



SPECIAL OLYMPICS PENNSYLVANIA STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2015

Athlete Led. Volunteer Driven. Community Building.

Special Olympics
Pennsylvania



INTRODUCTION LETTER

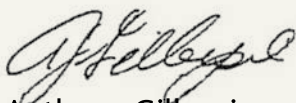
OUR CHAIRMAN & PRESIDENT

Athlete Led. Volunteer Driven. Community Building. Those words describe who we are, what we are about, and what we aspire to become as we implement our new strategic plan. We have worked for several years to strengthen our organizational foundation. We are now well positioned to do more – to serve more athletes and to enhance the quality of the experience we provide to all of our athletes.

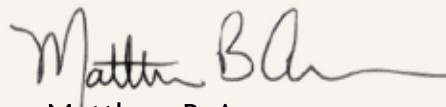
Special Olympics is a global Movement that has flourished for more than 40 years due to the passion and the commitment of its **volunteers**. Strong, vibrant local programs, managed by volunteers, are essential to everything we do. And, we have some of the best, most passionate, and most dedicated volunteers anywhere in the world! Our short-term success and our long-term health will depend on doing everything we can to support these incredible people and to recruit, train, and retain additional volunteers to carry us into the future.

Special Olympics views itself as an athlete-led and athlete-centric organization. But, as a Movement, we have a huge opportunity to do more and do better in terms of **athlete leadership**. There are incredible possibilities and we have an opportunity to make a real impact. We will focus on helping our athletes develop leadership skills and then utilize those skills in meaningful leadership roles. We will listen to our athletes' voices to guide us as we grow over the next three years to serve more athletes and as we deliver a richer, higher quality experience to athletes everywhere around the state.

This strategic plan, developed with the collective input of hundreds of stakeholders and approved by the Special Olympics Pennsylvania Board of Directors, is intended to provide a common focus for the entire organization – from local programs to the state office. It does not, of course, describe every task and activity we will complete over the next three years. Rather, it captures the most important activities and aligns them so as to provide overall direction for our collective efforts. TOGETHER, we will create a lasting impact on the lives of our athletes. In so doing, we will also transform their families, our partners, our staff and volunteers, and we will **build a better community!**



Anthony Gillespie
Chairman of the Board



Matthew B. Aaron
President and CEO

INTRODUCTION

OUR MISSION

To provide year-round sports training and 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.

OVERVIEW

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides training in 22 sports and offers hundreds of competition opportunities each year to approximately 20,000 athletes of all ages and ability levels around the state through its state offices and 56 local Programs. It takes a team of dedicated state and local staff and thousands of volunteers to make this happen. This strategic plan has been created to help guide the efforts of this state/local team for the next three years, and it outlines and aligns the most important activities to provide overall direction for our collective efforts.



How This Plan Was Developed

The process for creating this plan began in December of 2011 when more than 200 athletes, volunteers, coaches, Board members, and staff participated in a visioning session during our annual Leadership Conference. The group shared their ideas and vision for the future we would like to build together over the next three years. Several themes emerged from this session that informed further development of the strategic plan.

In the Spring of 2012, we conducted an electronic survey of key stakeholders. Most of the questions on this survey replicated those used for a similar survey back in 2009 so that we could look for trends in responses. Almost 500 individuals completed the survey, and interns from Bloomsburg, Penn State, and Wharton helped analyze the findings. Teams of interns then gathered additional data by conducting interviews during our 2012 Summer Games.

In addition to output from the Leadership Conference visioning session, online survey results, and Summer Games interviews, we provided our Strategic Planning Committee with several other sources of data including findings from a recent internal process review, sports survey results, and information from the Special Olympics, Inc. (SOI) Global Strategic Plan. Our strategic planning committee included athletes, local Program volunteers, coaches, staff, and board members. The group met for the first time in May 2012 in Philadelphia and conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis and developed the overarching drivers for the next strategic plan. The **Drivers** are those key areas (strategic goals or focus areas) where we will concentrate our efforts over the course of our next strategic plan. More detail about each of our three drivers and the vision associated with each is provided in the table below.

2013-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN DRIVERS

DRIVER	VISION
ATHLETES	Enhance the overall athlete experience.
VOLUNTEERS	Develop a comprehensive, well-trained and diverse volunteer base that will drive our organization into the future.
FOUNDATION	Solidify and strengthen our foundation through leadership, trust, and financial growth to ensure a consistent statewide athlete experience.



This lighthouse was drawn by Special Olympics Pennsylvania – Philadelphia athlete Lisa Barbour, a member of the strategic planning committee. It captures her inspiring vision of how the strategic plan drivers all connect together with the foundation anchoring the organization and our volunteers serving as the framework that lifts up our athletes and helps their light shine forth!

These drivers are all interrelated. Athletes would not have good opportunities without the assistance of good volunteers and the backing of an organization with a solid foundation. Volunteers are supported through the foundation of the organization, and the organization exists solely to serve the athletes. Due to this strong relationship, each of these drivers will be given equal priority.

Following Board review of the three drivers during their meeting in June 2012, the Strategic Planning Committee met again in July to develop more detailed strategies and tactics associated with each Driver. **Strategies** are defined for each driver and provide specific areas or activities we will focus on to address each driver. **Tactics** are identified underneath each strategy and provide even more detail about specific activities we will engage in related to each strategy and driver.

The remainder of the summer was spent sharing information with stakeholders about the plan and seeking input to validate and refine the work completed. A “town hall” conference call open to all volunteers was held to share an overview of the drivers, strategies, and tactics and then a series of three online webinars were conducted, one for each of the drivers. In September 2012, the Leadership Conference was again used to gather additional input about the plan and to begin the dialog about how we will measure and define success and the specific roles everyone will play in achieving success. All of this input was then used to develop the strategic plan presented on the following pages.

THE 2013-15 STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC DRIVERS

DRIVER 1: **Enhance the Overall Athlete Experience**

Vision: By 2015, SOPA will be a global leader in athlete leadership. Our athlete's voices will guide us as we grow and as we deliver a richer, higher quality experience to athletes everywhere around the state.

STRATEGIES:

Athlete Leadership – Ensure our athletes are directly involved in leading SOPA into the future. We will ensure our athletes are directly involved in leading SOPA into the future. In the past, there have been opportunities for athletes to assume leadership roles within the organization, but these opportunities were not always widely known or effectively used. We will change that by placing emphasis on exploring and creating meaningful leadership opportunities and then utilizing athletes effectively in these roles. To ensure their success in these roles, we will adequately train and prepare our athletes by implementing an “Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs) University” or other similar training model to foster further leadership development. Finally, we will seek and use feedback from our athletes to ensure their needs are being met. We will use athlete representatives and athlete committees to obtain input from their peers regarding all aspects of Special Olympics.

Growth – Increase the number of athletes participating and competing by 15%. We will increase the number of athletes who train and compete, with a focus on those areas of the state currently serving relatively low numbers of athletes. We will use two means to achieve our overall goal of 15% growth. First, we will encourage all local Programs to grow by at least 6% over the next three years. Second, for those local Programs with current penetration rates (the percentage of the eligible population being served¹) of less than 3%, we will encourage them to reach that threshold by the end of 2015. To foster growth, we will build new strategic partnerships with various organizations including schools, service agencies, and other nonprofits. And, we will work to eliminate or reduce barriers to participation such as transportation costs and administrative burdens. The state office will work collaboratively with local Programs to ensure they are equipped to manage and sustain this growth.

¹The eligible population of persons with intellectual disabilities in a given area will be calculated as 3% of the general population using the estimate provided by the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

See <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/aidd/programs/pcpid>.

