



SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
**USA GAMES**  
SEATTLE 2018



# **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT REPORT**



# SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT REPORT

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## LETTER FROM THE 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES CEO & DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEERS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Fifty years ago, the first Special Olympics were held at Soldier Field in Chicago. What started as a radical idea has since grown into a powerful international movement of more than 5.7 million athletes and unified partners in 172 countries. Those Games were revolutionary because they challenged the dominant social beliefs about the capacity and potential of people with intellectual disabilities (ID). The inaugural Games demonstrated that people with ID were capable of things that were previously considered unimaginable—not only athletic prowess on par with any population, but a model of sportsmanship, inclusion, and joy the world rarely sees.

Now, on the momentous 50th anniversary of the first Special Olympics, the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games are sending another important message—by setting a new bar for sustainability. The 2018 USA Games will leave a lasting positive legacy on the Seattle area, and inspire future Games to not only meet this new standard, but to re-define the limits again and again, sending a message of possibility to an ever-broader audience.

We recognize as an Organizing Committee that sustainability is about supporting the delicate balance of the planet's ecosystems but also about promoting a balance among people. Finding ways to include and connect everyone is also a core principle of sustainability initiatives. It is one of our deepest wishes that visitors to the 2018 USA Games in Seattle made that connection and remember those lessons upon returning home.

Focusing on key impact areas of waste and recycling, food and beverage service, accessibility and inclusion, transportation, sourcing, and education and legacy, the 2018 USA Games identified and mitigated ecological impacts to the greatest extent possible, and implemented policies to maximize positive social value, bolster the local community and support the health and wellness of all participants. We tracked and measured our successes—and our failures—so that the lessons we've learned may be documented and applied in the future.

The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games and its host venues thank all the athletes, fans, partners, and other participants and attendees at the Games for their committed effort to #RiseWithUs and successfully help these Games achieve a level of sustainability never seen before.

Sincerely,



**Beth Knox**  
President and CEO



**Karlan Jessen**  
Director of Volunteers and Sustainability



# SUSTAINABILITY BY THE NUMBERS



SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
**USA GAMES**  
SEATTLE 2018



**11**  
DAYS

**4,000**  
ATHLETES &  
COACHES

**15,000**  
VOLUNTEERS

**102.2**  
THOUSAND  
ATTENDEES

**4,000**  
REUSABLE WATER  
BOTTLES DISTRIBUTED  
TO ATHLETES

**800**  
POUNDS OF LEFTOVER  
FRUIT DONATED TO  
LOCAL FOOD SHELTERS

**8,051**  
ATHLETE & VOLUNTEER  
MEALS PROVIDED BY  
AMAZON AND PREPARED  
BY FARESTART, A LOCAL  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

**500+**  
HOURS OF TEMPORARY  
LABOR OPPORTUNITIES  
CREATED SPECIFICALLY FOR  
PEOPLE WITH ID

**10,000**  
ATHLETE & FAN TRIPS  
WERE TAKEN ON  
LOCAL TRANSIT

**5,000+**  
BIKE SHARE TRIPS WERE  
TAKEN AROUND UW  
CAMPUS AND  
DOWNTOWN SEATTLE

**4,000+**  
POUNDS OF VINYL  
BANNERS WERE RECYCLED  
TO MAKE INTO BAGS,  
TARPS AND GROUNDCOVER

**3,200**  
SUSTAINABILITY  
AND HEALTHY ATHLETE  
PASSPORTS DISTRIBUTED

**175**  
GREEN TEAM  
VOLUNTEERS

**435**  
HOURS OF GREEN  
TEAM VOLUNTEERING

**\$100**  
THOUSAND  
DOLLARS IN NEW  
SPONSORSHIP RAISED  
TO SUPPORT THE  
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

**93.2%**  
OF ATHLETE FAMILIES &  
TRAVEL COMPANIONS  
BELIEVE THE GAMES ARE  
INSPIRING PEOPLE TO BE  
MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY  
FRIENDLY





Karlan Jessen



Santiago Gallo



SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
**USA GAMES**  
SEATTLE 2018



## THANK YOU TO SPECIAL OLYMPICS

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.

This was the first Special Olympics USA Games to include a comprehensive Sustainability Program. It would not have been possible without Director of Volunteers and Sustainability Karlan Jessen, with support from Santiago Gallo, M.A. Sports Management, Seattle University, who led the efforts in data collection. This Sustainability Impact Report was created as both an enduring account of the inaugural Sustainability Program at the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games, and as a legacy resource for future Special Olympics USA Games Organizing Committees and the broader Special Olympics International movement. We hope it may also inspire and assist future organizers, operators, sponsors, and other stakeholders of large sporting and other events to minimize their environmental impact and maximize positive social impact.



Microsoft

## THANK YOU TO MICROSOFT PREMIER PARTNER OF THE 2018 USA GAMES

Microsoft enabled the creation of a sustainability legacy for the Games. This *Sustainability Impact Report* demonstrates Microsoft Procurement Responsible Sourcing's commitment to community stewardship and enabling others to reach new heights of sustainability.



David Muller



Tim Reeve

## THANK YOU TO THE AUTHORS

This Sustainability Impact Report was produced by David Muller, Tim Reeve and the rest of the Reeve Consulting team, working closely with Karlan Jessen and Santiago Gallo. Reeve Consulting is a sustainability strategy firm that works with sport organizers and corporate partners to implement innovative sustainability programs creating positive social and environmental impacts.

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games is an event with a core purpose of positively impacting the lives of people with ID through participation in sport. As a purpose-driven event, it was only natural for the 2018 USA Games Organizing Committee to also consider the impacts of the event on the community and the environment. This holistic view of the impacts and potential legacies that could result from the event meant the 2018 USA Games were organized differently from previous events. In 2017, the USA Games made a public, explicit commitment to sustainability.

This report tells the sustainability story of the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games. Its purpose is to provide an open and transparent account to various stakeholders and interested parties of the actual results and outcomes of the Games; it does so by benchmarking the results against the goals and objectives set forth in our 2018 USA Games Sustainability Strategy. We’ve profiled short stories of some things that went well, and we’ve provided the data to let readers come to their own conclusions on how well the sustainability program worked at the 2018 USA Games, and what may be improved upon in the future.

## HOW WE’VE ORGANIZED THIS REPORT

The report begins with a description of the 2018 USA Games Sustainability strategy and its key elements, materiality assessment, stakeholder engagement, impact baselines, and partnerships geared toward reducing the Games’ environmental footprint. The strategy was informed by the ISO 20121 Standard for Event Sustainability standard for event sustainability, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the pioneer and industry standard-bearer for sustainability reporting, customized to this event with essential input from the 2018 USA Games Organizing Committee.

Up next are the direct sustainability results and impacts of the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games across the six “Sustainability Impact Areas,” including data-driven results and notable impact stories for each of the six primary impact areas:



WASTE & RECYCLING



ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION



SOURCING



FOOD & BEVERAGE



TRANSPORTATION



EDUCATION & LEGACY

We have included our own reflections on “lessons learned”—what worked well and what could have gone better. Goal Six within our Sustainability Strategy was to “Create a Legacy of Sustainability Actions” and to be a catalyst for highlighting the importance and value that sustainability has within the 2018 USA Games and the Special Olympics movement across North America and the world. To further that goal, we have also produced a companion resource, the *Special Olympics Sustainability Playbook and Toolkit*, which will support Special Olympics Board Members, CEOs, Games Organizing Committee staff, and others on planning and implementing an effective, efficient, and inspiring Sustainability Program for their Games or event.

The Report closes with the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) table, a complete presentation of all of the performance data collected for the event.



