Special Olympics
Kansas

Live Life Without Limits

2016 Annual Report
A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Dear Supporters and Friends of Special Olympics Kansas,

As Chair of the Board of Directors of Special Olympics Kansas (SOKS), it is my honor and privilege to present to you the annual report for 2016. As we are rapidly approaching the 50th Anniversary of Special Olympics, we are excited for what the future brings. Each year we as an organization strive to improve our services, visibility and recruitment, insuring that the best programs possible are managed and provided to the athletes and families of SOKS.

Special Olympics Kansas would not produce successes as an organization without the support of our partners, communities and the volunteers who step forward every day. We truly are appreciative of your support and dedication and ask that you share your experiences with the next generation that will continue to offer this support.

In tandem, the support law enforcement continues to provide through the Kansas Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR), raising awareness and funds for Special Olympics Kansas, is incredible. In 2016 there were 1,267 officers involved in organizing fundraisers that raised over $501,000.00 and carrying the torch for countless miles through local communities. Our appreciation extends to their organizations, families and communities that support their efforts. The LETR was started in 1981 in Kansas and now spans the globe and Kansas law enforcement still proudly claims, “The First to Carry the Torch”.

In 2016, the President and CEO of Special Olympics Kansas, Chris Hahn, announced his plans to retire in 2017 after serving the organization for 29 years. During his leadership, Kansas has initiated new programs: Health & Wellness, Young Athletes, & Unified Champion Schools, to name a few. In the fall 2016, a search began for his successor, and we are eager to embrace this new era and the challenges that will face us during this time of transition.

We are fortunate as an organization to work with amazing individuals who we continue to be proud to call our family. Thank you for your continued support and passion for the organization and those we serve.

Special Olympics will always be, one movement, across every community and every country throughout the world. Our goal is to build communities of acceptance, loving families, inspired employees, coaches, volunteers and fans, and we are united in our commitment to inclusion, respect and dignity.

Together, we will achieve.

Mark Malick
Senior Special Agent, KBI
Chairperson, SOKS Board of Directors
The 10th annual Truck Convoy for NW Kansas was held in September. The communities of Colby, Oakley, Goodland serve as the starting and ending legs of the convoy. In 2016 Kansas ranked 8th in funds raised from all US and Canada convoys, with $58,372.48!

The Truck Convoy - moving athletes from the sidelines to the playing field.

Sgt. Adam Taylor, Prairie Village Police Dept. was inducted into the Richard LaMunyon Hall of fame for his contributions to the KS LETR. Over 1,200 officers carried the Flame of Hope through 52 Kansas counties, covering 1,563 miles; running, biking, and horseback riding through local communities, promoting awareness of athletes and programs.

The LETR International Conference was attended by 21 representatives from Kansas. For the first time, Kansas added an athlete ambassador to their delegation. Josh Alters, from Topeka, represented SOKS athletes and participated side-by-side with the Kansas officers in all events and sessions. KS LETR appointed two new Kansas Regional Coordinators. Chief Joni Showalter, Goodland PD, represents NW Kansas. Chief Michael Inlow, Meade PD, is the SW Kansas Regional Coordinator.

Josh (center) with athletes and law enforcement officers at a Red Robin Tip a Cop in Topeka

Sporting KC continued the MLS Exchange program sending a Special Olympics KC Metro Unified Team to compete against SOTX, with a return match hosted in Kansas at Children’s Mercy Park. In addition, Unified Bocce was added as the third sport.

While Unified Sports remains the focal point of our Unified Strategy, SOKS also saw growth in youth leadership and whole school engagement with participating schools electing Unified pairs as team captains, electing student coaches and one school team was entirely run and orchestrated by a student. Eight of the ten Unified Champion school districts promoted Spread The Word Day or Respect Week along with five other districts.
Over $96,000 in free medical screenings were delivered to SOKS athletes. Through Health Promotions, athletes learn about proper exercise and healthy eating. In Special Smiles, they receive dental check-ups. In Opening Eyes, those that have a prescription change, receive new eye glasses.

Christopher Simmons’ mother said, “Without Healthy Athletes, Christopher would not have the opportunity to receive regular health check-ups.” “I do not have to worry because at Healthy Athletes he is always well taken care of. They really know how to work with him and the other athletes.”

Athlete Stivaly Calles said, “I learned the importance of eating a balanced diet with more fruits and vegetables and less sugar. They showed me that Pop Tarts are not a good choice for breakfast.”

CAPITOL HILL DAY

New Hope, Pittsburg, athlete Chevi Peters represented Kansas at Capitol Hill Day in Washington, DC. In addition, to visiting with Kansas legislators he had the opportunity of meeting Mary Davis, Chief Executive Officer of Special Olympics International.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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Most Inspirational Athletes

Leora Kennedy
Dodge City Dodgers

Peter Newport
Topeka Junior Blues

Hall of Fame Inductees

James Franklin
Topeka Shawnee

Michael “Mickey” Algaier
Garden City Tigers

Chevi Peters
New Hope Bulldogs

Aaron Gudenkauf
Topeka Shawnee
MISSION PARTNERS

Amerigroup
RealSolutions
in healthcare

Knights of Columbus
In Service to One. In Service to All.

Lee Stanion
Wholesale Electric Co.

SOKS enjoys working in tandem with our Mission Partners for the benefit of the athletes. The generosity of our Partners provided over $93,000 of free health screenings, $28,000 worth of meals at competitions, $23,000 worth of medals and ribbons and much more......

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Financial Statement: In 2016, two major grants did not award funding to SOKS. These grants were received in the past and included in projected figures for the 2016 budgeted fiscal year. Policies and Procedures are now being put in place by our New CEO/President to eliminate this in future years.
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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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities