

SPECIAL OLYMPICS DELAWARE

ANNUAL REPORT

2025 OUTSTANDING COACH
TONY HAIGLER
KENT WILD KATS



**Special
Olympics**
Delaware

MISSION

The mission of Special Olympics is to 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.

SODE CORE VALUES: WE C.A.R.E.

One of the most meaningful accomplishments of the year was the introduction of Special Olympics Delaware's new Core Values. Developed to reflect the heart of our organization, these values embody our culture, spirit, and commitment to excellence. They serve as a guide for how we collaborate, innovate, and create meaningful opportunities while advancing understanding, acceptance, and inclusion for people with and without intellectual disabilities.



COMMUNITY

We value our athletes, families, volunteers, partners, and supporters who make our mission possible.



ACCEPTANCE

We are committed to creating a culture where every individual feels welcome, included, and empowered.



RESPECT

We strive to treat everyone with kindness, understanding, and admiration.



ENJOYMENT

We foster an environment enriched by friendship, fun, and shared experiences.

2025

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Wilmington Trust

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~

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A Message from the Board President and SODE President & CEO



As we reflect on this past year, we are filled with gratitude and pride for all we have accomplished together. Leading this incredible movement continues to be one of the greatest joys of our lives. Every day, we see the strength of our SODE Family in the confidence of our athletes, the dedication of our coaches and volunteers, and the unwavering support of parents, caregivers, and partners across Delaware.

This year marked several important milestones for our organization.

Listening to Our Community: For the first time, we launched an annual survey for athletes, parents/caregivers, and volunteers. Feedback is invaluable. It helps us understand what we are doing well, where we can grow, and how we can continue to deliver meaningful, high quality experiences. The insights shared will guide our planning, strengthen our programs, and ensure that every voice in our SODE Family is heard.

Introducing Our New Core Values: We C.A.R.E.

COMMUNITY • ACCEPTANCE • RESPECT • ENJOYMENT

This year we proudly introduced our new core values: a framework that reflects who we are and what we stand for. We C.A.R.E. is more than a slogan - it is a commitment to how we treat one another, how we design our programs, and how we show up for our athletes. These values will continue to shape our culture and guide our decisions for years to come.

Future Special Olympics Delaware Facility: One of the most exciting developments this year was advancing plans for a future Special Olympics Delaware facility. While final agreements are still in progress, identifying a location represents a major step toward creating a home for our SODE Family - a place where athletes, families, coaches, volunteers, and partners can gather, connect, and celebrate. This milestone positions us to expand our mission in ways that will strengthen our community for generations.

Celebrating Our Coaches and Volunteers: Our coaches and volunteers remain the heartbeat of Special Olympics Delaware. Coaches demonstrate an extraordinary level of dedication giving their time, expertise, and energy season after season to ensure athletes have meaningful opportunities to grow and compete. Volunteers bring joy, support, and spirit to every event, helping create the welcoming environment our athletes deserve. This year, we saw encouraging growth across our SODE Family of supporters, including a 20% growth in coaches. These gains reflect the commitment of our community and the momentum behind our mission. We will continue working to strengthen coaching support in our community programs, ensuring every team has the leadership it needs.

Growing Opportunities for Athletes: At the heart of everything we do are our athletes. This year, Special Olympics Delaware proudly served 5,580 athletes across community sports, Unified Champion Schools, and statewide programming. We expanded opportunities in multiple sports, welcomed new families, and reengaged athletes returning to play. Every new athlete represents a story of confidence, belonging, and possibility. As we look ahead, we are inspired by the strength of our SODE Family and the momentum we are building together. Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your unwavering belief in our mission. Together, we will continue to create opportunities, celebrate achievements, and build a Delaware where every person is valued and included.

With appreciation,

Ruth Lavelle, 2026 Board Chair
Special Olympics Delaware

David Halley, President & CEO
Special Olympics Delaware



BY THE NUMBERS

SPORTS

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS
ATHLETES & UNIFIED PARTNERS

OLYMPIC-TYPE SPORTS

16



ATHLETES

PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES (ID)

5,580



UNIFIED PARTNERS

(PEOPLE WITHOUT ID)

2,094



COMPETITIONS

154



LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY



AREA LEADERS

70

ATHLETE LEADERS

43

COACHES

1,244



VOLUNTEERS

3,817

EDUCATION & YOUTH



UNIFIED SCHOOLS

208



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS

100

A LIFETIME OF POSSIBILITIES



YOUNG
ATHLETES™

Young Athletes introduces children ages 2 to 7 to movement, play, and teamwork while building motor skills, confidence, and social connections.