# SPECIAL OLYMPICS INTERNATIONAL

The mission of Special Olympics International is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. This gives 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.

As Special Olympics athletes gain the confidence that comes with achievement, they are empowered to take on new challenges to make use of their inherent abilities. They become mentors for other athletes. They train to become coaches and officials. They move toward a more public role as a speaker or spokesperson. Special Olympics athletes are empowered to share their many gifts and talents with society. Yet, it's more than that. Special Olympics athletes also become empowered to be leaders in society—and teach us all about acceptance and understanding.

**“YOU ARE THE STARS AND THE WORLD IS WATCHING YOU.**

**BY YOUR PRESENCE, YOU SEND A MESSAGE TO EVERY VILLAGE, EVERY CITY,  
EVERY NATION. A MESSAGE OF HOPE. A MESSAGE OF VICTORY.”**


**—Eunice Kennedy Shriver,  
founder of the Special Olympics**

## SPECIAL OLYMPICS WASHINGTON AND THE 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES

The Special Olympics USA Games is a premier, national sports competition that showcases the power and joy of sports at the highest levels. The USA Games take place every four years with previous host cities being: Ames, Iowa (2006); Lincoln, Nebraska (2010); and Lawrenceville, New Jersey (2014). In its fourth running, the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games took place in and around Seattle, Washington. From July 1st-6th, more than 4,000 athletes and coaches from all 50 states and the District of Columbia descended upon Seattle and the surrounding region.

In 2014, Special Olympics Washington submitted a bid to host the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games and, after a selection process managed by Special Olympics North America, was awarded the right to host the 2018 USA Games. As an independent non-profit entity, the Games Organizing Committee existed solely to develop and execute the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games, and raised all the funds necessary to host this national competition. Special Olympics Washington served as the host state and was represented by more than 300 athletes at the Games, the largest delegation among state programs.

As an event of such magnitude, the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games present complex logistical and operational challenges for organizers; integrating a robust sustainability program into the Games increases that challenge. However, the 2018 USA Games Organizing Committee, with support from Premier Partner Microsoft, and modeling the courage of so many Special Olympics athletes, embraced the challenge of sustainability. A sense of responsibility to the greater Seattle-metro community, as well as recognition of the unique opportunity for the 2018 USA Games to set a new standard of sustainability for the Special Olympics, were the motivating factors in this game-changing decision.

The impact of the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games in Seattle did not conclude with the Closing Ceremony. Through initiatives such as the Healthy Athletes Program (record number of participants), the first-ever onsite Job Fair for Special Olympics Athletes and people with ID, and the Sustainability Passport program, impacts on athletes and guests from around the country will be reverberating for years to come. Indeed, as the first Special Olympics USA Games to include a comprehensive sustainability program, the 2018 USA Games will leave a legacy of stewardship and inclusion in Seattle, while inspiring future USA Games to continue raising the bar, just like so many Special Olympic athletes. 

# 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT AREAS & SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

## MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT AND THE KEY SUSTAINABILITY GOAL AREAS FOR THE 2018 USA GAMES

Big events have big impacts. The Special Olympics USA Games is a huge event, and the Organizing Committee took the time to consider where it should focus its limited resources and where it could have the biggest potential impact, given the local context and other operational factors.

**“OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY WAS A PRIORITY IN PLANNING FOR THE 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES. I AM PLEASED WE WERE ABLE TO PARTNER WITH SPECIAL OLYMPICS TO DELIVER A WORLD-CLASS EVENT THAT DEMONSTRATED OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION.”**

**—Jeff Scott,  
Executive Vice President Finance &  
Administration, University of Washington**

Our Sustainability Strategy and Action Plans were shaped by a materiality assessment that canvassed input from Games’ stakeholders through surveys and key informant interviews to see what was important to them. We also drew from internationally respected sport and event sustainability standards, including the GRI G4 Reporting Guidelines, GHG Protocol, ISO 20121 / 14001, and the Council for Responsible Sport. We also considered the sustainability strengths of our partners, especially the University of Washington, which hosted the majority of events.

Ultimately, considering stakeholder input, venue capabilities, and Organizing Committee resource capacity, six key Sustainability Impact Areas were determined. Four were operational in nature, typically related to venue/event management, and involved direct services for athletes, families, and fans. The other two overarching Sustainability Impact Areas were more focused on pre-Games planning and the consideration of post-Games legacies. The key Sustainability Impact Areas were:



WASTE & RECYCLING



ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION



SOURCING



FOOD & BEVERAGE



TRANSPORTATION



EDUCATION & LEGACY

The Organizing Committee assigned the Sustainability portfolio to a staff Director, adopted a comprehensive Sustainability Strategy, and created a Sustainability page on its website to convey to the public the 2018 USA Games’ overarching commitment as well as specific actions planned—all firsts for the Games. Sustainability became a core principle to both guide delivery of the 2018 USA Games and to shape its ultimate legacy—its lasting effect on the local community, all who participated, and on future Special Olympics USA Games and other events.



