Currently, besides helping to promote Special Olympics Chinese Taipei activities, I am also collaborating with my fellow athlete leaders from SO East Asia to drive Youth and Athletes Leadership initiatives and spread messages of inclusion.

Being involved in the Special Olympics movement, I have come to understand that everyone possesses unique strengths and abilities. Given the opportunity, we have the potential to achieve remarkable things. I am grateful for the platform provided by Special Olympics, which allows us to be the protagonists of our own lives and share our stories with many friends like us. I sincerely invite you to join us and experience these inspiring moments together.

Sincerely,
Wenli Chen

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Special Olympics East Asia (SOEA) I am pleased to share with you our efforts and achievements for the past year. In 2023, we saw determination and diligence in returning our Movement back to normalcy after the long pandemic. We were able to slowly return our events back to off-line activities while continuing to utilize virtual engagements where appropriate. Our mission to engage people with and without intellectual disabilities (ID) into our Movement to promote inclusion and equality remains our unwavering focus.

Our largest event for the year was the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Berlin, Germany in June. About 6000 athletes and Unified Partners representing 178 delegations participated and competed in 25 different sports categories. Over 420 athletes and Unified partners represented our 6 SOEA programs and showed their best showmanship at the Berlin Games, receiving over 400 medals in total. Most importantly, our delegations enjoyed the joy of sports and the honor of participating in this largest showcase sports competition in the world for people with ID.

During the World Summer Games in Berlin, a very high-level and important SOI initiative was launched, which is the Global Leadership Coalition for Inclusion. This Coalition will strengthen education and social welfare systems, as well as improve best practices amongst countries that are deepening their commitment to social inclusion. From the SOEA Region, we are grateful to the governments of China and Mongolia, for being two of the first countries to commit to building more inclusivity in their respective countries.

Regional Sports activities also slowly returned to on-ground format and our first-ever all-female football league was held to promote female team sports, a mandate from SOI. Coach training sessions were held both virtually and in-person to encourage and train up more coaches, which is the primary way for us to recruit more athletes. After the pandemic, our most important task is to bring back our athlete and participant count to at least where we were before the pandemic. Unified sports, Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) and a variety of regional and local competition training and games were all organized and held by our Sports team to benefit our athletes and their Unified partners.

Whenever we can, we always incorporate youth and athlete leadership activities into our events, especially during our World Games. More than 100 Youth leaders, with and without ID, congregated at the 2023 Special Olympics Global Youth Leadership Summit in Berlin to learn, lead and lift each other to drive more inclusive behaviors and practices. Leadership and capacity building for our athlete and youth leaders through training and summits, encouraging our youth to various creative ways including applying



Freda M. Fung
Regional President
& Managing Director
Special Olympics East Asia

2021-2024 GLOBAL STRATEGIC PLAN

for Innovation Grants, telling our athlete stories as well as training and encouraging Unified School leadership to share their experiences with each other through our Leadership Forums, are all important achievements by our SOEA Organizational Development Team.

Maximizing awareness and building brand presence is core to the efforts orchestrated by our Marketing, Communications and Development team to promote Special Olympics in and beyond our Region. We cultivate relationships with a wide variety of partners, ambassadors, donors and supporters while promoting our brand via social media, both domestically and internationally.

Our Healthy Athletes screenings have returned to being held off-line and more clinical directors and volunteers have been trained up in 2023 to provide pro-bono medical service to ensure our athletes receive opportunities to understand and maintain their physical and mental health better. Many local-funded screening events have been successfully organized and executed by our Health team.

In addition, many strides have been achieved in our partnership with United Nations and its agencies in the Region as well as across Asia. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between SOEA and UNICEF China to signify a mutual commitment to disability inclusion and the rights of all children and youth. This partnership was immediately operationalized through UNICEF China's support for the SOEA Youth Innovation Project and the release of animated videos to raise awareness about the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). We look forward to more closer collaboration in the future.

All in all, we've had a busy year and we are most grateful for the generous support that you, our supporters, donors and partners, have given to us. We would not be able to achieve our goals and targets for our Movement in our Region without your contributions. On behalf of our SOEA team, our athletes and families, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your great support to us throughout the year.

Thank you and we are looking forward to an even more exciting 2024 and working with you to continue making this world one of more acceptance and inclusion.

With thanks and blessings,

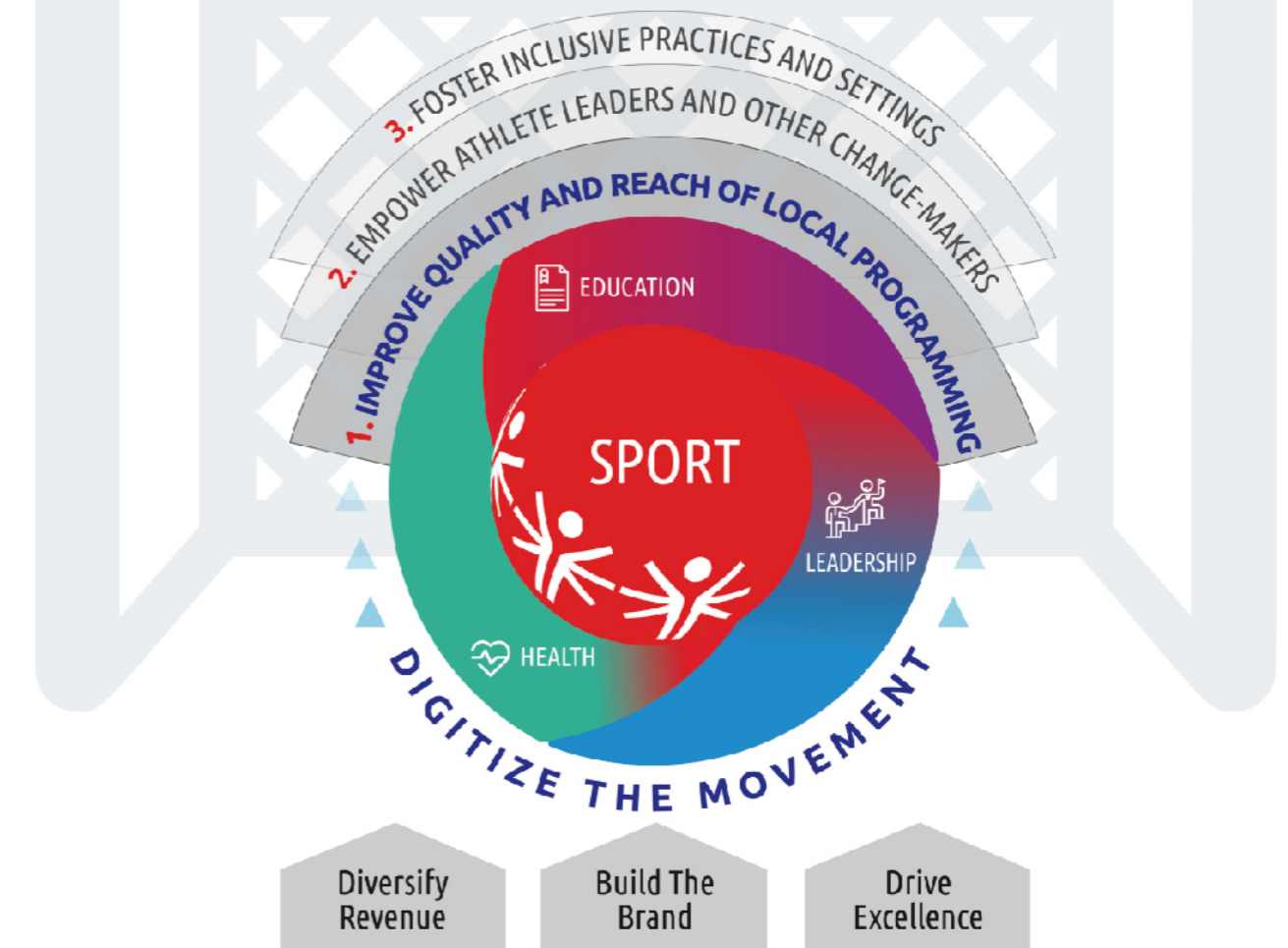
OUR **VISION** IS AN INCLUSIVE WORLD FOR ALL, DRIVEN BY THE POWER OF SPORT, THROUGH WHICH PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES LIVE AN ACTIVE HEALTHY AND FULFILLING LIFE.

