

TOGETHER, WE WILL ACHIEVE



***Special
Olympics
Kansas***

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2016 - 2020**

Dear Supporter of Special Olympics Kansas;

Welcome to the new 5-year Strategic Plan for Special Olympics Kansas (SOKS). If we are to have the maximum impact, all constituent groups -- athletes, coaches, family members, volunteers, donors, Board members and staff-- will need to focus on the targets in this plan and work together to achieve them.

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.

Our Mission is as relevant today as it was almost 50 years ago when Special Olympics was founded. As Nelson Mandela said, "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does... Sport can create hope, where once there was only despair... It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination." Sport is still the primary method SOKS achieves change, supported by work in health which has become critical to our mission. At the core, Special Olympics Kansas is a sports organization that uses the power of sport as a catalyst for social change. By drawing attention to the gifts of people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID), we break down misperceptions and tackle negative attitudes.

Although much progress has been made in recent years, people with ID still face stigma, discrimination, social isolation and injustice every day of their lives. They are routinely ignored or excluded by society, and in many cultures little or no value is placed on their worth or abilities. Through sport, SOKS is able to challenge these limiting social views, and expose the measure of inequality and exclusion that people with ID continue to face.

The focus for Special Olympics Kansas therefore needs to be on both providing a high quality sports experience for our participants, and engaging key influencers and communities with that experience in ways that help create positive attitudes and bring about permanent social change towards inclusion of people with ID.

While SOKS has made a tremendous impact, there is clearly much more to do. Ours is an urgent mission, and we must continue to provide opportunities that enable everyone to embrace people with ID as full members of society. When we do that, we show the world that there are millions of different abilities, not disabilities. In the words of a Unified sports partner: "What do you mean? What differences? We are all human -- this is what matters."

Together, we will achieve!

2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan

GOAL: Empower athletes to perform at the best by improving quality and access to our programs.

Special Olympics Kansas will improve the quality of programs, and broaden access to them. This means strengthening our focus on sports programming, supported by our health work, so that athletes are fit and healthy, master skills, build confidence and self-reliance and perform at their best on and off the field. As we do this, Special Olympics Kansas will use its expertise to be a leader on how to achieve inclusion in and through sport, and improve access to the effective programs we have, more than creating new ones. Special Olympics Athletes will have increased, year-round opportunities to participate, and improved quality will help us attract new athletes. Special Olympics Kansas will also seek targeted growth, especially in places where our presence is low.

- A. Enhance athlete performance levels by improving the quality of sports programming.**
- B. Increase inclusion and broaden access through Unified Sports, Young Athletes and expansion in schools and new areas.**
- C. Grow our health program to support athlete participation in sport and society.**

STRATEGIES:

To expand and enhance the training of coaches to provide enhanced training to the athletes resulting in an athlete's improved performance.

- Create a plan to offer increased opportunities for coaches education;
- To annually offer additional face-to-face Coach Trainings; and
- Review and revise the Coach Certification requirement to support an increased focus on coach training.

To develop 3 partnerships with other sports organizations to increase opportunities for expanded competition to individuals with intellectual disabilities:

- Missouri Valley AAU Swimming;
- Missouri Valley Tennis; and
- Missouri Valley Track and Field.

To identify opportunities to expand competition opportunities within SOKS sport offerings:

- Offering events for High Performance athletes in a sport;
- The addition of preliminaries to the competitions, where feasible;

- Evaluate if a sport needs to be offered at the local, region and state or may be offered at the local and region, or at local and state;
- Establish a plan by which to develop a sport; and
- Evaluate the events offered within a sport to ensure events offered are meeting the needs of the athletes.

To increase the number of registered athletes by 5% each year.

- Expand the Brand of SOKS to a wider base;
- Increase access to Unified Sports for all age groups;
- Create flexible ways to expand the offerings of Young Athletes to be included in the programming in each Region;
- Define and understand the purpose of Special Olympics Kansas;
- Review the sports currently offered to determine if present offerings meet today's needs; and
- Establish Regional goals for the growth of athlete numbers.

To increase the number of school age participants participating in the program by 10%.

- Develop SOKS marketing materials designed for parents/family member of school age children and youth;
- To distribute SOKS materials (schools pamphlet) with an introductory letter to the Special Services Cooperatives;
- To meet face-to-face with the director of the Cooperatives about their participation, identifying their local program and the contact information;
- Meet with the local recreation commission or parks and recreation department to assist in distributing and promoting SOKS;
- Contact the YMCA's to partner with and assist in the distribution of information and recruitment of school age participants; and
- Contact school PTA's and PTO's to assist in distributing SOKS information within their school.

To grow the health and fitness program to support athlete participation in sport and society.

- To assist athletes, families and coaches to improve the athletes' fitness and general health;
- Work with health related partners to encourage them to provide better healthcare for individuals with intellectual disabilities;
- To expand the offering of Healthy Habits, a health care preventive program; and
- To recruit, orient and train health care professionals to volunteer to support the health and fitness initiatives of SOKS.