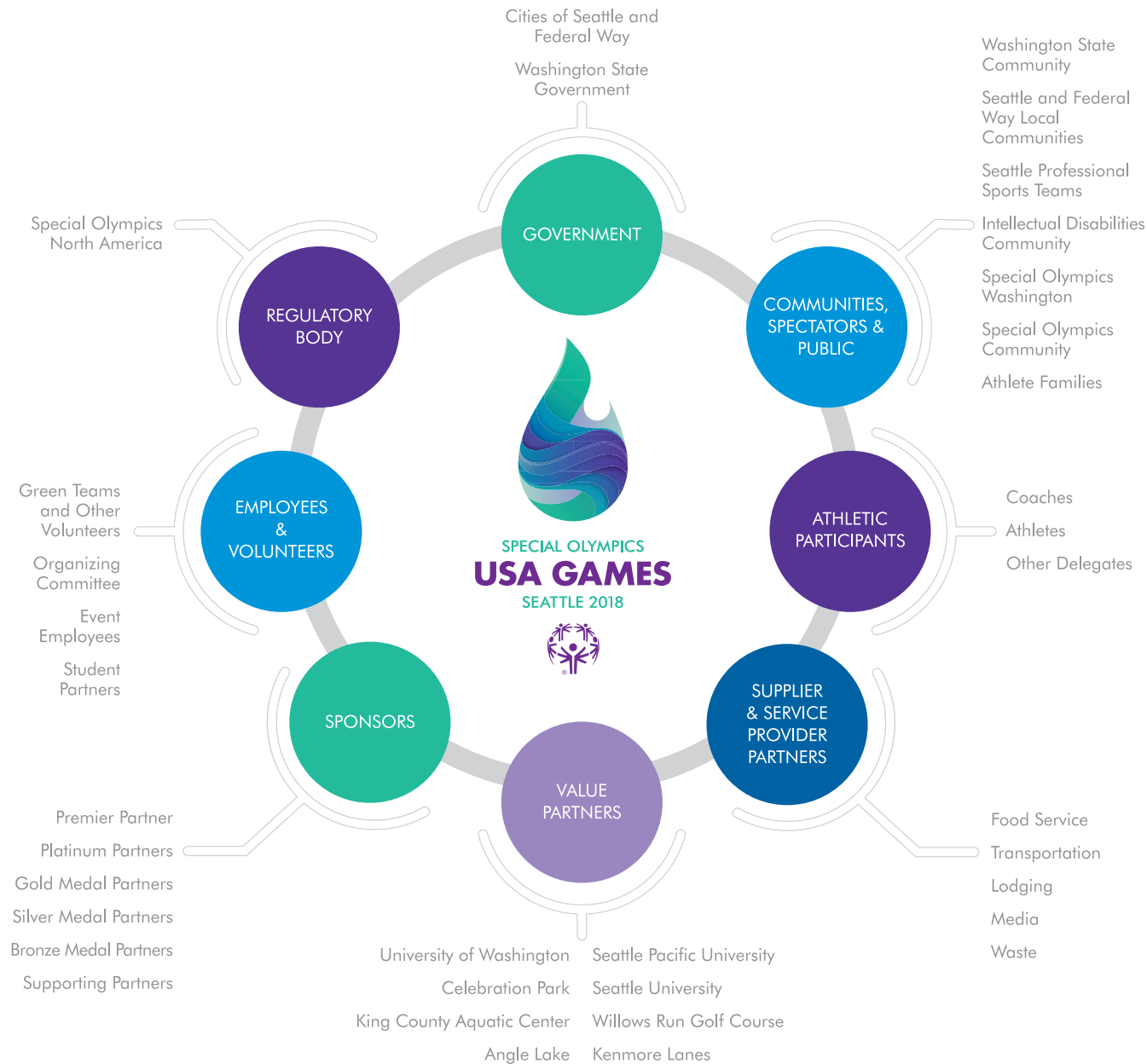


## MANAGING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games generated approximately 4200 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, with the vast majority arising from athlete and family travel to and from Seattle. These are largely unavoidable transportation impacts that are simply inherent in a large, national event. The remainder of the carbon footprint came from ground transportation in and around Seattle, and then from waste and supply chain impacts.

Unfortunately, no major offset partnerships were forged for the 2018 USA Games. This is one key area where an earlier focus and increased capacity would have given the Organizing Committee the opportunity to be creative in securing offsets that had a local connection, particularly by finding a sponsor to cover the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> and water offsets, which was beyond the core budget of the Organizing Committee. However, some CO<sub>2</sub> offsets were achieved through the planting of 2,018 Douglas Fir seedlings, which provided the backdrop at the Opening Ceremony, at a local youth camp. 💧

# STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERSHIPS





The background is a solid teal color. Overlaid on this is a large, stylized plant with long, pointed leaves that curve upwards and outwards. In the center of the plant, there is a splash of white water or foam, suggesting movement or a natural element. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, with a focus on nature and sustainability.

# **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT AREAS & RESULTS**

**WASTE & RECYCLING**

**FOOD & BEVERAGE**

**ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION**

**TRANSPORTATION**

**SOURCING**

**EDUCATION & LEGACY**

# WASTE & RECYCLING

## **Primary Goal:**

Maximize Waste Diversion  
and Minimize waste-to-landfill

## **Key Objectives:**

- O1:** Ensure ample tri-sort waste stations are present at all events and facilities
- O2:** Educate and assist with waste sorting
- O3:** Use and distribute reusable, compostable, or recyclable food service ware
- O4:** Minimize packaging waste and maximize the use of recycled materials
- O5:** Minimize food waste-to-landfill
- O6:** Repurpose surplus assets within the local community



The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games developed and implemented policies in conjunction with host venues and vendors to maximize landfill waste diversion from all USA Games events. The “Key Objectives” listed above focused the Organizing Committee’s strategy and actions around achieving its primary goal to maximize waste diversion from landfills.

Concessions were a major element of nearly all 2018 USA Games events, and the principal source of waste generation (both pre- and post-consumer) for the event as a whole. The Organizing Committee worked both internally and with all host venues, vendors, and all staff and volunteers in order to divert as much waste as possible to recycling, compost, or donation rather than sending it to landfills. Policies implemented included tri-sort bins at nearly all events, consistent signage from event-to-event and venue-to-venue, and training and placement of volunteers to assist Games vendors, attendees, and participants in the process. Food waste specifically, a major proportion of total waste generated, will be addressed in the “Food & Beverage” section of this report.



# DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

## O1: ENSURE AMPLE TRI-SORT WASTE STATIONS ARE PRESENT AT ALL 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES EVENTS AND FACILITIES

- There were tri-sort waste stations (recycling/compost/landfill) throughout all the Games venues on the UW campus; additional tri-sort stations would have been helpful, particularly at outdoor athlete and volunteer lunch service areas.
- Other host venues, which had much smaller crowds and overall footprint, had at least basic recycling systems for containers, but not necessarily composting.
- Coca Cola, in addition to their employment initiative, introduced their Give Back program providing two Give Back machines in the Fan Zone and donated a nickel back to the Special Olympics for every plastic bottle recycled through the machine.

## O2: EDUCATE AND ASSIST WITH WASTE SORTING AT THE 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES

- There was a large volunteer “Green Team” that assisted guests with proper sorting for recycling and composting in some areas within the main Games venues. Their presence was particularly important and effective during athlete and volunteer lunches, when high volumes of material needed sorting. This resulted in significantly less contamination in streams bound for recycling and composting.
- Large A-frame signs illustrating proper disposal of various waste items were posted adjacent to waste stations at most Games venues.
- UW Dining Services (which served thousands of meals to athletes and guests) has “shadow boxes” at waste stations in the dining area, displaying specific waste items and which stream they belong in.
- There were different colored collection bins at different venues, and not all of the correct colors were properly represented on the signs. Even within the same collection jurisdiction, bins can be different colors and it’s difficult to represent them all when mass producing signs.
- According to pre and post-Games survey, only 44% of athletes and their families expect the Games to recycle most of its waste prior to attending the event; however upon experiencing the Games tri-sort nearly 96% believed that most waste would be recycled - showing the strong impressions the sustainability program had on attendees.

## O3: USE AND DISTRIBUTE REUSABLE, COMPOSTABLE, OR RECYCLABLE FOOD SERVICEWARE AT ALL 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES EVENTS AND FACILITIES

- All food serviceware (plates, cups, and cutlery) distributed at UW, Seattle University, and in volunteer lunches was compostable.
- Platinum Medal Partner Kaiser Permanente donated reusable water bottles to each athlete and all beverage containers were recyclable.
- Starbucks gave away reusable cups and straws on the first day of the Games and donated prizes for athletes who completed the Sustainability and Healthy Athlete Passport.
- Compostable serviceware was not used at Celebration Park (Softball), Kenmore Lanes or King County Aquatic Center.

## O4: MINIMIZE PACKAGING WASTE AND MAXIMIZE THE USE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS

- Some packaging waste was avoided, but there was still a large amount that went to landfill. Requests to minimize non-recyclable packaging were made to vendors and partners, but there was inadequate time and capacity to effectively secure binding commitments to reduce packaging waste and to coordinate with various vendors and partners on follow-through.

- There was a fair amount of “panic buying”—last-minute purchases of items presumably essential for Games’ operation—which did not consider the Sourcing guidelines due to time constraints; this contributed to excess waste and is an area of ‘risk’ for future organizers to better manage.

## **05: MINIMIZE FOOD WASTE-TO-LANDFILL**

- The majority of food waste-to-landfill was avoided by the composting of post-consumer food waste (with the help of Green Team volunteers) and by the composting of food-prep waste at UW.
- Approximately 800 lbs. of fresh, untouched produce were captured and donated, which would have gone to landfill otherwise.

## **06: REPURPOSE SURPLUS ASSETS WITHIN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

- 2,018 live Douglas Fir saplings from the Washington Department of Natural Resources were used as a moveable backdrop for the Opening Ceremony stage, which were set aside to be re-planted at Camp Korey, a summer camp for children living with life-altering medical conditions.
- Much of the vinyl signage is being repurposed into bags and other products, but other signage was made from corrugated plastic, which is a poor material for repurposing and unfortunately cannot be recycled in a standard plastic stream. Some of this material was repurposed by the University of Washington, but the majority went to landfills.