UNIFIED
CHAMPION
SCHOOLS

Athletes and Unified partners compete side by side, creating friendships, breaking down barriers, and building more inclusive schools and communities.



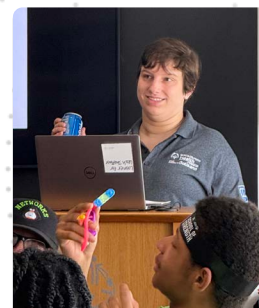
COMMUNITY
SPORTS

Athletes train year-round in a variety of sports, developing physical fitness, teamwork, perseverance, and lifelong friendships.



HEALTHY
ATHLETES®

Free health screenings and education help athletes stay healthy, identify unmet medical needs, and compete with confidence.



ATHLETE
LEADERSHIP

Athletes develop leadership skills as public speakers, coaches, mentors, committee members, and advocates for inclusion.

2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES + CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

(For the year ended December 31, 2025)

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE	2025	2024
Contributions	\$310,715	\$345,030
In-Kind Contributions *	165,437	1,415,791
Special Events Revenue, Net	1,565,669	1,600,772
Other Project Income	113,910	80,543
Fundraising Projects	559,997	331,337
Grants & Foundations	396,150	407,000
Total Public Support and Revenue	\$3,111,878	\$4,180,473
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$2,255,140	\$3,361,843
Management & General (Administration)	104,511	67,002
Fundraising	385,376	464,698
Total Expenses	\$2,745,027	\$3,893,543
Change in Net Assets before Non-Operating Activity	\$366,851	\$286,930
NON-OPERATING ACTIVITY		
Interest & dividend income, net of fees	\$131,537	\$128,475
Capital gains distribution	39,060	14,537
Realized gain on investments	42,013	62,485
Unrealized gain on investments	298,774	112,246
Miscellaneous income	36,020	0
Total Non-Operating Activity	\$547,404	\$317,743
Change In Net Assets	\$914,255	\$604,673
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$4,603,584	\$3,998,911
Net Assets, End of Year	\$5,517,839	\$4,603,584

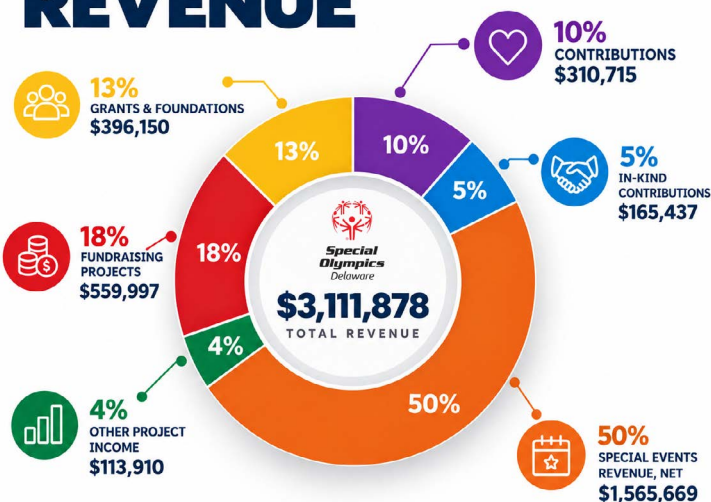
At Special Olympics Delaware, we believe cost should never stand in the way of participation. That's why all of our programs remain completely free for athletes and their families. Every dollar raised goes directly toward creating opportunities, providing access to training spaces, competition venues, equipment, uniforms, and the tools our athletes need to succeed. With the continued support of our community, we're removing financial barriers and opening doors to inclusion through sport.

* In-kind contributions decreased by a substantial amount compared to the prior period, resulting from a change in the methodology used to calculate the value of such contributions, rather than a corresponding decrease in the underlying contributions received.

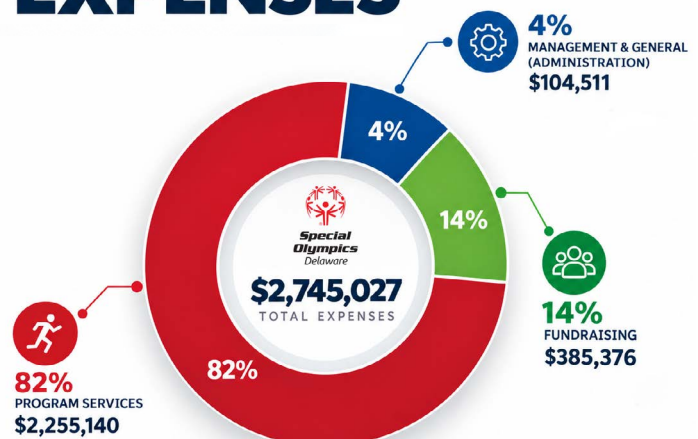
82%

82¢ of every dollar went directly to programs that help athletes compete, grow and thrive.

