



Coach - Golf Hometown: Orland Park, IL

1. How long have you been with Special Olympics?

I have been coaching Special Olympics sports for 20 years. I started off by coaching basketball and softball. Since then, I have coached track and field, soccer, bowling, bocce, golf, snowshoeing, powerlifting, floor hockey, and volleyball. Over the years I have also participated in Unified sports, such as Unified golf and Unified volleyball. In 2010, I attended USA games as Team Illinois' golf coach.

2. How has Special Olympics changed your life?

Watching athletes compete in sports has changed my outlook on sports. You don't always have to win or be the best at the sport. Many athletes that I coached have taught me to stay positive, not to get frustrated, to learn from your mistakes and that practice does truly improve your game. Every single opportunity I have to share time with Special Olympics athletes I am reminded that sports should be fun and an opportunity to socialize.

3. What has been your biggest obstacle to overcome?

When I was 23 years old my daughter was born. My wife and I had just graduated with our bachelor's degrees and were excited to begin our careers. Being a young parent has taught me about sacrifice and how important it is to be a good example to your children no matter what the situation brings. I am so proud that my daughter is now in college and we have a very close relationship.

4. What makes you most proud?

Seeing my daughter be successful. She is a sophomore at Grand Valley State University in Michigan. She has great drive to do good in the world. Whatever she puts her mind to she will accomplish. I am very proud of the woman she has become.

5. What are some other accomplishments you are proud of?

In Special Olympics I have played Unified volleyball for eight years. Over these eight years my team has earned at least two state gold medals.



6. What other interests or hobbies do you have?

I thoroughly enjoy playing golf with friends and family. I also love watching my daughter play volleyball.

7. Who do you admire most and why?

This is an easy answer for me. I admire my parents. I am the youngest of four boys and throughout our lives they did everything they could to educate us and provide for us. They taught us that anything we put our mind to we could achieve. My parents are big Special Olympics supporters through my agency.

8. What does attending USA Games mean to you?

It means the world to me to be able to coach again at USA Games. I am looking forward to meeting team Illinois and other athletes that will be at the golf venue. I hope that the competition is fun and fair and that all athletes and coaches experience life-changing opportunities.

9. How are you preparing/training for USA Games?

I have begun truly focusing on my personal health. I have started riding my bike again at least 10 miles, two to three days per week. I'm working on eating healthier and choosing foods that nourish my body.

10. Have you been to a World Games or USA Games before?

In 2010, I attended USA Games as Team Illinois' golf coach.

11. Are you employed? If so, where at and what's your role?

Yes I am - I have been Special Recreation Supervisor for the Oak Lawn Park District since 2001.

12. Are you a currently a student? If so, where and is it a Unified Champion School?

No I am not.