### **Key Lessons Learned**

1. Start planning as early as possible; it can be surprising how something as simple as bins for collecting recyclables, trash, and compostable materials can fail in operation without sufficient planning with venue hosts. Do not leave plans for bins, signage, and pick-up frequency to the last minute.
2. If possible, choose venue hosts with effective recycling and composting systems in place and work closely with venue partners to confirm the placement of collection containers, signage requirements, and collection methods; review these periodically to validate plans.
3. Start at the source: ask vendors and suppliers very early on to make binding commitments to reduce packaging and other waste, and to prioritize recyclable/compostable items whenever possible; consider banning direct purchases of non-recyclable/non-compostable materials such as Styrofoam or corrugated plastic.
4. Reach out to waste haulers early to build a relationship and enable collaborative efforts to divert waste from landfills, and to obtain detailed data after the event; involve them in discussions on how to minimize contamination and recover as much clean material as possible.
5. Plan on sorting: delegate Green Team members to sort waste during/after events to minimize contamination, or partner with local non-profits to do so; in states with a 5- or 10-cent deposit on beverage containers there is an added financial incentive for collecting recyclables.
6. A large proportion of volunteers generally sign up in the last month before the Games—proper, extensive Green Team training should occur no more than two weeks from the start of the Games.



## SUCCESS STORY: GREEN TEAM VOLUNTEERS STEP UP TO BOOST RECYCLING

The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games assembled a 175-person Green Team, which volunteered 435 hours toward the success of the Waste and Recycling Program. These volunteers played an essential role in helping all guests—athletes, families, officials, volunteers, et.al., dispose of their waste properly. The Green Team was particularly important during athlete and volunteer lunch service, which generated a large influx of waste each day of the Games. The tri-sort system of recycling, compost, and landfill was new to a great number of the athletes, fans and families—it was essential to have hands-on support at the tri-sort stations to capture material effectively.

Green Team volunteers not only guided uncertain guests on which waste stream their half-eaten sandwich, empty bottle, or mustard packet belonged in, they helped introduce and explain both tri-sort waste systems and the very concept of composting to many guests for the first time. More Green Team members deployed in these roles would have further improved the quality and capture rates for recyclable and compostable materials. Interviews with Games attendees revealed great interest and enthusiasm in this program, as well as commitments to establish such systems in their respective communities. Green Team athlete and fan education were a significant legacy impact of the 2018 USA Games. 



## FOOD & BEVERAGE

### Primary Goal:

Maximize the proportion of local, sustainable, Fairtrade-certified, and healthy food and beverages options, while minimizing food waste

### Key Objectives:

**01:** Make local, healthy, and Fairtrade-certified food options available at all 2018 Special Olympics USA Games events

**02:** Maximize donations of prepared, untouched food to local people in need

**03:** Maximize composting of pre-consumer vendor food prep waste

**04:** Maximize composting of post-consumer (purchased but uneaten) food waste



The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games developed and implemented policies in conjunction with food and beverage providers, host venues, and waste haulers to maximize local, healthy food options, donations of untouched food to people in need, and composting of both pre- and post-consumer food waste. The Organizing Committee also worked with vendors and host venues to utilize compostable service ware as much as possible at every food service location for the 2018 USA Games.

The Organizing Committee worked with food and beverage vendors and host venues to consider the origin and nutrition of planned food and beverage offerings and to maximize the proportion of local, sustainable, healthy options (i.e. fruits, veggies, meatless options, non-fried options). Additionally, it implemented policies in conjunction with food vendors to divert food prep waste into the compost stream, worked with local organizations to capture and donate untouched food, and posted volunteers at waste stations in order to assist attendees with composting post-consumer food waste and serviceware.



## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### **O1: MAKE LOCAL, HEALTHY, AND FAIRTRADE-CERTIFIED FOOD OPTIONS AMPLY AVAILABLE AT ALL 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES EVENTS**

- The box lunches provided to athletes and volunteers were reasonably balanced meals, including a sandwich, fresh fruit and low/no sugar beverage options. They also contained chips and a cookie, though both athletes and volunteers were generally burning lots of calories throughout the day. Many of the ingredients were locally sourced.
- In addition to the concession stands at UW and other venues, the Fan Zone featured two Seattle-area food trucks, one offering seafood and the other offering Middle Eastern foods. Both offered healthy and locally-sourced options.
- Fairtrade certification for all food was an aspirational goal that was unachievable at the 2018 USA Games in the timeframe allowed.

### **O2: MAXIMIZE DONATIONS OF PREPARED, UNTOUCHED FOOD TO LOCAL PEOPLE IN NEED**

- ~800 lbs. of fresh produce (300 lbs. of bananas, 300 lbs. of apples, 200 lbs. of oranges) were donated to local food banks.
- ~200 lunches (prepared and untouched) were not captured for donation, because the system in place didn't enable that food to make it into cold storage quickly enough to meet food safety requirements.

### **O3: MAXIMIZE COMPOSTING OF PRE-CONSUMER VENDOR FOOD PREP WASTE**

- Both concessionaires and Dining Services at UW composted their food prep waste, per standard operating procedure.
- Waste from food prep performed offsite by FareStart was composted.
- It is unclear how much food prep waste was composted at secondary venues or at food carts, but that accounted for a small percentage of overall food service at the 2018 USA Games.

### **O4: MAXIMIZE COMPOSTING OF POST-CONSUMER (PURCHASED BUT UNEATEN) FOOD WASTE**

- Compost bins were available at most 2018 USA Games venues/food service areas.
- There were Green Team volunteers posted at waste stations at the University of Washington and elsewhere during high-traffic times to help guests properly compost their food waste.
- A-frame signs next to most waste stations illustrated at UW illustrated to guests which bin to use for food waste.

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## SUCCESS STORY: LOCAL SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FEEDS THE 2018 USA GAMES VOLUNTEERS

Over 8,000 athlete and volunteer meals were donated by Amazon, who contracted with FareStart, a job skills training organization that has been helping people gain the skills to step out of homelessness and poverty for over 25 years. FareStart and their team helped to make and deliver the balanced meals fresh each day. FareStart also captured and donated ~800 lbs. of produce to local residents in need. 💧



### Key Lessons Learned

1. Start planning early: as soon as venues are contracted, request information and connect with food and beverage providers onsite, to build a relationship and enlist them in the Sustainability Program.
2. For catered food, seek out suppliers that emphasize local, healthy, sustainable ingredients.
3. Determine local infrastructure and facilities around composting; if no commercial composter is available, explore other options, such as working with nearby farms, garden centers, and non-profits who may be interested in capturing food waste for compost or animal feed.
4. Establish partnerships with local food banks and/or non-profits that capture excess food for donation.
5. Ensure refrigerated trucks (or other cold storage) are onsite and ready to accept excess food at the appropriate times—there is a short window from when food is prepared to when it must be loaded into cold storage in order to meet food safety requirements.

# ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

## **Primary Goal:**

Every 2018 USA Games event is accessible to and inclusive of all people, regardless of intellectual or physical ability level

## **Key Objectives:**

**01:** Ensure all venues and facilities meet ADA accessibility standards

**02:** Educate on accessibility and inclusion at 2018 Special Olympics USA Games events

**03:** Apply principles of inclusion within volunteer program

**04:** Promote accessibility and inclusion amongst all partners (e.g. state and local governments, universities, partners, suppliers, etc.); advance Seattle's City of Inclusion initiative

**05:** City of Seattle/State of Washington gains recognition as a 'Healthy Community' by Special Olympics Health program



2018 USA Games organizers and venue operations managers applied best practices in accessibility and inclusion to its own operations with protocols reflected in general operations of the Organizing Committee office; stakeholder meetings and summits and other planning events (hand-out materials were accessible; meeting spaces were accessible for persons with hearing or sight impairment, physical, and/or intellectual disabilities).