GOAL A

INCREASE LOCAL SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND WELL-BEING TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

GOAL B

REMOVE BARRIERS TO INCLUSION AND EXPAND REACH THROUGH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY



2019-2023 SO EAST ASIA CENSUS DATA

Data Captured April 6th, 2024



GLOBAL TARGETS REACH

STRATEGIC METRICS - ROAD TO 2030



	2019	2021	2022	2023
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	1,781,183	1,742,643	1,725,910	1,749,480
ACTIVE PROGRAMS	6	6	6	6
CERTIFIED COACHES	85,916	65,749	66,500	69,047



	2019	2021	2022	2023
UNIFIED (CHAMPION) SCHOOLS	402	554	664	838
ATHLETES IN MEANFUL ROLES	26,342	28,247	28,358	28,653
UNIFIED LEADERSHIP	0	0	295	405



	2019	2021	2022	2023
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS	24,091	31,742	37,175	42,841
HEALTHCARE WORKERS TRAINED*	0	0	664	1,104

SO EAST ASIA FOOTPRINT

SPECIAL OLYMPICS DEMOGRAPHICS

	2019	2021	2022	2023
TOTAL PROGRAMS (National, States, Countries, Jurisdictions)	6	6	6	6



	2019	2021	2022	2023
ACTIVE PROGRAMS	6	6	6	6

	2019	2021	2022	2023
LOCAL CLUBS/ PROGRAMS	115	42	364	587
LOCAL CLUBS/ PROGRAMS CONDUCTING UNIFIED SPORTS (excluding Unified Schools)	72	28	342	388

SPORTS & COMPETITION

ATHLETES, PARTNERS, COMPETITIONS, COACHES



ATHLETES, COMPETITIONS, COACHES

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Individual	1,434,390	1,396,626	1,407,937	1,430,986
MATP	3,450	3,381	3,376	3,452
Young Athletes	15,467	17,929	19,480	21,622
Total who Trained AND Competed, Athletes	794,350	783,154	785,786	793,738
Total Traditional Competitions By Sport, Other	0	0	0	7,537
Total Athletes Trained BUT did NOT Compete	640,040	613,472	622,151	637,248
Total Competitions (traditional and Unified)	7,596	7,610	7,690	7,781



BY GENDER

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Individual Total Male	812,476	774,571	1,172,260	1,188,946
Individual Total Female	621,914	622,055	836,016	846,369
Individual Total Other Gender	0	0	0	0

CERTIFIED COACH RATIOS

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Total Coaches (Certified and Uncertified), Coaches	87,027	87,613	88,501	92,049
Number of Certified Coaches, Coaches	85,916	65,749	66,500	69,047
Certified Coach Ratio	1:17	1:21	1:21	1:21



BY AGE

	2019	2021	2022	2023
2-5 Year Olds	0	17,929	19,384	21,527
6-7 Year Olds	14,405	7,804	12,464	12,593
8-15 Year Olds	810,497	374,890	378,340	389,405
16-21 Year Olds	831,017	390,869	382,679	388,709
22+ Year Olds	1,291,509	605,134	613,568	617,229

SPORT PARTNERSHIPS*

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Sport Partnerships	56	40	26	55

UNIFIED ATHLETES, PARTNERS, COMPETITIONS, COACHES

UNIFIED SPORTS RECREATION MODEL

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Unified Sports Recreation Model, Athletes	143,649	147,551	148,727	150,780
Unified Sports Recreation Model, Partners	157,885	158,846	158,846	159,322

UNIFIED PLAYER DEVELOPMENT MODEL

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Unified Player Development Model, Athletes	70,804	72,113	72,871	73,872
Unified Player Development Model, Partners	112,630	112,464	92,550	92,563

UNIFIED COACHES

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Total Unified Coaches, Coaches	54,680	55,430	56,115	57,299

UNIFIED ATHLETES AND PARTNERS

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Unified Totals Athletes and Partners, Athletes	272,324	273,945	282,366	285,799
Unified Totals Athletes and Partners, Partners	346,793	346,017	317,973	318,494

UNIFIED COMPETITIVE MODEL

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Unified Competitive Model, Athletes	61,000	61,034	63,162	64,065
Unified Competitive Model, Partners	77,590	77,162	74,432	74,484

YOUTH UNIFIED ATHLETES AND PARTNERS

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Youth Unified Athletes and Partners, Athletes	127,836	129,804	131,111	133,270
Youth Unified Athletes and Partners, Partners	89,338	88,503	88,576	88,651