REVENUE



EXPENSES





THE MOMENTS BEHIND

COURT OF CHAMPIONS



Special Olympics Delaware made history by competing in the inaugural Special Olympics North America Women's 3X3 Basketball Tournament. Five athletes and Unified partners proudly represented Delaware, competing against teams from across North America while showcasing their skill, determination, and teamwork. Their participation marked an important milestone for women's sports within Special Olympics and reflected the continued growth of opportunities for female athletes to compete at the highest levels of competition.

THE PICKLEBALL ERA



The 2025 Fall Festival was one for the record books, welcoming more than 600 athletes and Unified partners, nearly 160 coaches, and more than 600 volunteers for the largest Fall Festival in Special Olympics Delaware history. The event also marked the exciting debut of pickleball, expanding competitive opportunities for athletes. From bocce, soccer, flag football, long-distance running, and pickleball to the Young Athletes Experience and Olympic Village, the day celebrated inclusion, achievement, and the power of sport to bring our community together.

RELAYS TO REMEMBER



Each year, a select group of Special Olympics Delaware athletes qualify to compete at the prestigious Penn Relays, one of the world's premier track and field events. In 2025, five Team Delaware athletes rose to the occasion, achieving personal bests while capturing gold medals in the 100-meter dash, the 4x100-meter relay, and Shot Put. Their outstanding performances showcased the talent, dedication, and competitive excellence of Special Olympics Delaware athletes on one of track and field's biggest stages.

THE BIGGEST SPLASH YET



The 2025 Lewes Polar Bear Plunge made history with a record-breaking 4,416 Polar Bears taking the plunge in support of Special Olympics Delaware. Together, participants raised more than \$1.2 million, helping provide year-round sports training, competition, health programs, and opportunities for thousands of athletes across the state. This milestone was a powerful celebration of community, generosity, and the incredible impact that can be made when Delaware comes together.

HIND THE MISSION

THE POWER OF A T-SHIRT



Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools promotes dignity, respect, acceptance, and inclusion by engaging entire school communities through Unified Sports, inclusive youth leadership, and school-wide activities. One of the program's signature initiatives is the annual Spread the Word - INCLUSION campaign, celebrated each March with events that encourage students and staff to choose inclusion. In 2025, a record 20,636 Delaware students, educators, and community members purchased and wore the annual Spread the Word - INCLUSION t-shirt, demonstrating the growing impact of inclusion across the First State.

CIAO, TORINO!



Special Olympics Delaware athlete Christi Theron represented Team USA on the world stage at the 2025 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy. Competing against top athletes from around the globe, Christi delivered an outstanding performance in the 1K Cross Country Skiing event, earning a silver medal. Her achievement reflects the dedication, perseverance, and competitive spirit of Special Olympics Delaware athletes while inspiring our community with what is possible through sport.

BOCCE AT THE BALLPARK



Bocce at the Ballpark brought more than 100 Special Olympics Delaware athletes and Unified partners from middle and high schools to Citizens Bank Park for an unforgettable day of competition. Paired with Philadelphia Phillies volunteers, ambassadors, and the Phillie Phanatic, athletes competed in a Unified bocce tournament that celebrated inclusion, teamwork, and friendship. The event showcased the power of sport to bring people together and create lasting memories both on and off the field.

WHERE IT ALL BEGINS



The core goal of Young Athletes is to introduce foundational movement and basic sport skills like running, kicking, throwing, balancing, and jumping in a fun, non-competitive environment. In 2025, 1,742 children participated as active Young Athletes, representing approximately 35% of the total athlete population. This engagement reflects the reach of this programming across district preschool Field Day experiences, community area programs, and events offered during Summer Games and Fall Festival.

MORE THAN A MEDAL

A Life Filled with Purpose

For nearly 30 years, Special Olympics Delaware has given Matt Montgomery more than a place to compete. It has provided friendship, confidence, purpose, and a true sense of belonging. From the Mary Campbell Center Youth Program to the Wilmington Wizards, Matt has embraced every opportunity along the way.

Today, Matt competes year-round in flag football, basketball, swimming, and bowling while giving back through fundraising events, the Wilmington Wizards Athlete Input Council, the DE LETR State Committee, and the Polar Bear Plunge. "Special Olympics means everything to me," Matt says. "It's about making friends. It's about being accepted for who I am. It's about opportunity."