All venues and facilities were required to meet ADA accessibility standards and verifying information was collected from the University of Washington (primary venue), Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University, Angle Lake, Celebration Park, Kenmore Lanes, King County Aquatic Center, and Willows Run Golf Club.

Beyond simply providing an accessible Games, organizers also worked closely with community Partners and Sponsors to create training and employment opportunities for people with ID, with some notable results.

# DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

## O1: ENSURE ALL VENUES AND FACILITIES MEET ADA ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

- 100% of venues and facilities met American Disabilities Association (ADA) standards for accessibility.

## O2: EDUCATE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION AT THE 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES

- Music and guest entertainment was provided by artists with ID at the Power of Inclusion Forum and the Chairman's Dinner at the Chilhuly Garden, through a partnership with the non-profit United by Music.
- Special Olympics Cheerleaders were included throughout the 2018 USA Games, and a number of guest speakers and presenters during the Opening Ceremony and other events were Special Olympics Athletes and Global Ambassadors.

## O3: APPLY PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSION WITHIN VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- Individuals with ID were encouraged through promotional campaigns and community groups to volunteer with the Games.
- Many of the ~15,000 volunteers had some form of ID and their efforts were crucial to the success of the Games, both from an operations perspective and from an awareness and educational perspective for others.

## O4: PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION AMONGST ALL PARTNERS (STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, UNIVERSITIES, PARTNERS, SUPPLIERS, ET. AL.); ADVANCE SEATTLE'S CITY OF INCLUSION INITIATIVE

- The SourceAmerica Job Fair was the first of its kind and introduced an avenue for employment to at least 200 athletes and their families.
- One of the legacy goals for the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games is that Seattle will be recognized as a model "City of Inclusion" for the rest of the country. This goal and message resonated strongly with the 2018 USA Games Board of Directors and corporate Partners, and aligned strategically with regional efforts to actively demonstrate a message of welcome and inclusion to all, regardless of ability. The City of Inclusion Advisory Committee capitalized on the momentum created by the 2018 USA Games by making the inclusion network visible and amplifying this important conversation.
- More than 300 area businesses took a pledge of inclusion through the Welcome Inclusion Initiative (WIN), providing a lasting impact of heightened awareness and attitudinal changes toward people with ID.
- MTR Western, the official 2018 USA Games transportation suppliers, ensured that all motor coaches were accessible, and Lyft was able to send vehicles that were wheelchair accessible when requested.
- Challenges and opportunities around inclusion were explored during a compelling panel discussion at the Future of Inclusion Forum, held at the Seattle Repertory Theatre and attended by ~800 people. The panel included:
  - o Devon Adelman, Special Olympics Washington Athlete, who read her original poem "Strong"
  - o Tig Notaro, GRAMMY- and Emmy-nominated comedian, writer, and actor
  - o Lauren Potter, Glee Actress, Special Olympics Ambassador, and person thriving with ID
  - o Tim Shriver, Chairman of Special Olympics International
  - o Brad Smith, Microsoft President and Honorary Chairman of the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games



## O5: CITY OF SEATTLE/STATE OF WASHINGTON GAINS RECOGNITION AS A 'HEALTHY COMMUNITY' BY SPECIAL OLYMPICS HEALTH PROGRAM

- Special Olympics Washington was able to leverage the excitement around the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games to work closely with King, Snohomish, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Adams, and Okanogan counties to deliver the annual programming and the long-term infrastructure to gain the Healthy Communities recognition. The Healthy Communities program is now available all across the State of Washington.




## SUCCESS STORY: COCA COLA SHOWCASES INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES

To prepare for the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games, Swire Coca-Cola brought on Marcia Barrett, a Special Olympics Washington athlete, to help prepare and assist the company with its inclusion efforts from an athlete's perspective. This proved very helpful. Marcia was brought on five weeks before the Games, working 179 hours in her advisory role. For the week of the 2018 USA Games, Coca-Cola contracted an additional 14 individuals with ID that worked alongside Coca-Cola employees for a total of 393 hours of temporary employment. Several individuals stood out, making such an impression that four individuals were recommended for ongoing employment. This success also led Swire into discussions with another Games' partner, SourceAmerica, to help pilot further efforts towards inclusive hiring. 💧



## SUCCESS STORY: FIRST EVER JOB FAIR BUILDS ATHLETE'S EMPLOYMENT READINESS

Presented in partnership with SourceAmerica, the first-ever 2018 USA Games Job Fair provided a complete “Journey of Employment” for Special Olympics athletes and others with ID. Designed to build confidence, provide resources, and allow for interview experience, 200 athletes and others with ID met with 17 sponsorship partners and national non-profits. SourceAmerica also offered disability awareness training for participating companies. 

### Key Lessons Learned

1. Lead by example and create direct opportunities for individuals with ID to be part of the Board and the 2018 USA Games Organizing Committee.
2. Segment ID employment opportunities into medium-term planning, with both organizing roles and onsite 2018 USA Games roles.
3. Engage Partners and Sponsors in conversations around employment opportunities for individuals with ID as part of activation (e.g. brand ambassador roles) as well as longer-term opportunities as part of inclusive and diversity hiring efforts.
4. Engage with local organizations serving people with ID around adopting the Healthy Community Challenge and use the occasion of the 2018 USA Games to accelerate the adoption of ADA standards in local and statewide facilities.
5. Plan early for a Job Fair and promote this regularly to athletes and families in the lead-up to the 2018 USA Games.



# TRANSPORTATION

## Primary Goal:

Maximize active transportation and transit use to and from 2018 USA Games events “offset unavoidable CO2 impacts

## Key Objectives:

**01:** 2018 Special Olympics USA Games staff follow an active transport/transit pledge for the office

**02:** Promote and encourage active transport/transit use to and from 2018 Special Olympics USA Games events

**03:** Minimize CO2 emissions from athlete and family travel to and from 2018 USA Games

**04:** Offset all unavoidable CO2 impacts from athlete and family travel to and from 2018 USA Games



The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games developed and implemented policies to promote a “Walkable Games,” maximizing active transportation to and from all 2018 USA Games events.

The Organizing Committee worked internally and with the City of Seattle, local transit agencies, rideshare and bikeshare companies in order to incentivize and make active and alternative transportation, use of public transit, and ridesharing to and from all 2018 USA Games events as easy as possible for all participants. In addition to reducing the CO2 footprint of the 2018 USA Games, these steps helped improve the experience of attendees and participants, as fewer personal vehicles inevitably leads to reduced traffic and wait times while arriving at/leaving events.



# DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

## **O1: LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE STAFF FOLLOW AN ACTIVE TRANSPORT/TRANSIT PLEDGE FOR THE OFFICE**

- All Organizing Committee staff committed to using active and alternative transportation (i.e. walking/biking, transit, rideshare, carpool) whenever possible for travel related to the Games, though no formal pledge was signed.

## **O2: PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE ACTIVE TRANSPORT/TRANSIT USE TO AND FROM GAMES' EVENTS**

- Registration credentials for athletes and honored guests functioned as transit tickets.
- 1,623 ORCA ("One Regional Card for All") transit cards were distributed to visiting family members, which were used for 9,925 individual trips.
- A partnership with bike-share company LimeBike subsidized guests' use of their distinctive green bicycles on and around the UW campus, resulting in 5,413 individual trips.
- The partnership with LimeBike also included a number of e-bikes, introducing many guests to e-bikes for the first time and changing their perception of their own abilities to use bicycles for transportation.