UNIFIED COMPETITIONS

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Number of Unified Competitions	337	262	269	274
Total Unified Competitions By Sport, Other	0	0	0	274

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ATHLETE LEADERSHIP				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Athletes Serving in a Meaningful Leadership Role	19,334	20,364	20,395	20,549
Number of Youth Leaders (aged 8-25)	7,008	7,883	7,963	8,104
Athletes Trained in Leadership or Skill Development	0	0	3,256	3,707

PAID & UNPAID STAFF				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Full-Time Paid Program Director/CEO?	5	5	5	4
Total Number of Paid Staff (full and part-time)	58	59	62	67
Number of Paid Staff with Intellectual Disabilities	4	5	6	6
Number of Unpaid Staff with Intellectual Disabilities	2	0	0	4

SCHOOLS				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Total Number of Schools Engaged in Special Olympics	3,295	2,039	2,023	2,209
Number of Unified Schools	357	520	623	799
Number of Unified Champion Schools	45	34	41	39

FAMILIES				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Total Registered Family Members	161,858	178,069	177,876	179,654
Number of Family Leaders	7,793	8,330	8,407	8,719



ORGANIZATIONS EDUCATED UNIFIED LEADERSHIP				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Organizations Educated in Unified Leadership	0	0	295	405



VOLUNTEERS				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Total number of Volunteers	69,455	57,748	57,730	58,243
Number of Youth Volunteers (aged 8-25)	42,064	39,588	39,470	39,840



SOCIAL MEDIA				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Total Social Media Followers	24,091	31,742	37,175	42,841
Facebook	17,461	21,015	24,583	28,197
X (Formerly Twitter)	1,310	0	0	0
Instagram	4,264	7,789	8,813	10,633
Other	1,056	2,938	3,779	4,011

FITNESS				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Athletes that participate in any Fitness Activity	0	12,452	13,216	17,258
Athletes that participate in a Structured Fitness Activity of 6 weeks or longer	0	3,628	3,644	4,077
Individuals w/o ID (Unified Partners, Coaches, Family members, etc.) that Participate in any Fitness Activity	0	1,194	1,357	1,768
Individuals w/o ID (Unified Partners, Coaches, Family members, etc.) that Participate in a Structured Fitness Activity of 6 weeks or longer	0	278	380	375



HEALTH COMMUNITIES & TRAINED WORKERS				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
Healthy Communities	0	0	4	4
Healthcare Workers Trained	0	0	664	1,104



IMPROVE SPORT QUALITY

SPORTS COMPETITIONS

2023 Special Olympics East Asia Unified Schools Football League April 2023



The Special Olympics 2023 East Asia Unified Schools Football League was held in Fengxian District, Shanghai from April 17 to 21, 2023 and attracted 8 domestic teams with 88 participants. It was the first time that SOEA held a Unified female football competition to encourage more female athletes to join team sports. During the competition, the LOC also prepared cultural experiences featuring Chinese

Jiangnan rural characteristics for the athletes, including intangible cultural heritage handmade tie-dye, Zhelin rolling lamp, and Jiangnan sculling boats. These arrangements aimed to provide more opportunities for communication and create a harmonious coexistence environment for Special Olympics athletes and Unified Partners, fostering meaningful connections and helped Special Olympics athletes better integrate into life.



2023 Special Olympics Chengdu 3v3 Basketball Competition

May 2023



2023 Special Olympics Chengdu 3v3 Basketball Competition was held in Qingyang District, Chengdu from May 10 to 11, 2023, with a total of 12 teams and 94 participants. The competition divided the 12 teams into 3 groups based on the results of the divisioning. The participating teams included both from Unified Schools, and from the communities, which increased the diversity of the competition. This event not only provided a stage for Special Olympics athletes to show their talent in basketball, but also encouraged more new Special Olympics families to actively participate in sports.



2023 Shanghai Badminton Competition

September 2023

2023 Shanghai Special Olympics Badminton Competition was successfully held at the Jing'an V Jump Badminton Hall on September 24 and 25. Hosted by Special Olympics, the badminton competition was supported by Pudong Enpai Public Welfare Foundation's "Qingya Sports Rehabilitation" Special Fund and co-organized by Shanghai Lucky to Have You Public Service Center and Shanghai Youth Development Promotion Center. The event also received support from Walt Disney (China) Co., Ltd. as charity partner.



The badminton competition was open to city-wide athletes who received year-round Special Olympics-style sports training. Through recruitment channels such as the Enpai Qingya Sports Public Welfare Foundation, trainees, parents' organizations, and special education schools, a total of 160 athletes attended. The competition was divided into four sessions, with 40 athletes participating in each session. The aim was to ensure fairness and justice in the competition and to explore the athletes' individual potential.

COACH WORKSHOP & TRAINING

2023 Special Olympics China MATP Coach Workshop

May 2023



2023 Special Olympics China MATP Coach Workshop was held in Chengdu from May 8—11, 2023, co-organized by Fujian Normal University and Chengdu Qingyang District Special Education School. The participants included the local MATP coach team from Qingyang District Special Education School and more than 30 special education teachers from across China. The purpose of this workshop was to raise the awareness of Special Olympics, promote MATP

development, and enhance the professional knowledge of Special Olympics coaches. The workshop was delivered by experienced lecturers from MATP technical advisory group of Fujian Normal University.



2023 Special Olympics East Asia Virtual Cheer Coach Workshop

November 2023

The Special Olympics East Asia Virtual Cheer Coach Workshop was successfully held on November 14-15, 2023. The two-day course attracted nearly 120 cheerleading coaches from various Programs in Special Olympics East Asia. The workshop featured professional lecturers, including Darian Packard, the Global Advisor for Cheer and Co-Chair of the Cheer of SO Resources Team, and Lee Trudell, an expert from the International Cheer Union (ICU). Over two days of virtual training with ICU, the coaches gained extensive cheerleading expertise and learned how to teach Special Olympics Cheer athletes. The virtual workshop also included a presentation by a coach from



Chinese Taipei, the principal of Miaoli Special School, who shared their experiences at ICU's World Cheerleading Championships.

Unified Schools Football Training Program-Guangzhou

Year round

With the great support of City Football Group, Guangzhou Unified Schools had conducted an all-year-round football training program, including coach education, routine players training, and group training. A Unified football festival was scheduled for the end of the year. Through this project, the young leader team from Guangzhou Sport University visited the Unified schools 36 times, conducted 6 online training sessions, and guided 2 offline football exchange games, benefiting more than 2,000 Special Olympics athletes and Unified partners.



