

Special Olympics Kansas

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CONTACT: Donna Zimmerman
PHONE: 913.236.9290 ext. 112
E-MAIL pr@kssso.org



MAKING A DIFFERENCE AWARDS ANNOUNCED SPECIAL OLYMPICS KANSAS RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Mission, Ks – Special Olympics Kansas (SOKS) has announced Making A Difference Awards for 2013.

- ❖ Family of Year – Family of Brady Tanner – Lawrence, KS
- ❖ Business of Year – KOAM TV/FOX 14 – Pittsburg, KS
- ❖ Coach of the Year – Irene Smith, ANW Coop – Iola KS
- ❖ Event Volunteer of Year – Rob Emery, Pittsburg, KS
- ❖ Program Volunteers of Year – Dave & Mary VanSchuyver, Plainville, KS

The Tanner Family are members of the Douglas County Jayhawks. They have shown that people with disabilities can do great things. Their commitment to helping Brady as a world champion powerlifter has elevated the sport throughout the state. They are role models for all Special Olympics Families.

KOAM-TV/FOX 14 has helped promote Special Olympics in SE Kansas. They sent 2 reporters to Lincoln NE to cover the New Hope Bulldogs team on their quest for a national championship in flag football. KOAMTV creates a promo video annually for the Polar Plunge. They always promote Special Olympics in a positive way.

Irene Smith has coached for 37 years and is still coaching!. She helped start the ANW Coop Team in Iola in 1973 and has been involved as coach, program coordinator, and fundraiser. She taught for 59 years, 37 of them in Special Education and is truly the face of Special Olympics in Iola.

Rob Emery has volunteered well over 25 years, starting as a police officer in Pittsburg. He is now the voice of the State Summer Games, brining his own equipment to announce the Opening Ceremony and awards throughout the weekend

Dave & Mary VanSchuyver are local program coordinators for Solomon Valley. They host the West region basketball tournament, recruit volunteers, handle fundraising and meals for athletes. They are exceptional team leaders.

Chris Hahn, President & CEO of Special Olympics Kansas stated, "It is an honor to recognize outstanding service to our organization, and these winners represent the best of the best. They have made a significant difference in the lives of our athletes, in our programming, and in our mission. SOKS is proud to recognize their accomplishments"

The Award winners will be officially recognized at the Opening Ceremonies of Summer Games, June 6th at 7 pm in Wichita at Cessna Stadium on the Wichita State University Campus.

Special Olympics Kansas is dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive, respected members of society through sports, health and nutrition programs and leadership development.

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