## **O3: MINIMIZE CO2 EMISSIONS FROM ATHLETE AND FAMILY TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE 2018 USA GAMES**

- Organizing Committee staff and volunteers assisted/chaperoned all athlete delegations in traveling by light rail from and to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac).
- Over 3,000 2018 USA Games athletes, coaches, and supporters traveled to Safeco Field from UW by light rail for a celebratory night at the ballpark, seeing the Mariners' victory over the Los Angeles Angels.
- A shuttle provided by transportation Partner MTR Western operated daily between the downtown Seattle Sheraton (official hotel Partner) and University of Washington, as well as providing shuttles to all satellite venues.
- A partnership with Lyft encouraged guests to share rides rather than driving personal vehicles during their stay in Seattle.

## **O4: OFFSET ALL UNAVOIDABLE CO2 IMPACTS FROM ATHLETE AND FAMILY TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE GAMES.**

- As an aspirational goal, the Organizing Committee undertook the effort to calculate the total CO2 footprint of the 2018 USA Games, and endeavored to offset it completely. Unfortunately, no sponsor could be secured to cover the costs of CO2 offsets, which were beyond the Organizing Committee's budget.
- According to pre- and post-Games athlete and family surveys only 3% of respondents expected to use public transit during the Games prior to arrival - but in fact 22% reported they actually did use public transit during the event.

## SUCCESS STORY: LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSIT MOVES THOUSANDS OF ATHLETES, FAMILIES AND FANS

The 2018 USA Games Organizing Committee successfully forged a partnership with King County Transit, Sound Transit, and the Port of Seattle to ensure a collaborative network of public transit was easily accessible and readily available to all athletes and families. Visitors were able to move more efficiently and avoid traffic congestion. Many were introduced to the idea of riding public transit for the first time, finding the experience simple and enjoyable. Volunteers were encouraged to use public transit to and from their volunteer shifts and were offered free transit rides to and from the airport on arrival and departure days. They were able to avoid costly parking fees as well. 

### Key Lessons Learned

1. If transit, active transport, and rideshares/bikeshares are available and feasible for guests to travel around the host city/metro area, most guests will take advantage of such alternative transportation options and forgo using personal vehicles.
2. Transportation provides fertile ground for partnerships with local transit authorities, rideshare and bikeshare companies, and other transportation providers, all of which benefit from the influx in ridership that a large event like the 2018 USA Games can provide. Establishing partnerships early on can greatly increase both usage of these services, and the ease of doing so, for guests traveling from other areas.
3. Fewer single-occupancy vehicles, and fewer personal vehicles overall, leads to improved guest experience, as traffic is reduced and arriving at/exiting venues is generally more efficient; additionally, parking impacts are reduced as lots are less likely to fill and complaints less likely to arise.
4. Decide from the start the scope of the emissions that will be calculated, to make them accurate—there are different sources of transportation that can affect the footprint of the event.
5. Seek out a Sustainability Partner or Sponsor early on who will commit to cover the cost of CO2 offsets for the event—the vast majority of which come from athlete and family travel. The cost can be estimated with a fair degree of accuracy, and such a sponsorship provides a golden opportunity for a Partner or Sponsor eager to showcase their own sustainability actions and commitments.

# SOURCING

## Primary Goal:

Maximize positive supply chain outcomes and minimize negative social and environmental impacts in the 2018 USA Games supply chain

## Key Objectives:

**01:** Follow the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games Responsible Sourcing Guidelines and use Responsible Sourcing tools

**02:** Collaborate with suppliers and sponsors to advance sustainability goals and showcase innovative green technologies

**03:** Collaborate with suppliers and sponsors to maximize social value in service contracts and create local training and employment opportunities for people with ID

**04:** Ensure all suppliers and merchandisers comply with the 2018 USA Games Code of Conduct for Suppliers and Sponsors to promote fair labor practices in the supply chain



Responsible sourcing is typically an underutilized tool or function when it comes to managing risk and promoting sustainability innovation—and this was generally the case with the 2018 Games. The Organizing Committee endeavored when purchasing to consider materials and how items could be repurposed or safely recycled. However, there was not an explicit call to action early enough in the process to favor suppliers who could deliver great price, quality, and service, and do so in a sustainable fashion.

Responsible Sourcing Guidelines and a Supplier Code of Conduct were created and adopted in late 2017, but most major procurement had already been completed, so these had limited impact. A list of ‘High Impact Procurement Opportunities’ was created to focus responsible sourcing efforts on a targeted list of product and service categories that had high potential risk or opportunity, but the Organizing Committee staff capacity for procurement, sourcing, and logistics was very lean, and had huge operational demands that did not afford the necessary time to pursue opportunities with suppliers to reduce packaging, source locally, or create employment for people with ID. The combination of limited resources and late attention to using sourcing as a driver for sustainability meant the successes for this goal, some of which were significant, were largely anecdotal.

# DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

## **O1: FOLLOW THE 2018 SPECIAL OLYMPICS USA GAMES RESPONSIBLE SOURCING GUIDELINES AND USE RESPONSIBLE SOURCING TOOLS**

- Results in this area were mixed: formal policies and procedures were adopted less than a year in advance of the 2018 USA Games, meaning many of the major suppliers and subcontractors had already been selected. Nonetheless, Organizing Committee staff did apply responsible sourcing principles around waste reduction and reuse to several procurements, including repurposing a bocce court sitting unused in California for 2018, and ensuring it could then be used post-Games by Special Olympics Washington, which also received other leftover sports and office equipment.

## **O2: COLLABORATE WITH SUPPLIERS AND SPONSORS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABILITY GOALS AND SHOWCASE INNOVATIVE GREEN TECHNOLOGIES**

- There was some progress in this area with suppliers, but it was severely limited due to the late nature of the Responsible Sourcing engagement program and lack of internal capacity to work with suppliers on match-making around inclusive employment, or to address potential concerns around packaging and repurposing materials after the Games.
- Efforts to work with sponsors showed better results as several of these companies already had well-developed internal sustainability initiatives and recognized the potential to leverage the platform of the 2018 USA Games to build their brands. ESPN, Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Amazon, Kaiser Permanente and others all made efforts to align their brand activation strategies with the Games' Sustainability Program.
- 2,018 live Douglas Fir saplings from the Washington Department of Natural Resources were used as a moveable backdrop for the Opening Ceremony stage. Within hours they were whisked away to a reforestation project at Camp Korey, a summer camp for children living with life-altering medical conditions.

## **O3: COLLABORATE WITH SUPPLIERS AND SPONSORS TO MAXIMIZE SOCIAL VALUE IN SERVICE CONTRACTS AND CREATE LOCAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH ID**


- Several Partners and Sponsors, and notably Coca-Cola, actively included people with ID in their Games' staffing strategy.
- In time, the greatest achievement in this area may be the legacy effect of the Job Fair hosted by SourceAmerica, which saw over 200 athletes and others with ID receive information, advice and basic training on employment opportunities. 17 companies participated as potential employers.
- No people with ID were directly employed by the Organizing Committee in a staff or intern role. This may be an opportunity for future Games Organizing Committees to consider.

## **O4: ENSURE ALL SUPPLIERS AND MERCHANTISERS COMPLY WITH THE 2018 USA GAMES CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SUPPLIERS AND SPONSORS TO PROMOTE FAIR LABOR PRACTICES IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN**

- The Organizing Committee did adopt a formal Responsible Sourcing Policy, which included a Supplier Code of Conduct requiring compliance with basic standards around labor practices and worker health and safety. However, because most of the procurement cycle had already been completed by the time the Policy was adopted, it was difficult to retroactively apply it to many of the suppliers.
- Social compliance standards for key categories of products and merchandise, such as t-shirts and uniforms, were verified.

# SUCCESS STORY: 2018 USA GAMES SUPPLIERS COMMIT TO FAIR LABOR PRACTICES

An Organizing Committee never wants a scandal around discriminatory labor practices to undermine the brand and impact of their event. 20,000 t-shirts were created for the 2018 USA Games for athletes, volunteers, officials, and as fan merchandise. Clothing can be a product category with high instances of unfair labor and safety practices. Disney's support for the Games included sponsoring the volunteer program, and they wanted assurance that Brooks, the manufacturer supplying the volunteer t-shirts, was not only capable of meeting the Games' Supplier Code of Conduct, but Disney's own Supplier Code of Conduct, which had even stricter requirements in certain areas. Disney did their due diligence on the Brooks t-shirts that were produced in factories in Nicaragua to ensure fair labor practices that met or exceeded the standards in the Disney Supplier Code of Conduct.

San-Mar was another apparel supplier which also has strict codes around factory labor practices, and is transparent about these practices on their website. This reinforced the importance of responsible sourcing to corporate Partners, who are very protective of their brands and expect hosts and event organizers to have baseline standards in place and actively applied. The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games were able to #RiseUp and ensure athlete and volunteer apparel was ethical as well as cost-effective. 

## Key Lessons Learned

1. Start early and build a responsible sourcing program into the DNA of the staff teams managing procurement, logistics, and operations.
2. Since many products and services come through 'value-in-kind' contributions from sponsors, make sure sourcing efforts are completely integrated into the Partner program as well, so the same opportunities can be explored.
3. Use the 'High Priority Procurement Opportunity' (HIPO) list created by the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games as a quick start for targeting key product or service categories; pay particular attention to high-risk product categories like clothing or merchandise.
4. Leverage the support of a major Partner or Sponsor or a member of the Sustainability Advisory Committee who has deep experience in responsible sourcing to support your internal team with supplier engagement activities or research into sustainable alternatives.
5. Ensure that sourcing and procurement also include guidelines around quantity as well as quality of items purchased, as most cost savings and waste avoidance will come through conservative and well-organized purchasing practices.





## EDUCATION & LEGACY

### Primary Goal:

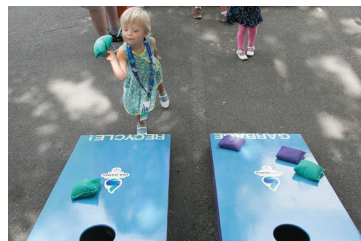
The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games establishes a new bar for event sustainability and inspires all stakeholders and spectators to integrate sustainability into their actions at the Games and beyond

### Key Objectives:

**O1:** Implement the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games Sustainability Strategy and accompanying Action Plans

**O2:** Educate athletes, families, volunteers, spectators, and partners about sustainability via onsite modeling/instruction and distributed materials

**O3:** Document sustainability work to leave a legacy for continuous improvement



Outside of managing the eco-footprint of the event itself, and leveraging the Games to create direct and indirect employment opportunities, Legacy is the area in which a local Organizing Committee can arguably have its greatest impact. The platform of the Special Olympics provides a golden opportunity to broadcast a message of inclusion, environmental stewardship, and corporate responsibility—and is really an extension of the core ethics of the Special Olympics movement itself.

For the 2018 USA Games, Legacy is an area where the Organizing Committee and its Partners and Sponsors knocked it out of the park. The high visibility of the waste and recycling program, the nature of a ‘walkable Games’ and the extensive use of transit, the Healthy Athletes initiative, and more, had a profound and direct impact on thousands of athletes, families, coaches, fans, and officials over the course of the week. And while many of the sustainability initiatives were new to guests (e.g. tri-sort waste systems/composting organic waste), participants were eager to learn the eco-protocols and do their best to follow them.



## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 01: IMPLEMENT THE 2018 USA GAMES SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND ACCOMPANYING ACTION PLANS

- The 2018 USA Games Sustainability Strategy was presented to the Board of Directors in December 2017, which included a vision and six key goal areas for the Games. The Strategy was presented by the CEO and the Director of Volunteers and Sustainability.
- Six Action Plans (one for each Sustainability Impact Area) were finalized soon after the presentation of the Strategy to the Board; however, with limited resources, six months' lead time was a very aggressive (in some cases impossible) timeframe for fully implementing all the actions and programs that had been identified as potential sustainability opportunities.

### 02: EDUCATE ATHLETES, FAMILIES, VOLUNTEERS, SPECTATORS, AND PARTNERS ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY VIA ONSITE MODELING/INSTRUCTION AND DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS

- Over 3,200 Sustainability Passports were distributed to athletes, encouraging them to engage in eco-friendly and healthy activities such as recycling, composting, getting a health check-up, selecting healthy food options, et.al. Athletes were incentivized to collect stamps for completing certain activities, thereby earning them an 'eco-pin' or other prizes.
- The Fan Zone included a Sustainability Booth that provided information on the Sustainability Strategy for the Games, and onsite 'eco-tips' for athletes, families, and fans. The Sustainability Booth promoted bike sharing and had other interactive games such as cornhole to illustrate proper waste sorting, and a Coca-Cola bottle recycling machine that made a 5-cent donation to the Special Olympics for every bottle inserted.
- The Organizing Committee included a page on its website dedicated to Sustainability, and used the Sustainability Strategy as an opportunity to engage some Partners and suppliers in new programming or awareness-raising around key environmental and inclusion issues.

### 03: DOCUMENT SUSTAINABILITY WORK TO LEAVE A LEGACY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Microsoft, one of the largest and most influential technology companies in the world, has been headquartered in the Seattle area since 1986, and is the 2nd-largest employer in the metro area. It has also been a leader on sustainability issues for many years. Thus, Microsoft was an excellent fit as the Premier Partner of the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games. And when the Organizing Committee needed additional support to put its sustainability plan into action, Microsoft CSR/Responsible Sourcing was willing to step in and provide that support, enabling the 2018 USA Games to set a new benchmark for sustainability.



## SUCCESS STORY: SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTHY ATHLETE PASSPORT PROGRAM INSPIRES PERSONAL ACTIONS

Building on similar behavior incentive programs at other Special Olympics events (e.g. Special Olympics Canada 2014, held at the University of British Columbia), the Organizing Committee created the Sustainability and Healthy Athlete Passport, which was a small booklet with a series of sustainability tips for athletes and their families to ‘go green’ by taking actions such as recycling and refilling water bottles. It was unique because it also integrated health tips such as selecting healthy food options and getting dental check-ups during the Games. 3,200 passports were distributed, along with reusable water bottles, in the athlete welcome bags. Athletes were encouraged to collect stamps by demonstrating completion of various ‘tips’ and were offered incentives for collecting stamps such as the official 2018 USA Games eco-pin. Athletes returned their completed Passports to be entered into a prize drawing. Ten athletes won recognition gifts for their efforts, provided by Amazon and Starbucks. 💧

### Key Lessons Learned

1. Specifically engage major Partners and Sponsors in helping to amplify the Special Olympics messages around environment and inclusion to their employees and the wider community; they have a self-interest in associating their brand with sustainability and they can contribute resourcing that will enable funding of some or all of the sustainability programming.
2. Develop a dedicated volunteer Green Team, who will help to operationalize the Sustainability Program during the Games by providing hands-on tips to guests on how to properly recycle and compost their waste, how to take advantage of alternative transportation options, and how athletes can use the Sustainability Passport. Work with Partners, local environmental organizations, and schools to source Green Team volunteers and promote the program through social media.
3. Use a Sustainability Passport or similar athlete engagement program, and message about it regularly in advance to remind athletes and their families about the Sustainability Program and create excitement around the potential to win pins and other prizes for active participation; continue to link the environmental messaging with Healthy Athlete messaging.
4. Use the research findings from the 2018 USA Games regarding athletes’ and families’ attitudes and actions toward sustainability, and particularly the key findings around how to actively engage audiences in sustainability actions both during and post-Games.
5. Coordinate with Special Olympics International, Special Olympics North America, and the host state delegation around education and social media opportunities to amplify sustainability plans and successes before, during, and immediately after the Games.

