



ORGANIZATION

Special Olympics is a global organization that unleashes the human spirit through the transformative power and joy of sport, every day around the world. Special Olympics Illinois is a not-for-profit organization offering year-round training and competition in 18 sports to a community of more than 55,000 traditional athletes, Young Athletes, Unified partners, coaches, volunteers, and more.

Special Olympics transforms the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, allowing them to realize their full potential in sports and in life. Special Olympics programs enhance physical fitness, motor skills, self-confidence, social skills and encourage family and community support. This global organization that unleashes the human spirit through the transformative power and joy of sport, every day around the world.

Special Olympics began in Illinois with the first games at Soldier Field in July 1968 thanks to the efforts of Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her peers. There are now more than 6 million athletes and Unified partners in 170 countries. Special Olympics is financially sound with diverse revenue streams, a thorough annual budget process and increasing organizational revenue streams. Special Olympics Illinois does not charge athletes or their families to participate in the program.

OUR MISSION

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 VISION

Special Olympics Illinois (SOILL) will be a global leader in shaping a culture where people with and without intellectual disabilities are fully integrated into the community by providing year round opportunities in competitive sports, health education, leadership and personal development.

ATHLETE OATH

"Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

OUR REACH

- 18,912 athletes (children and adults) with intellectual disabilities
- 2,689 Young Athletes ages 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities
- 31,984 volunteers and coaches
- 190 competitions each year
- 18 Olympic-type sports
- Programs in 11 Regions, each coordinated by a Region Director and a volunteer committee
- Dynamic sports and corporate partnerships
- Learn more [here](#)

OUR PROGRAMMING

- **COMPETITIVE SPORTS:** Deliver high-quality training and competition in an inclusive culture that stresses athletic excellence, rewards determination, emphasizes health and celebrates achievement.
- **HEALTH PROGRAMMING:** Promote the overall well-being of people with intellectual disabilities via programs that ensure ongoing access to quality, community-based health care services, highlighted by free health screenings at Special Olympics Illinois competitions, games and other venues.
- **LEADERSHIP:** Equip young people and adult influencers with effective tools and training to create sports, classrooms and community actions that produce friendships and acceptance, driving positive attitude and behavioral change toward people with intellectual disabilities in communities statewide, strengthening the fabric of society.

THE NEED IS GREAT

The need for services is great as we estimate that Special Olympics Illinois is currently serving about 10 percent of those eligible to participate and is always working to increase this reach. Individual donors account for 65 percent of our donations so we rely on people just like you to ensure that we can continue reaching out to more of those in need. You can do your part to transform lives by making an [online donation](#) now!

If you have questions not answered here, please [email](#) Special Olympics Illinois.