2023 Unified Schools

Year round



Thirteen Unified Schools events were successfully held with the guidance of 2 technical teams. The Unified Schools programming was designed to facilitate Special Olympics Unified Sports, provided classroom and community experiences that reduced bullying and exclusion, promoted healthy activities, combat stereotypes and negative attitudes, eliminate hurtful language in schools, and engage young people in activities that lead to improved behavior and a better school climate.

In 2023, the Unified Schools events were mainly held in Shanxi Province, featuring football, basketball, track and field, fun games, etc. The activities benefited approximately 2,500 Special Olympic athletes, Unified Partners, parents and volunteers.



LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY BUILDING

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Regional Youth Leadership Summit

September 2023

The "Moving Together" Virtual Youth Leadership Summit, a collaborative initiative between Special Olympics East Asia and UNDP Asia-Pacific, served as a dynamic platform for over 200 youth leaders with and without intellectual disabilities, to foster change in line with the UN SDGs and the CRPD.

The Summit featured engaging sessions, including "Intro to the SDGs", "Innovative Mindsets", "Inclusive Youth Leadership", "Unified Leadership", and "Youth Strategies and Declarations for an Inclusive Future", facilitated by guest speakers from Special Olympics, UNDP Asia-Pacific, and the UN Youth Office, alongside young leaders with ID who have benefited from SOEA's and UNDP AP's youth programs. The collaborative event underscored the critical values of inclusion, understanding, and acceptance, drawing participants from a wide geographical scope to engage deeply with the principles of global sustainability and rights for individuals with disabilities. At the same time, it strengthened the network of changemakers and equipped them with the knowledge and skills to drive initiatives in their communities, demonstrating the impactful collaboration between Special Olympics East Asia and UNDP Asia-Pacific in nurturing a generation committed to building a more inclusive world.



Innovation Grants and Regional Youth Engagement Committee

Year round

In 2023, twelve Youth Innovation Grants were awarded to Youth Leaders, with and without intellectual disabilities, from Special Olympics East Asia Programs. Half of these projects were inspired by the Berlin Special Olympics Global Youth Leadership Summit held in June. Over the course of nine months, youths are leading these projects, focusing on creating inclusive campuses, communities, and networks. Their goal is to engage more children, adolescents, and youth in the Special Olympics community, enhancing the movement's visibility and growth among these groups.



Out of these awardees, six Unified projects were identified and launched in mainland China through the collaboration and selection process of Special Olympics East Asia and UNICEF China. These projects, which address inclusivity in various fields such as education, employment, sports, health, environment, and advocacy, showcase the efforts that young people have dedicated to social change.

The SOEA Regional Youth Engagement Committee (YEC) members from the 2020–2023 and 2024–2026 classes have contributed to this project as well. In 2023, the YEC initiated three activations: Capture the Moments, Share Your Summer Life, and Footprints for Inclusion, furthering their mission of promoting inclusion as young leaders.



ATHLETE LEADERSHIP

Regional Athlete Leadership

Training and Regional Athlete Leadership Council

August 2023



The 2023 Special Olympics East Asia Athlete Leadership Training, hosted in Taicang, China, aimed to empower SOEA athlete leaders and adult mentors to lead effectively and drive positive changes in society. This training brought together more than 100 participants from all SOEA Programs and prioritized the development of leadership, emotional management, and self-advocacy skills for athletes with ID. Additionally, the event facilitated exploration into how youth leaders without ID, mentors, and a broader audience can support. Unified Leadership (UL) was underscored through the collaborative teamwork demonstrated by the members of the Regional Youth Engagement Committee on the site, and further emphasized by a series of virtual UL educational sessions provided after the event. All these efforts impacted 405 external organizations across the Region.

With the support of organizations such as UNICEF China, Inclusion Factory, and WEable, the training placed a strong emphasis on actionable skill-building to achieve community impact by cultivating a leadership network centered on the theme of "Team Up Lead Up".

The training also provided a crucial opportunity for 2021–2023 and 2024–2026 Regional Athlete Leadership Council members to meet, ensuring a smooth transition and preparing the new class for their roles. This approach underlines the commitment to sustainable leadership development and the advancement of inclusion.

Our Time to Shine

Year round

In 2023, Special Olympics East Asia featured eight stories authored by athletes on Weibo and WeChat, a column dedicated to their personal narratives inaugurated at the beginning of the pandemic back in 2020. This column has motivated athletes to share tales about their lives and the people around them, highlighting their journeys toward inclusion and demonstrating their abilities and perspectives to a broader audience. The stories emphasize how providing equitable support, opportunities, and platforms can help fulfill the potential of people with ID.

Moving forward, SOEA is committed to continuing its collaboration with professional facilitators and visual trainers to discover new ways in crafting content that empowers more athletes to share their stories with a wider audience.

特殊奥林匹克组织

特奥专栏故事—看我们的! 第26期



Regional Leadership Council

September 2023

After a three-year pause due to the pandemic, the Special Olympics East Asia Regional Leadership Council Meeting resumed in person and was successfully held in Hong Kong from September 5 to 6. Leaders from all six SOEA Programs, regional offices, and the SOI headquarters gathered for in-depth discussions on approaches and tactics to promote local programming, the Healthy Athletes program, and Marketing and Development. The main objective was to promote the effective implementation of the Special Olympics strategic plan within the region.



During the meeting, remarkable milestones and progress from the past year were revisited, fostering a spirit of learning and inspiration among the Programs. Additionally, a consensus was reached that the position of Council Chairperson would rotate every two years among the Programs, enabling each Program to contribute to the Council.

The meeting coincided with the regional bocce competition, where all RLC representatives attended to cheer for athletes and Unified partners. By joining the event, everyone experienced the joy of Unified Sports.

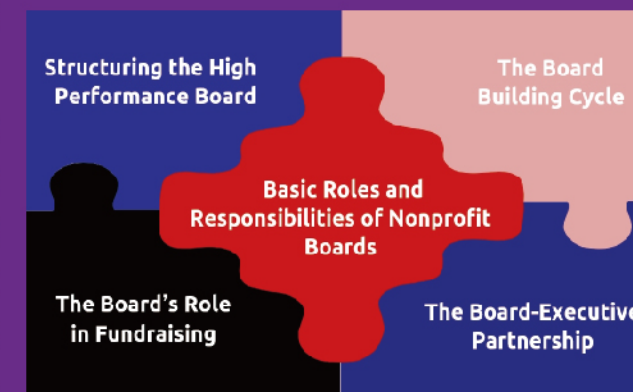
Another highlight was the movie 'TRIO', screened by Special Olympics Mongolia. The film deeply resonated with viewers as it depicted profound social implications and revealed the essential characteristics of humanity, emphasizing the importance and urgency of respect and inclusion in life.