# CONCLUSION

The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games was an extraordinary event, with countless positive impacts that will reverberate for years to come. The incredible achievements of Special Olympics Athletes, and the pure joy they get from competing, are truly inspirational. And, the 2018 USA Games in Seattle will go down in Special Olympics history as the first USA Games to deliver a comprehensive sustainability program.

Across all six Impact Areas that were addressed in the Sustainability Program—Waste & Recycling, Food & Beverage, Accessibility & Inclusion, Transportation, Sourcing, and Education & Legacy—there were innovative, groundbreaking accomplishments. However, the USA 2018 Games did not score a “perfect 100” on sustainability (very few events do); there were opportunities missed, good plans and intentions that did not come to fruition, and room for improvement even on the most successful elements of the Sustainability Program.

**“AS THE FIRST SPECIAL OLYMPICS GAMES TO TRULY DEDICATE TIME AND RESOURCES TOWARDS PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY, THE SEATTLE GAMES...HAS LAID A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR ALL FUTURE GAMES.”** —Becky Bronstein,  
Outreach Coordinator, Washington Green Schools

But most importantly, tens of thousands of visitors to Seattle and the 2018 USA Games engaged in the Sustainability Program, many for the first time. People were inspired to change their behavior in ways they may replicate at their homes or workplaces, leaving a lighter footprint as a result.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible amount of effort put forth by the Organizing Committee staff, led by Karlan Jessen, Director of Volunteers and Sustainability, and Santiago Gallo, M.A. Sports Management, Seattle University, along with hundreds of Green Team volunteers, and essential material support from Premier Partner Microsoft. All involved in the 2018 USA Games Sustainability Program have a great deal to be proud of—and none are resting on their laurels. The shared hope among stakeholders in the 2018 USA Games Sustainability Program is that this work will inform and inspire future organizers of Special Olympics events at the national, state, local, and even international level to not just meet, but exceed the sustainability benchmark set in Seattle in 2018.

This Sustainability Report details what actions were taken, the results of those actions, and key lessons learned in the process—we hope future organizers will take the time to read the Report, apply lessons learned, and take sustainability at the Special Olympics to an ever-higher level of performance—just like Special Olympics athletes. To that end, we have also produced a Legacy Playbook and Toolkit that is available to the public and contains step-by-step recommendations and tools/templates for implementing a high-performing Sustainability Program at future events.

Both resources will remain freely available to future Special Olympics organizers and the public at large—and the *Sustainability Playbook and Toolkit* will be repeatedly updated and improved as future iterations occur. Anyone and everyone who wishes to apply the lessons learned from the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games to make another event more sustainable is encouraged to make use of these resources. We acknowledge that funding and capacity can sometimes be hard to come by, and our ideal for a sustainability program may not always be feasible—but there is a great deal that every event can do to reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts. It’s all good and worthwhile work.

**To future organizers: We challenge you to raise the bar. Show us how much better we can do. Innovate and create. And know we’ll be cheering for you all the way.** 

# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: FINAL RESULTS

Goal	KPI	Result
Waste Diversion	<p>a. Total tons of waste to landfill</p> <p>b. Total tons of materials for composting</p> <p>c. Total tons of materials for recycling</p> <p>d. Recycling or Diversion Rate = (R+C)/Wx100</p> <p>e. Percentage of athletes who received a reusable water bottle</p> <p>f. Total tons or measure of food donated</p> <p>g. Percentage of venues with access to recycling/composting and signage</p>	<p>a. 6.6 tons</p> <p>b. 2.7 tons</p> <p>c. 5.1 tons</p> <p>d. 54%</p> <p>e. 100% including athletes and delegations. 4000 bottles.</p> <p>f. 300 lbs.bananas, 300 lbs. apples, 200 lbs. oranges to local food banks</p> <p>g. 100%</p>
Local & Healthy Food	<p>a. Total number of meals served</p> <p>b. Percentage of meals where healthy options were available</p>	<p>a. 64,000 to athletes and 10,000 to volunteers</p> <p>b. 100%</p>
Accessibility & Inclusion	<p>a. Percentage of facilities or venues that met ADA accessibility standards</p> <p>b. Full-time or temporary jobs created for people with ID</p>	<p>a. 100%</p> <p>b. 200 athletes visited job fair</p>
Transportation & Transit	<p>a. Orca cards distributed</p> <p>b. Total number of Orca trips</p> <p>c. Total bus miles for athlete and guest transport</p> <p>d. Total Lime Bike trips</p> <p>f. CO2 offsets purchased</p>	<p>a. 1623</p> <p>b. 9,925 (5,695/Sound Transit, 4,230/King County Metro)</p> <p>c. 27,200 miles</p> <p>d. 5,413 trips</p> <p>f. 0</p>
Supply Chain Impacts	<p>a. Total number of vendors/partners who signed the supplier code of conduct</p>	<p>a. &lt;10</p>
Legacy & Education	<p>a. Total green team volunteers/total green team volunteer hours</p> <p>b. Total Passports distributed/total collected for contest</p> <p>c. Athletes/families stating they will do more to reduce eco-impacts at home</p>	<p>a. 175 volunteers/435 hours</p> <p>b. 3200 distributed/N/A</p> <p>c. 80%</p>
Economic Performance	<p>a. Temporary jobs created</p> <p>b. Economic impact on Seattle</p>	<p>a. 10,200</p> <p>b. \$76.4 million</p>
Diversity	<p>a. Volunteers statistics</p>	<p>a. 48 states, 23 Countries</p>
Footprint	<p><b>Pre-Games estimate:</b></p> <p>a. Air transportation</p> <p>b. Commuting during the Games</p> <p>c. Food</p> <p>d. Shipping</p> <p>e. Waste</p> <p>f. Energy</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b></p>	<p><b>Tons of CO2</b></p> <p>a. 3,625</p> <p>b. 62.24</p> <p>c. 118.05</p> <p>d. 76.31</p> <p>e. 158</p> <p>f. 0.9</p> <p><b>4,041</b></p> <p><b>Percentage</b></p> <p>90%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>3%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>4%</p> <p>0%</p> <p><b>100%</b></p>
	<p><b>Post-Games calculation:</b></p> <p>a. Air transportation</p> <p>b. Commuting during the Games</p> <p>c. Food</p> <p>d. Shipping</p> <p>e. Waste</p> <p>f. Energy</p> <p>g. Ground miscellaneous transportation</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b></p>	<p><b>Tons of CO2</b></p> <p>a. 3863.25</p> <p>b. 74.65</p> <p>c. 165.19</p> <p>d. 76.13</p> <p>e. 13</p> <p>f. 0.03</p> <p>g. 7.68</p> <p><b>4,200</b></p> <p><b>Percentage</b></p> <p>91%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>4%</p> <p>2%</p> <p>1%</p> <p>0.1%</p> <p>0.2%</p> <p><b>100%</b></p>



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