**What is the U.S. Athlete Leadership Council?**

The U.S. Athlete Leadership Council (USALC) is a council of athlete leaders who represent Special Olympics athletes throughout the United States. Comprised of eight regional members, each representing a different multi-state region, as well as up to four at-large members, the USALC gathers athlete feedback for Special Olympics North America and its related official national Councils, committees, and task forces/working groups within the United States on issues affecting Special Olympics athletes at the national or world level.

The USALC advocates for athletes from across the United States, ensuring they have a say in what is going on within the Special Olympics movement. The USALC is proof that we as athletes can do more than play sports in Special Olympics: we can provide valuable feedback to make Special Olympics the best organization it can be. Decisions made within Special Olympics affect all of us as athletes, and we work hard to ensure athletes’ voices are heard at the highest levels of the organization.

**How does the U.S. Athlete Leadership Council gather feedback?**

Depending on the situation, the USALC can use different approaches to gather feedback from athletes across the country. The USALC holds conference calls on the third Monday of each month to consider and discuss key topics, then proposes ideas and solutions to issues facing athletes and Special Olympics as a whole. The USALC maintains a network of communication with athletes on the boards of directors in every state, ensuring many different perspectives are considered for feedback. When additional input is needed, the USALC can utilize surveys and other means to connect with athletes nationwide.

**How does someone request feedback from the U.S. Athlete Leadership Council?**

The USALC wants to engage with Special Olympics Program leaders to provide the athletes’ perspective on issues that matter most to the Special Olympics movement. You can submit discussion topics to the USALC Chair (Bruce Clarke: bclarke@sotx.org) and facilitator (Stephanie Levine, slevine@specialolympicsco.org), including any relevant background information or supporting documents for consideration. Below is the timeline the USALC requires for gathering input and returning feedback from the USALC, athlete board members, and other athlete leaders throughout the U.S. If feedback is needed quicker than the timeline below, the Council may be able to expedite the process if you communicate your deadline and include any relevant materials right away.

* Two weeks for input from the USALC members.
* Three weeks to gather input from athletes on state boards of directors.
* Four-plus weeks for feedback from athlete leaders throughout the U.S. via survey links, emails, state Athlete Leadership Council meetings, etc.