

Special Olympics Kansas

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**Special
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Kansas

NEWS RELEASE

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Special Olympics Kansas Receives \$25,000 Contribution from Amerigroup

Mission KS ~ Special Olympics Kansas (SOKS) announced they have received a \$25,000 contribution from Amerigroup to promote Health and Wellness programs and provide health screenings to all athletes of the 2017 Summer Games. The presentation was made during last week's Opening Ceremony of the 47th annual Summer Games. SOKS will recognize Amerigroup as a Mission Partner.

"Amerigroup is proud to sponsor and support Special Olympics Kansas. This is a great partnership where Amerigroup associates have a wonderful opportunity to volunteer to help with Special Olympics Kansas events and raise awareness of this exceptional organization, while also working to help Kansans live healthier lives," said Frank Clepper, Amerigroup President.

The SOKS Health & Wellness program not only identifies health issues but offers health education and preventative practices intended to assist each athlete to develop a healthy lifestyle. Teaching preventative practices impacts the quality of life of SOKS athletes. Lessons include: Hydration, Nutrition, Exercise, Sun Safety, Handwashing, and Oral Health. The goal is to provide Healthy Athletes practices at regional competitions and to also partner with residential facilities who could also offer them on a daily basis. SOKS wants to create a "culture" of health and wellness and increase awareness about the importance of health.

Special Olympics Kansas has offered health screenings to athletes since 2009. These screenings include vision screenings, hearing screenings, dental screenings, and general health screenings. In addition to health education at screening events athletes may receive hygiene items, protective eye wear, and glasses. Amerigroup will be the presenting sponsor at all SOKS Healthy Athletes Screenings in 2017.

Although not considered a "medically underserved" group by the federal government, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have limited access to healthcare, and the quality of the care they do receive is often poor. Additionally, they have a 40 percent greater risk of preventable secondary health conditions, such as obesity, poor fitness, nutritional deficits, untreated or poorly treated vision, dental, hearing and podiatric problems.

Energized by the pride and power of teamwork, Special Olympics Kansas provides individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to be an athlete...and more...through acceptance, inclusion, physical fitness, health and nutrition programs and leadership development.

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