SOEA Program Governance Training

May 2023

The Virtual SOEA Board Governance Training was held on May 9 and 16 in response to the imperative for Special Olympics to navigate the increasingly challenging changes at all levels. This training convened board members, executive leaders, and staff from all six SOEA Programs, covering topics aimed at achieving exceptional governance within our organization. The knowledge and skills provided during the training were designed to help



build a high-performing Board and to clarify the respective range of responsibilities necessary for effectively governing a non-profit board. Gaining new and enhanced insights about governance models, frameworks, systems, and tools enables our board members, as well as the board to work more effectively, sustainably, and with a greater sense of accomplishment.



UNIFIED SCHOOLS

SNF Play Unified Learn Unified Project

Year round

In 2023, we continued our partnership in phase II of the SNF Play Unified: Learn Unified project with Special Olympics China, Special Olympics Chinese Taipei, and Special Olympics Mongolia. This initiative has enabled the Programs to lead the way in fostering the movement for inclusion by expanding Unified Schools across their territories. By the end of the year, the project had extended its impact to 468 schools.



Co-hosted by Special Olympics Shaanxi, the virtual and in-person Unified Schools trainings were held in mainland China to enhance the capacities of coaches, teachers, youth with and without ID, as well as volunteers. This, in turn, strengthened the quality of Unified Schools programming locally.

Special Olympics Chinese Taipei and Mongolia continued to leverage large-scale events in schools and communities to engage people of all abilities in experiencing the joy of sports. This approach effectively garnered the attention and support of local government ministries, other non-profit organizations, communities, and media outlets, opening up more pathways for athletes to become better integrated into society.



Unified Schools Leadership Forum

November 2023



After three years of stagnation due to the pandemic, the Special Olympics East Asia Unified Schools Leadership Forum returned to being held in person in Xi'an, mainland China. Representatives from over 100 Unified Schools and staffs from all six East Asia Programs attended the forum.

In addition to the conventional practical sharing and Unified Sports experience sessions, the forum covered various new topics, including the Easy-to-read Simplified Chinese Guide, Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation, Comprehensive Sexuality Education for children and youth with disabilities, and research findings on inclusive education. These new developments, ideas, and concepts undoubtedly inspired and enlightened both new and existing Unified Schools, further acknowledging the transformative significance of Unified Schools and the driving force they provide for everyone.



FAMILY AND YOUNG ATHLETES

Advanced Family Leadership Training Resource

March—November 2023

As a continuation of the efforts from the previous year, SOEA developed four new modules for an advanced Family Leadership training resource in 2024 and kicked off the testing phase. The modules in the advanced course focus on different areas but all aim to enhance the competencies of Family Leaders. This process enables the internalization of the principles outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, assisting families in conveying the inclusive concepts of Special Olympics to a wider audience in the community using appropriate skills and methods.

A total of 60 Family Leaders, deliberately selected from the outstanding learners of Special Olympics China, Special Olympics Macau, and Special Olympics Chinese Taipei, participated in the training and actively engaged in the co-creation process of the new modules. As part of the practical exercise in the courses, the trained family leaders have also conducted outreach and training sessions for families and community members at the local level.



SO Educational Visual Resource

May—December 2023

Establishing a correct understanding of Special Olympics at the grassroots level is closely correlated with the development of local programming. Family members serve as one of the most important mediums for publicity, making it crucial to deliver an accurate message about the Special Olympics. In response to this need, SOEA has launched a series of educational videos that address misconceptions about Special Olympics. These videos are narrated by six Special Olympics athlete leaders to clarify the true nature of Special Olympics as a global movement.

Additionally, real-life cases and stories provide significant emotional resonance and guidance for families. Videos featuring practical case studies, which represent challenges and the corresponding measures taken for Family Engagement programming at different stages of development, are presented by four family leaders from the East Asia region. These educational videos are designed to be easily understood and utilized, applicable not only in family community settings, but also in various promotional occasions and initiatives.



Young Athletes Community Outreach and Localization

Year round



Building on the accumulation of the past five years, Special Olympics East Asia has successfully incubated local SO Program at the grassroots level through the Young Athletes Program. To evaluate past successes and lessons learned, and to create a more diverse network and collaborative partnership model in communities, schools, and families, the first SO Community Development Forum was hosted by Rongzhi, a local organization specializing in conducting Special Olympics activities, in Chengdu from March 30 to 31, with the support of SO East Asia. The forum, which focused

on Young Athletes and Health Program, brought together over 90 participants from special schools, universities, institutions, family organizations, and foundations to discuss the needs and opportunities for developing Special Olympics programming. One of the follow-up outcomes was the launch of a Young Athletes curriculum optimization project in August, aimed at providing more context-based guidance for implementing Young Athletes in mainland China.