Quality – Enhance the quality of the experience we provide to our athletes. While it is important that we work to increase the number of athletes we serve, we also must ensure we provide high-quality opportunities and experiences for all of our athletes. We must continue to focus on “doing the basics well,” and we will not sacrifice the quality of what we offer in order to add new programs or simply to increase our numbers.

We will continue the review of our current sport and competition offerings to ensure we are providing an optimal mix of the right sports, right competitions, and right seasons. We will work to build better, healthier communities through a more holistic approach to health, nutrition, fitness, and inclusion – working with partners to integrate and align activities across multiple disciplines, such as Healthy Athletes, to achieve better outcomes for our athletes and their communities. We will enhance the experiences of our athletes by focusing on two areas: invitationals and Unified Sports. Invitationals, defined as local competitions involving more than one Program, offer cost-effective ways to provide competition opportunities to athletes beyond those available solely within a local Program. We will offer more invitationals and increase the number of athletes taking advantage of these opportunities. We will also increase awareness of and participation in Unified Sports to provide additional opportunities for our athletes and further engage the broader community.





Measuring Success – Key indicators of success over the next three years include:

- All local Programs will have an athlete representative on their management team by the end of 2014. At least 25 athlete committees will be in place in local Programs around the state by the end of 2015. To support this, the state office will more clearly define these roles in 2013 and work with local Programs to assist them with this development.
- Each local Program will certify one (1) additional athlete as a coach by the end of 2015. The state office must develop the capacity to track these new coaches and will provide training and mentoring support.
- Hire at least one (1) athlete to fill a paid state staff position.
- Explore “ALPs University” concepts and develop a long-range plan during 2013. Conduct a pilot program in 2014.
- Add 15% more athletes by the end of 2015 (the baseline will be defined based on census numbers taken in early 2013).
- Two Unified Soccer teams will take part in the 2014 USA National Games.
- By the end of 2015, every local Program will either offer its own invitational or send athletes to participate in at least one invitational each year.



DRIVER 2: **Strengthen Our Volunteer Base**

Vision: We will develop a comprehensive, well-trained and committed volunteer base that will drive our organization into the future.

STRATEGIES:

Assess – Identify specific volunteer support needs. We will conduct an initial volunteer assessment to ensure we accurately understand our current and future volunteer needs. We will then review and update these needs on an ongoing basis. We will also ensure our volunteer position descriptions are accurate and concise to attract the most suitable and qualified candidates.

Recruit – Attract new volunteers who meet our specific needs. As our organization grows and evolves, so do our volunteer needs. We must be creative, flexible, and diligent in addressing the challenges of recruiting volunteers who will serve our organization and help us deliver our mission in the future. We will seek state and local partners to help us identify and attract new volunteers to fill our requirements – from one-day opportunities to year-round leadership positions. We will develop targeted volunteer recruitment campaigns using all appropriate means, including social media. We will explore ways to simplify the volunteer registration process, leveraging technology to the maximum extent possible. And, we will look for creative and flexible solutions, such as job sharing, that accommodate the time and availability constraints of our volunteers while still allowing us to meet our organizational goals.

Retain – Foster long-term support and volunteer satisfaction. We must do a better job of thanking our volunteers for their dedication and service. Therefore, we will implement better volunteer recognition programs at both the state and local levels. In addition, we will increase the quality and quantity of the training programs we offer to make it easier for volunteers to receive the training they need. Technology will enable us to extend our reach, but we must also expand our traditional offerings as well to ensure we reach volunteers everywhere. Finally, to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of our local Programs, we will fully implement the Succession Planning program approved by the Board of Directors.





