Special Olympics History

- Founded by Eunice Kennedy Shriver in 1968
- 1968: First International Games held at Soldier Field in Chicago
  - 1,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities from 26 U.S. states and Canada
  - Athletes competed in athletics and aquatics.
- 1971: US Olympic Committee gave Special Olympics official approval to use the name “Olympics”
- One of only three global organizations sanctioned by the International Olympic Committee
  - Junior Olympics, Paralympics, and Special Olympics
SOMT History

- Initial Launch of Special Olympics Montana – 1970
  
  First Summer Games (SSG) – 1970 in Billings at Daylis Stadium with approximately 400 athletes competing in Track & Field and Swimming. It is still held annually, with nearly 1200 athletes and partners competing in 2017.

- First State Basketball Tournament (SBB) – 1975 in Great Falls at CMR Fieldhouse with approximately 250 athletes competing. It is still held annually, with approximately 750 athletes and unified partners competing 2017.

- First State Winter Games (SWG) held in 1977. As of 2018, SWG is no longer offered as a state-level event, but is still offered at the area level.

- First State Bowling Championships added in 2016 and are held annually. Approximately 700 athletes and unified partners competed in 2018.

SOMT Currently:

- Over 2300 Athletes
- Over 4000 Volunteers
Sports & Competitions Offered

SOMT offers 18 sports

- Alpine Skiing
- Aquatics/Swimming
- Athletics
- Basketball
- Bocce
- Bowling
- Cross Country Skiing
- Cycling
- Equestrian
- Floor Hockey (local sport)
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Kayaking
- Powerlifting
- Snowboarding
- Snowshoeing
- Soccer
- Triathlon

Competition Opportunities

- Area Games
- State Games
  - State Summer Games (SSG)
  - State Basketball Tournament (SBB)
  - State Bowling Championships
- USA Games
  - USA Summer Games
- World Games
  - World Summer Games (WSG)
  - World Winter Games (WWG)
Volunteers

Class A: Volunteers who have regular, close physical contact with athletes, are in a position of authority or supervision with athletes, in a position of trust of athletes, or who handle substantial amounts of cash or other assets of the Program.

Examples include: Area Management Team (AMT) Members, Coaches, Unified Partners, Chaperones, Games Management Team (GMT) members, etc.

“Day Of”: Volunteers who agree to help out on a short term basis, usually during an event (competition, fundraiser, etc.)
How to Become a Registered Class A Volunteer

Class A: All Class A Volunteers must submit a volunteer application, pass a criminal background check, and complete the online Protective Behaviors Training.

Link to Volunteer Application:

Link to Online Protective Behaviors Training:
http://resources.specialolympics.org/protective_behaviors_training.aspx
Volunteer Roles: Examples

- School/Agency Coordinator
- Coaching
- Partners Club Member
- Fund-raising Games Mgmt Team (Area/County & State)
- Officiating
- Event Volunteer
- Medical Support
- Recruiting Athletes, Families & Volunteers
- Training
- Public Relations
- Unified Sports™ Partner
- Management Team (Area/County & State)
- State Board Member
- Chaperoning
- Office Support

Special Olympics is one of the LARGEST Volunteer Driven Organizations In The WORLD
Athletes and Unified Partners

Special Olympics Montana
Special Olympics Athlete Oath

“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt!”
Athlete Eligibility

- Person with intellectual disability identified by an agency or professional physician
- Person with closely-related developmental disability, in addition to an intellectual disability or cognitive delay
- Ages 8+ eligible for competition
- Young Athletes Program – for ages 2 to 7 years
How to Become an Athlete

Paperwork:
• Athlete Participation/Medical Form
• Athlete Consent Form
• Athlete Code of Conduct
• Unified Partner Forms

Resources:  http://somt.org/resources/
Athlete Code of Conduct

- Athletes and Unified Partners are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship both in training and competition. To that end, SOMT requires all Athletes and Unified Partners to read the Athlete’s Code of Conduct and sign at the bottom signifying his or her understanding.

- At this time, SOMT does not require an Athlete or Unified Partner to resubmit the form after the initial completion. However, Local Programs have the option of requiring resubmission by the athlete or Unified Partner.
Unified Partners

• Unified partners are individuals without intellectual disabilities who compete alongside athletes on teams for training and/or competition.

• Special Olympics offers 13 unified sports
  • Bowling
  • Basketball
  • Alpine Skiing
  • Showshoeing
  • Cross Country Skiing
  • Golfing
  • Soccer
  • Triathlon
  • Athletics
  • Swimming
  • Bocce
  • Kayaking
  • Equestrian
“Athlete Experience”

Special Olympics Montana
Other Athlete Experiences

- Healthy Athletes
- Athlete Leadership Program (ALPs)
- Young Athletes Program (YAP)
- Unified Strategies
Putting it all together...
TRAINING is the key
COMPETITION is the means
Skill, confidence, courage & joy are the OUTCOMES
Better preparation for life is the GOAL
Lifelong skills & increased independence are the RESULTS
Special Olympics – Training & Competition Timeline

- Registration Package Distributed: 12 weeks out
- Coaches Training: 8-12 weeks out
- Begin Practice: 8-10 weeks out
- Rosters Due: 6 weeks out
- Final Registration Due: 3 weeks out
- Area Competitions: 1-3 weeks out
- State Competition

Eight weeks of practice
Head back to the Coaches Corner page, click on the link for the quiz, and take the quiz. We’re happy to have you as a coach!