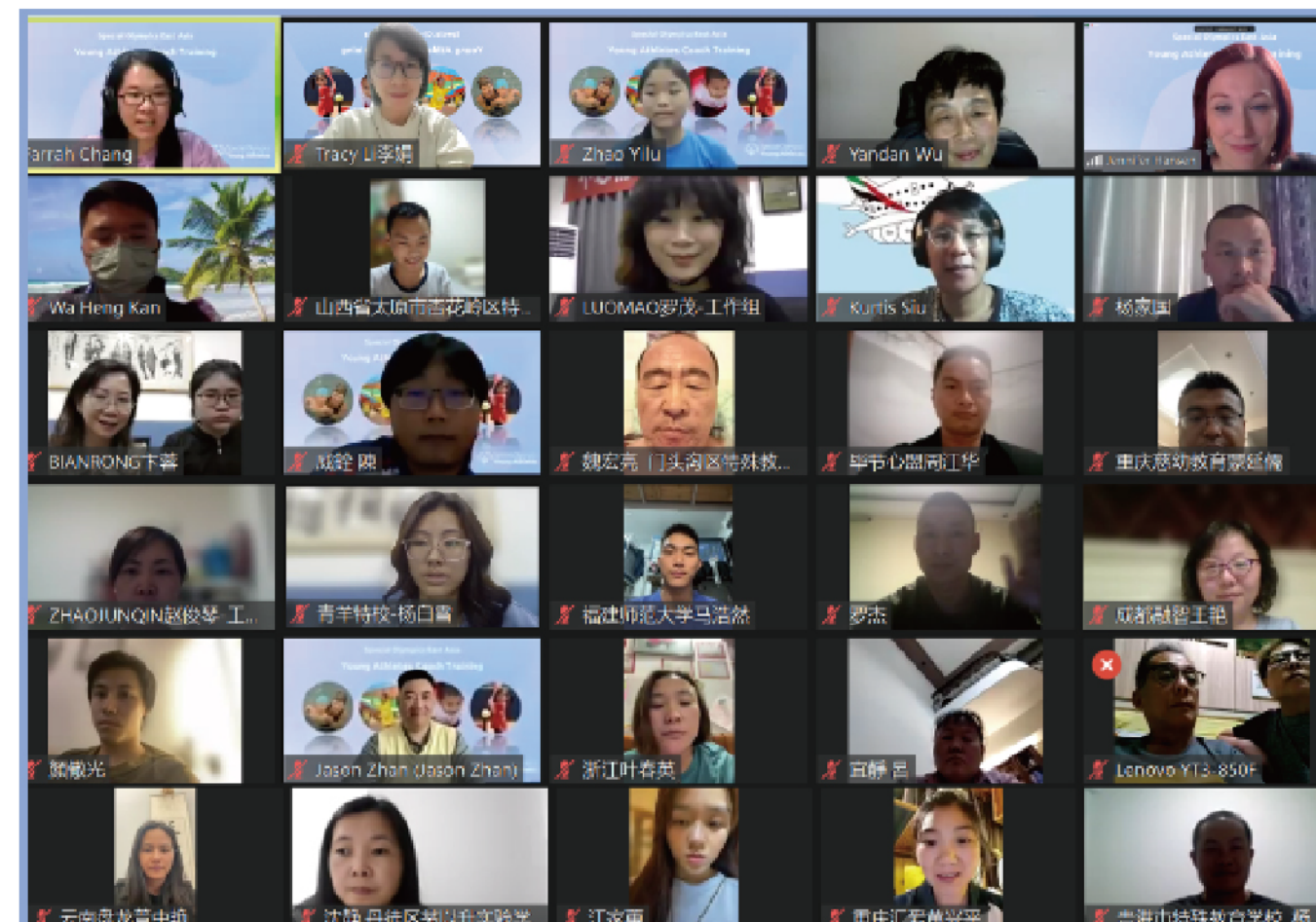
Regional Young Athletes Coach Training

May 2023

In alignment with the global strategic focus and to facilitate the growth of Young Athletes across the region, the Virtual Young Athletes Coaches Workshop was held from May 17 to 19. Over 210 participants from all six Programs of Special Olympics East Asia enrolled in the training. The workshop covered curriculum guidance resources for supporting the development of Young Athletes, from building basic skills to transitioning to sports, as well as case studies of implementing Young Athletes in various settings.



It not only helps everyone gain a more comprehensive understanding of Young Athletes, but also prompts each coach and teacher to re-examine the purpose and goals of teaching children with ID. Additionally, it maintains the motivation for teachers to create inclusive and empowering environments for special children through sports, leading them toward countless possibilities for success.



GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Engagement of China and Mongolia Governments in Special Olympics' Global Leadership Coalition for Inclusion

Year round

In June 2023, during the Berlin Special Olympics World Summer Games, China and Mongolia stood out as two of the first countries to pledge their commitment to the Global Leadership Coalition for Inclusion. This collective action underscores a shared dedication to enhancing the lives of individuals with ID through concerted efforts in education, sports, and community engagement.



China's commitment to the Global Leadership Coalition for Inclusion is evidenced by its ambitious targets for 2024 — 2026. The nation plans to establish 2,000 new Unified Schools, create 2,000 inclusive community centers, and engage 500,000 participants. This commitment was highlighted during the visit of Dr. Timothy Shriver, Chairman of Special Olympics International to China, where he met with Deputy Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu and the China Disabled Persons' Federation underscored China's resolve to advance the Special Olympics vision.

Mongolia's commitment mirrors this dedication to inclusion, aiming to establish 90 Unified Schools, involve about 2,700 youths in inclusive programs, and set up 30 Unified Sports clubs. This pledge was reinforced through productive meetings between Special Olympics Headquarters, the East Asia Regional Office, Special Olympics Mongolia, and Mongolian government officials, including the Prime Minister and other ministers, highlighting Mongolia's strong support for the Coalition's ambitions.



The proactive steps taken by China and Mongolia not only exemplify leadership in building inclusive societies for individuals with ID, but also serve as a beacon for other countries within and outside the Special Olympics East Asia region to join this transformative commitment.

Rehabilitation International Outstanding Achievement Award

May 2023

On May 24, Dr. Timothy Shriver, Chairman of Special Olympics International, was present with the China Disabled Persons' Federation, Special Olympics East Asia, Special Olympics China, and other partners in Beijing to receive the Rehabilitation International Centennial Outstanding Achievement Award. This award recognized Special Olympics' work promoting inclusion for people with ID around the world. Only two organizations in the world received this honor in 2023, which included a \$200,000 grant to support efforts to enable people with disabilities to lead fulfilling and productive life.



During the visit, Dr. Shriver met with China's Deputy Foreign Minister, Ma Zhaoxu, who represented the Chinese government's commitment to expanding Unified Sports and education programs, as well as engaging young people through enhanced partnerships with Special Olympics. This commitment marked a significant step forward in the global movement to advance inclusion and the rights of individuals with ID.



Partnerships and Engagements with Regional and International Organizations UN Partnerships

Year Round

In 2023, SOEA significantly enhanced its collaborations with the United Nations, culminating in more formal and enriched partnerships. Through joint efforts and mutual participation in events, SOEA and the UN have ensured reciprocal contributions and benefits, solidifying a partnership aimed at promoting inclusion and realizing the rights of individuals with disabilities.



UNICEF



In September 2023, SOEA and UNICEF China marked a significant advancement in their collaboration by launching a partnership at the UNICEF China office. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on September 11 signifying a mutual commitment to disability inclusion and the rights of all children and youth. This partnership was immediately operationalized through UNICEF China's support for the SOEA Youth Innovation Project and the release of animated

videos to raise awareness about the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The collaboration was further celebrated during the World Children's Day event in Beijing, which brought together a diverse group of children, including those with ID. This ongoing partnership exemplifies a deepening commitment to children's and disability rights, with both organizations continuously engaging to develop future initiatives aimed at fostering a more inclusive society.