Measuring Success – Key indicators of success over the next three years include:

- Complete an initial volunteer assessment in 2013 that identifies both local Program management needs and sport-specific coaching needs. This assessment will take into consideration the other goals of this plan (including growth targets) to ensure current and future needs are addressed. Results will feed into the development of targeted outreach campaigns/strategies.
- Following an initial statewide assessment, Field Directors will work with local Program volunteer coordinators to ensure local Program needs are assessed and updated on an ongoing basis.
- Develop and implement recruitment campaigns to address the needs identified through the volunteer assessments. These campaigns will be tailored to meet specific needs and will include, where appropriate, strategies to re-engage former volunteers (inactive Class A volunteers) as well as further engage one-day volunteers in deeper, longer-term roles with the organization.
- Update SOPA's volunteer registration form to ensure it accurately captures all pertinent information. It will be available on SOPA's website by 2014.
- Update all volunteer position descriptions by the end of 2013 to ensure they are accurate and concise in order to serve as effective tools when recruiting new volunteers.
- By the end of 2013, all local Programs will identify a transition date for their program manager. Those Programs with transition dates occurring prior to the end of 2015 will have assistant managers identified and in training at least 18 months in advance. By 2015, local Programs will begin developing succession plans for the remaining management team positions.
- Enhance volunteer recognition at both the local and state levels. This will start with a "thank you" when an individual first signs up online for an event or registers as a volunteer and will include annual local and state-level volunteer recognition initiatives.
- By the end of 2013, 17 webinars will be available to provide on-demand online training for all management team positions and other key roles (including coaches and heads of delegation HOD).
- By 2015, multiple training schools will be offered seasonally in each region of the state in order to make training more convenient and accessible.

*Unleashing the human spirit
through the transformative power
and joy of sports everyday!*

DRIVER 3: **Solidify and Strengthen Our Foundation**

Vision: We will solidify and strengthen our foundation through leadership, trust, and financial growth to ensure a consistent statewide athlete experience.

STRATEGIES:

Increase and Cultivate Partnerships – Build new relationships and enhance current relationships to financially support the movement. A significant part of the success of the movement in Pennsylvania is due to the contributions of partners and sponsors of both competition and fundraising events. These partners provide not only financial and logistical support, but often large numbers of volunteers as well. To continue to grow financially and programmatically, SOPA will secure additional corporate partners for all major state, sectional, and local competitions and fundraising events and will work towards a 20% increase in overall corporate giving by the end of 2015. In addition, we will continue to focus on growing the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR). In particular, we will recruit more law enforcement officers and expand our network around the state. We will grow our existing LETR activities and create new ones. At least two of these new events will be shared fundraising opportunities where local Programs and the state office work together and share proceeds from the event.

Improve Internal Processes – Create a more efficient flow of information to simplify participation and improve the sharing of knowledge and data throughout the organization. Efficient and effective internal processes are essential for the smooth operation of any organization. We have identified a need to improve our communication and will therefore work to streamline and improve the overall flow of information throughout the organization, including communications between local Programs. We will also look at ways to improve our processes related to athlete, competition, and volunteer management. Current inefficiencies are hindering participation and volunteerism. In some cases, we are currently doing things manually. In others, we are utilizing technology but have room to improve our efficiency and reduce duplication. We will assess these processes and future needs, develop recommendations, and implement solutions in each of these areas. We will also continue the work that has been done on Centralized Accounting by completing pilot testing and developing and implementing the final recommended solution.





Program Health – Ensure every local Program is able to provide high-quality opportunities to all athletes in their program area. Our athletes deserve the best possible experience while participating with SOPA, regardless of where they reside in the state. A “health report” will be developed as a tool to aid in recognizing areas of need within specific Programs and to identify trends and broader needs among Programs so the most appropriate and effective solutions are pursued. An array of supports and resources will be created and made available including functional expertise provided by staff or volunteers as well as ongoing support to local Programs via mentors from other Programs. In addition, the new “Al Senavitis Mission Impact Fund” will be utilized to provide assistance to local Programs in those cases where the need is financial.