Goal: Change Attitudes Towards People with ID

Attitude change must be a deliberate outcome of Special Olympics Kansas. We create change from others engaging with and witnessing the athletes as they participate in sports. It is essential that Special Olympics Kansas continuously work to improve awareness of what people with ID can achieve. We need people to see the athletes competing, and athletes leading the

way as the face and voice of our movement; that is what opens hearts and minds and ultimately promotes inclusion in friendships, communities, health, education and jobs

- A. Improve external awareness through PR, celebrities and government engagement.**
- B. Connect everyone in the Movement so we can harness our power and speak with a collective voice.**
- C. Maximize external impact of Games and competitions to showcase athletes' abilities.**

STRATEGIES:

To maintain the large number of volunteers involved in the program, but look to enhance and expand the opportunities and experiences.

- Create an Annual Volunteer Appreciation event in each Region;
- Design and distribute a Volunteer Evaluation Form following each volunteer experience;
- Ask and encourage volunteers to place comments/experience on their social media;
- To purchase a Volunteer Management System upgrade;
- Send acknowledgement to each volunteer following an event with a recap (number of athletes, amount of money raised, etc.);
- Develop an on-line volunteer information/education program; and
- Establish a Task Force to provide insights and ideas for volunteers.

To expand the number of trained Global Messengers to include a minimum of 2 per Region.

- To bring forward stories of athletes/families which focus on an interesting theme;
- Design a program for Global Messengers to place a courtesy thank you call to high end donors;
- Determine the various scenarios in which a Global Messenger may be utilized; and
- To promote the program to sponsors.

Connect everyone in the Movement so we can harness our power and speak with a collective voice.

- Create a composite list of Law Enforcement Torch Run agencies with contacts to distribute relevant information;
- Develop talking points for events/activities/competitions and deploy to staff, BOD, GMT's, committees, coaches, etc.;
- Identify, recruit and educate celebrities willing to promote/endorse SOKS; and
- Educate constituents on a specific program in each newsletter.

Maximize external impact of Games and Competitions to showcase athletes' abilities

- Identify and recruit athletes the organization can feature;
- Incorporate on signage at events information about Facebook, twitter handle, hashtags, etc.;

- Promote and recruit Fans in the Stands;
- Promote athlete features in marketing collateral;
- Utilize the competition aspect of Games to educate VIP's about Special Olympics; and
- Educate the SOKS staff and BOD to use social media at events.

GOAL: To Build Capacity, by improving resources and leadership:

Securing adequate resources is vital to the success of Special Olympics Kansas over the next five years. The aim is to align existing and new partners with our strategies, and combine increased resources with dynamic leadership to deliver the best possible impact for people with ID. In addition, we will integrate athletes, families and young people as we implement every aspect of this plan, especially in leadership roles, to ensure success:

Athletes - If we want the world to be inclusive, Special Olympics athletes can and should contribute in ways beyond the sports field. This means involving athletes as volunteers, as coaches, as officials, as fundraisers, as staff, as Board members. It means developing more athlete leaders, and ensuring they are actively engaged in meaningful roles at all levels. When we do that we will learn from our athletes, and they in turn will teach the world the true meaning of inclusion.

Families - The families of Special Olympics athletes are critical to this plan. They understand the meaning and benefits of inclusion, and provide a critical voice we need to move our priorities forward. Special Olympics Kansas needs to engage additional family members in new ways, for example becoming volunteers, supporting home exercise, helping to raise more resources, and telling their stories.

Youth - Young people with and without ID are important because they are the future of Special Olympics Kansas. They also are more open to inclusion – they understand and embrace it. They bring the creativity and energy we need to change the world. To be successful, Special Olympics needs to create systems for engaging young people beyond youth to lifetime involvement. We also need to reach young people in new ways and engage them in our vision and goals.

STRATEGIES:

Generate additional resources and strengthen leadership

- Identify, solicit and secure new corporate sponsorships for Games, Torch Run, Health and Fitness and Unified Sports;
- Identify avenues to work with local programs on new revenue sharing opportunities;

- Evaluate current online fundraising platform and determine if it will meet the needs from 2016-2020;
- Actively recruit new community members to serve on event committees;
- Ensure events follow brand guidelines; and
- Incorporate SOKS messaging at fundraising and sponsorship events for attendees to leave knowing more about the programs.

To create additional opportunities and experiences to enhance the involvement of individuals creating a pool of individuals with varied experiences from whom to draw when opportunities arise.

- To create succession plans throughout the organization;
- Local Programs to identify an individual as the Assistant Coordinator;
- To educate volunteers of other opportunities furthering their involvement and organizational knowledge;
- Create mentorship program for Local Programs to implement;
- Invite a larger pool of individuals to attend the Kansas Program Conference; and
- Promote teamwork and the involvement of others.

To become less dependent upon a single funding source as the largest piece of the annual budget and move toward no one source providing more than 30% of the organizations funding.

- Research new fundraising opportunities;
- Implement an Individual Giving program;
- Enhance current fundraisers, by strengthening marketing of the event;
- Strengthen sponsorship programs; and
- Develop collateral materials which speak to the importance of the Special Olympics program and the way in which the program which we are seeking support funding works to accomplish the purpose.



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