UNDP



SOEA maintains a strong relationship with UNDP, coordinating its representation at the Berlin Special Olympics World Summer Games. This included delivering the Disability Inclusion Strategy and conducting a workshop to gather athlete input for the Special Olympics International Board of Directors. The "Moving Together" 2023 SOEA Virtual Youth Leadership Summit, co-hosted with UNDP Asia Pacific, aimed to empower youth leaders with and without ID to become community change agents, which is well-aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the CRPD.

Other UN Engagement

SOEA sustains its interactions with other UN entities, including the UN Youth Office, UNFPA, UNESCO, and UNRCO in China - through meetings, social media engagements, and information exchanges - underscoring a commitment to broadening its impact and advocating for a disability-inclusive society. Special Olympics' publication of a brief titled "Expanding Inclusion Through Purpose-Driven Partnership" shares the best practices and insights gained from these experiences.



Resource Development

SDGs Education and Resources

Leveraging the valuable insights and successes from 2021 and 2022, SOEA has continued its collaborative efforts with UNDP China to enhance the Movers educational modules, making them more accessible and relevant to individuals with disabilities. This ongoing partnership has resulted in the development of two new modules focused on Gender Equality and Wellness, specifically tailored to be disability-friendly and relatable.



Animated CRPD Videos

This animated short series, created by the Special Olympics East Asia and the YouRen Foundation, explores the daily lives and challenges faced by people with disabilities. It provides clear and engaging information suitable for individuals with ID as well as people of all ages and abilities. The series aims to deepen the public understanding of the disability community and the Convention, highlighting that the Convention is relevant not only to those with disabilities but also serves as a public education resource on disability.



Easy-read Simplified Chinese Guide

Collaborating with the Shenzhen Information Accessibility Research Association, the "Chinese Simplified Easy-to-Read Version Reference Guide" was launched to establish a unified standard in the Chinese context. This guide simplifies language use by presenting shorter sentences and clearer visuals for easier comprehension. It is applicable in the medical, legal, and financial fields, helping to prevent misunderstandings, reduce the risk of errors, and ensure that important information is more accessible to everyone. Recognized for its impactful contribution at the 2023 Information Accessibility Outstanding Case Selection, this guide lays the foundation for widespread practice and promotion, aiming to enhance the accessibility of information through technology and assist various organizations in providing more understandable content.



IMPROVE ATHLETE HEALTH

Inclusive Health 2023

Ongoing Prevention and Fitness

3,111 family members and caregivers received health education.

1,364 athletes participated in the constrictive fitness program at community level.

Early Detection & Care Coordination

5,484 Healthy Athletes Screenings were offered,

with **78%** of urgent referrals addressed and **90%** of non-urgent referrals received follow-up care.

1,576 new Young Athletes were recruited,

and **174** Young Athletes participated in the Health & Wellness programs.

Training the Health Workforce

336 medical students and professionals received training in and out of Healthy Athletes events.

Transforming Health Systems

1 Healthy Community Global Leadership Award (SO Chinese Taipei)

RAISE AWARENESS

Unified Run at Haichang Ocean Park in Shanghai

April 2023



To raise public awareness for Autism Day on April 2, a Unified Run including over 300 participants was organized at Haichang Ocean Park in Shanghai. 30 Special Olympics athletes, including 5 athletes who would compete at the Special Olympics World Summer Games Berlin 2023, were invited to

join the run. Ms. Freda Fung, SOEA Regional President, spoke at the opening ceremony and introduced the athletes and Ms. Yang Yang, our Special Olympics Global Ambassador, to the audience. Ms. Gong Jinjie, Chinese Olympics Female Cyclist Gold Medalist, also attended and was deeply impressed by the Special Olympics' spirit she observed from our athletes. Their presence was a great encouragement to everyone at the event. Everyone had a great time, and the event received a wide media coverage.



Love Football and Treasure Water in Shanghai

April 2023

The WaterMark project, initiated by City Football Group's global charity foundation program, Citizens Giving, and the leading global water technology company Xylem, celebrated a football festival to kick off the second year of the project, "Love Football and Treasure Water", in Shanghai. Up to 150 people participated in the event, including 20 staff members from CFG China and 15 volunteers from Xylem's local company. Participants played alongside 50 SO athletes and Unified partners from Shanghai Pudong Special School and its Unified Partner School, Foreign Service School. As part of the Champion Trophy Tour in China, Manchester City brought the trophies they won in the last Premier League and their legendary football player Paul Dickov, who was popular among the participants. The athletes also created artworks featuring themes of football and water to express their passion for sports and their commitment to environment protection.



The project aims to use football to provide vital water education to 5,000 young people in five cities around the world, including Shanghai, Mumbai, Sao Paulo, New York and Cape Town. It will provide essential education on water, sanitation, and hygiene through specially adapted football games.

Berlin 2023 World Games

June 2023



Athletes from all around world came together to proudly represent their countries and jurisdictions on the global stage, inspiring a worldwide audience with their courage, perseverance, and the spirit of the Special Olympics. More than 7,000 Special Olympics athletes from approximately 190 Programs competed in 26 sport disciplines.

At the opening ceremony, Dr. Timothy Shriver, Chairman of Special Olympics International, delivered an inspirational speech, highlighting the Game's great potential to

change the world. Chinese tennis star Li Na raised the flag of the World Games to bring it to a climax, conveying the unity and strength of the athletes. Well-known TV host and social entrepreneur Yang Lan also attended to offer encouragement and blessings to the athletes.

New Global Ambassador joined the Movement—Zhou Guanyu

July 2023

F1 racing driver Zhou Guanyu has pledged his support for creating more sporting opportunities for the people with ID by becoming a Global Ambassador for Special Olympics. Born in Shanghai, China, 24-year-old Zhou is the first driver from China to race in a Grand Prix, having made his debut for Alfa Romeo in 2022 after previously racing in F4, F3, and F2.



SOCT 2023 Special Olympics Unified Schools Leadership Forum

December 2023



Special Olympics International CEO, Mary Davis, along with Freda Fung, Regional President of SOEA, visited Special Olympics Chinese Taipei on December 1 to attend the 2023 Special Olympics Unified Schools Leadership Forum at Chiayi Minzu Primary School. There, they observed the progress of Unified Sports and Schools Programs in Chiayi City. Mary also delivered inspiring words of encouragement to the school principals and teachers, emphasizing the positive impact of Unified Sports on their students.