Measuring Success – Key indicators of success over the next three years include:

- Increase revenue from corporations by 20% by end of 2015.
- Launch two new major shared fundraising events by the end of 2015.
- Fill each of the 13 LETR Executive Committee leadership positions with an active law enforcement officer by the end of 2013. By 2015, create and host an annual statewide conference for our LETR leaders.
- Grow annual LETR-related revenues to \$1.5 million by 2015.
- At least 75% of local Programs participate in at least one shared fundraising event by the end of 2015.
- Identify and implement solutions to improve athlete, volunteer, and competition management.
- Implement Centralized Accounting in all local Programs by the end of 2014.
- Develop a Health Report as a tool to assess local Program performance and assist in identifying areas of strength as well as need.
- Launch the Al Senavitis Mission Impact Fund and begin granting funds to support local Programs in need.

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

– Special Olympic Athlete Oath



IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The Special Olympics Pennsylvania Board of Directors sets the strategic goals for the organization and is therefore the “owner” of this plan. The President and CEO is responsible for executing the strategic plan and achieving the goals it establishes. But, to be successful in achieving the goals set forth in this plan, the collective efforts of ALL stakeholders will be required. In particular, good collaboration between the state office and local Programs will be necessary in order to fully and accurately understand needs, develop action steps, and secure the resources necessary to address those needs in order to collectively reach our goals.

As an aid during the implementation of this strategic plan, a companion document will be created that will break the plan down into more detailed annual action steps, with associated targets or measures, for each of the three years of the overall plan. This “roadmap” will also help us clarify the various roles the state office and local Programs will play in achieving success for each of the strategies and tactics associated with the plan. The “roadmap” will make implementation more manageable by enabling us to better establish our annual priorities and to determine financial resource needs more effectively when budgeting.

We will develop scorecards and other tools based on the “roadmap” to help us track and report progress. We will share this information with the Board of Directors at their periodic meetings and will use it internally to help us monitor progress toward our goals.

***Special
Olympics
Pennsylvania***





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The Special Olympics Pennsylvania Board of Directors

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Jake Armstrong	Bill Lenhart	Sue Paterno	John Verbanic
Tom Baker	Mary Meder	Chris Ritchie	Glenn Wada
Carl Burgess	Tom Mogan	David Rosenberg	Samantha Wasson
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Anthony Gillespie (Chair)	Kim Woodworth	Mike Stephens	Jim Wenner

SOPA Strategic Planning Committee

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Program</u>
Amanda Sechrist	Manager	Northampton
Anthony Gillespie	Board	N/A
Carl Burgess	Board	N/A
Carol Erzen	Management Team Member	Allegheny
Clare Walsh Miller	Staff	N/A
Ed Scarpignato	Coach	Delaware
Eric Cushing	Staff	N/A
Gregory Stewart	Board (Committee Chair)	N/A
Halley Perrupato	Coach	Delaware
Jack McCormick	Staff	N/A
Josh Stranix	Athlete	Schuylkill
Kathie Mayo	Database Coordinator and Coach	Centre
Kim Woodworth	Board	N/A
Lisa Barbour	Athlete	Philadelphia
Matt Aaron	Staff	N/A
Samantha Wasson	Board, Athlete, Global Messenger	Crawford
Scott Otterbein	Training Coord, Future Manager	Montgomery
TJ Mayo	Former Manager	Centre

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Koosie Boggs, MBA Intern, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

George Bonnewell, SMEAL Business School Intern, Penn State

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Noah Jones, MBA Intern, Bloomsburg University

William Lovell, MBA Intern, Bloomsburg University

Joshua Stout, MBA Intern, Bloomsburg University

Zachary Walsh, MBA Intern, Bloomsburg University

Pamela Wynn, Professor, Bloomsburg University

Robyn Markey, Organizational Development Director, Special Olympics North America



Special Olympics Pennsylvania



2570 BLVD. OF THE GENERALS | SUITE 124 | NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 19403
PHONE 610.630.9450 | FAX 610.630.9456 | www.specialolympicspa.org

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