

# Special Olympics Kansas

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CONTACT: Donna Zimmerman  
PHONE: 913.236.9290 ext. 112  
E-MAIL: [pr@kssso.org](mailto:pr@kssso.org)



## **Josh Alters, Topeka/Shawnee Athlete Elected to Special Olympics Kansas Board**

**Mission, KS – Josh Alters, member of Topeka/Shawnee Special Olympics Program was recently elected to the Board of Directors of Special Olympics Kansas (SOKS). He will represent athletes and provide athlete input to the Board at their regular meetings.**

**Alters stated, “It has been a dream of mine to one day be a member of the SOKS BOD as a voice for the athletes. It is most important that the athletes be heard and that inclusion becomes more and more common in our communities, our country and our world. I am looking forward to the excitement of being a part of a new leadership, with forward-thinking John Lair as President/CEO, and to seeing what great things lie ahead and where the future takes us!”**

**Alters is no stranger to representing athletes. Just a few of his accomplishments include, emceeding the Special Olympics North America Softball Invitational Opening Night, serving as a Celebrity Chef for a State Softball fundraising event, Kansas Delegate to USA Games and won Gold and Silver in swimming, & addressing Kansas Legislators at annual Shrimp Peel. He also regularly attends Business Charity Fairs to talk about Special Olympics Kansas.**

**Alters recently served on the Kansas Law Enforcement Torch Run Board for 4 years, as an athlete representative.**

**John Lair, President & CEO of SOKS stated, “I am excited to welcome Josh to the Board of Directors. Josh will be a great advocate and leader for the athletes of Special Olympics Kansas. I have seen Josh grow in the 10 years I have known him and I am truly proud to say he is a member of our Board of Directors. Having Josh's ideas and passion on the board is a huge plus for us”.**

**When Alters was 6 months old, he was diagnosed with Williams Syndrome. There were only 100 cases in the world at that time. His first 4 ½ years were spent with a lot of therapists. His genetic disorder is also known as “pixie” or “elfin” syndrome, due to the facial formation and features. He was bullied constantly. He saw his life change when he joined Special Olympics. Josh stated “I became an athlete who could finally compete and the kids next to me never made fun of me. My team mates became friends for life.”**

**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 achievement, acceptance, inclusion, physical fitness, health and nutrition programs and leadership development.**

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