Prior to this, they enjoyed watching athletes and partners learning to play Unified bocce at Chiayi Minsheng Secondary School. The athletes had a great time experiencing Unified Bocce alongside their guests. Under the leadership of SOCT's Chairman, Lee Shi-jin, and his team, Special Olympics athletes and their Unified partners have ample opportunities to learn from each other, creating impactful connections.

While in Chiayi, Mary, Freda, and SOCT leadership also paid an official visit to Mayor Huang Minhui, who is also SOCT's Honorary Chairperson.



2023 Special Olympics Unity Fundraising Gala Dinner

December 2023

2023 Special Olympics Unity Fundraising Gala Dinner was successfully held at the Regent's Grand Ballroom in Kowloon, Hong Kong, on December 6. The Gala was hosted by Special Olympics East Asia (SOEA) and received strong support from Special Olympics Hong Kong (SOHK), Rockcheck Group, and Gaw Capital.



Notable attendees included Ms. Mary Davis, CEO of Special Olympics International; Dr. Shi Derong, Special Olympics Board Member and Chairman of SOEA Senior Advisory Council (SAC); Ms. Yang Lan, Special Olympics Board Member, Global Ambassador and Chairperson of Sun Culture Foundation; Ms.

Gu Shuhang, Special Olympics Board Member, SAC member and CEO of Creative Artists Agency China; Ms. Yan Lan, SAC Vice Chairperson; Mr. Robert Shi, SAC Secretary General; and Ms. Zhang Junting, SAC member and President of Rockcheck Group & Chair of Rockcheck Puji Foundation.



Also in attendance were Special Olympics Global Ambassadors Li Na, Yang Yang, Zou Shiming and spouse Ran Yingying; Ms. Christina Gaw, Managing Principal & Global Head of Capital Markets and Co-Chair of Alternative Investments at Gaw Capital Partners; Friend of Special Olympics Li Xiaopeng and his spouse Li Anqi; Zheng Haixia, member of the China Basketball Hall of Fame; and former Hong Kong outstanding athletes Wong Kam-po, Fong Lik-Sun, and Chu Kam-yin.

The Gala raised a total of 2,245,000 Hong Kong dollars, including proceeds from 20 precious auction items donated by philanthropists and corporate supporters. These funds will be allocated to important projects aligned with Special Olympics International's strategic plans to support the development of the Special Olympics movement in the East Asia region.

GENERATE MORE RESOURCES

Sponsor & Donors

Rockcheck Group

Rockcheck Group has been supporting Special Olympics East Asia in various key projects.

Sun Future Foundation

The Foundation donated to support SOEA's strategic development in marketing and communications.

ShiDa Foundation

The Foundation has been supporting SOEA since 2021.

City Football Group

Supporting Special Olympics Unified Schools Football Training projects in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, the group used football as a platform to do good to local communities.

Coca-Cola China

Coca-Cola is the presenting sponsor of SOEA Unity Gala Dinner, in addition to regular year-round support.

Disney

Being the global partner of Special Olympics, Disney also pays a great attention to the regional development of the cause by supporting SO Unified sports activities through donation and voluntary service.

Illumina

Illumina started to support Special Olympics Healthy Athletes program in 2023 and is likely to extend the partnership in the future.

Yeangder Group

The group donated to develop the SO Athlete Leadership and Youth Summit project to call for the participation of the young generation.

CMC China

CMC donated and continues to help Special Olympics to raise public awareness through various activities.

A Very Special Christmas (AVSC)

AVSC, the single most successful benefit album in musical history for the past decades, funds SOEA to hold an annual AVSC Party to appreciate supporters.

ESPN

As a global partner, ESPN leverages its resources to help with the development of Special Olympics Unified Sports in the East Asia region.

Lions Club

As a Special Olympics Champion Partner globally, Lions Clubs International has always been supporting the SO Opening Eyes program.

Also, we would like to express our deepest appreciation to following corporates, organizations and individual donors:

CBA

China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development

Shanghai Charity Foundation

NBA China

Shanghai Disney Resort

U.S. Consulate General Shanghai

Endeavor China

Ling Ding Auction

Gaw Capital

Regent Hong Kong

Dynamic Network Alliances

Wellnessmed

Catalo

Hafina

In alphabetical order

Betty Cao

Chen Weide

Hou Kun

Jiang Youmei

Li Anqi

Liao Mei

Li Na

Li Ning

Li Ping

Li Ruigang

Li Xiaopeng

Mary Gu

Mont Gu

Paul Mak

Ran Yingying

Robert Shi

Sharon Kwan

Shi Derong

Su Yiming

Tse Ling-Ling

Wu Jingyu

Yang Lan

Yang Yang

Yan Lan

Yao Ming

Yeung Man Ying

Zhang Jiantao

Zhang Junting

Zheng Haixia

Zhou Guanyu

Zhou Xun

Zou Shimin

LETTER FROM CHAIRMAN OF REGIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Dear athletes, families, partners, supporters and colleagues,

Thank you very much for taking time out of your busy schedule to read this annual report. On behalf of the Special Olympics East Asia Regional Leadership Council, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for all the understanding and support you have given to SOEA over the past year.

In 2023, we continued to empower individuals with intellectual disabilities through sports and various non-sports activities, promoting inclusion, unity, and respect throughout East Asia. Despite the challenges and uncertainties brought about by global instability, our dedicated team, volunteers, and athletes persevered and adapted to ensure that our programming and events continued to make a meaningful difference in the lives of many.

It is truly inspiring to witness the resilience, determination, and hope displayed by our athletes, who continue to break barriers and redefine what is possible. Their achievements, both on and off the playing field, serve as a powerful reminder of the potential and capability of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our partners, sponsors, families, supporters and staff members who have been instrumental in bringing our mission to life. Your unwavering commitment and generosity have enabled us to reach more individuals, create more opportunities, and foster a more inclusive society for all.

Looking ahead, I am confident that the Special Olympics East Asia Region will continue to grow, evolve, and inspire positive change in the years to come. Together, we will work towards a future where individuals with intellectual disabilities are valued, respected, and included in all aspects of society.

Sincerely,
Soh Changwoo



Soh Changwoo
Chairman of Special Olympics
East Asia Regional
Leadership Council

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