Beyond Special Olympics, Matt works at Waggies By Maggie & Friends and the Wilmington Blue Rocks, volunteers with the Howard High School varsity football team, and serves as an ambassador for the New Castle County Volunteer Fire Service. His journey shows how Special Olympics can open doors to competition, leadership, employment, service, and lifelong friendships.

"It's about making friends. It's about being accepted for who I am. It's about opportunity."

A Journey of Health and Growth

Donna Walton, a Special Olympics athlete for nearly 15 years, has built a life centered on health, service, confidence, and connection. Growing up in West Virginia, inactivity, poor nutrition, anxiety, and depression affected her daily life, and at one point she was taking 13 medications.

After moving to Delaware and joining Special Olympics as an MOT Tiger, Donna found friendship, belonging, and a supportive community. Today, she competes with the Sussex Riptide in numerous sports and participates in Athlete Leadership, Young Athletes, and Health Messenger initiatives. She also gives back through volunteer work at her church.

Through regular activity, improved nutrition, and support from the Special Olympics community, Donna transformed her health, going from a size 3XL to Large/XL and reducing her medications from 13 to just three. She has also gained confidence, improved her emotional well-being, and become more comfortable connecting with others. Donna's journey demonstrates how Special Olympics can create lasting change in health, confidence, leadership, and quality of life.



"I was given a chance with Special Olympics and it has made my life so much better."



**Special
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Delaware

2025 FUNDRAISERS

We acknowledge the outstanding support of the following individuals in their efforts to raise funds for Special Olympics Delaware's Law Enforcement Torch Run, Lewes Polar Bear Plunge, Over the Edge, and Ride to the Tide.

\$50,000+

Irv & Phyllis Levin

\$10,000 - \$19,999

Steff DiMartine
Kylie Lavelle
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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Jannelle Bryant
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Janet Sumner
Robert Sumner
Beth Swadley

Chip Thomas
Jay Troy
Anthony AJ Vaquiz
Terance Walker
Michelle Wartenberg
John Welsh
Michael Whitney
Gary Zoll
Amy Zook

\$1,000 - \$1,999

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Rob Thompson
Alec Thomson III
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Patrick Tiernan
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Steven Turner
Katie Urbanski
Silvana Vallejos
Francesca Vavala
Fiona Walsh
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Debijo Wheatley
Paul White
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Jessica Young
Paul Zoppi
Nory White
Kinley Wills
Devin Wineland
Lorna Wohl
Jennifer Wolford
Gary Zoll
Paul Zoppi



**Special
Olympics**
Delaware

2025 CHAMPIONS TOGETHER GIVING SOCIETY WITH THANKS AND GRATITUDE

The Champions Together Giving Society is made up of individuals who pledge a minimum of \$1,000 annually for five years to support Special Olympics Delaware. We are profoundly grateful for these donors' commitment to transforming lives through sport, fostering inclusive communities, and enhancing our athletes' quality of life.

Will and Jean Beck
Shane and Susan Breakie
Bradford Bugher
Connie Callahan
Edward Capodanno
Chris and Kathy Crowell
Gina D'Alfonso
Lucille D'Alfonso
Steve and Deborah Dignan

David and Jeanette Failing
Kelly Firment
David Halley
Mary Ward Hutchison
Mary Jones-Gant
Paul Jungling
Carl and Mary Krienen
Ruth and Greg Lavelle
Christie Longo

William and Kim Lovett
Timothy Maloney
Jeromy and Erika Newton
Bobby and Heather Pancake
Richard Perry
Eric Reinhold
Dave Repass
Don Robart
Jeffrey and Ida Rowe

Christopher Schatzschneider
Patty Shipper
Terry and Lynne Sklar
Thad Truitt
Marichu Valencia
Bill and Mary Jane Willis

2025 DONORS

Our deepest thanks to the following individuals and organizations who power our movement through their generosity.

MISSION PARTNER

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® is Special Olympics Delaware's largest community-driven public awareness and fundraising initiative. In 2025, Delaware law enforcement collectively raised more than \$1.8 million while also volunteering and presenting medals, in support of Special Olympics athletes all year long.



YEAR-ROUND PARTNER

Draper Media

GOLD (\$100,000)

State of Delaware

SILVER (\$50,000 - \$99,999)

Camp Barnes (in-kind)
The Wawa Foundation

BRONZE (\$20,000 - \$49,999)

Bank of America
Delaware Community Foundation
Delaware Department of Correction
Highmark Delaware
Jersey Mike's - Millsboro/Seaford
JPMorgan Chase & Co.
Kohl's Cares
Perdue Farms

GUARDIAN (\$10,000 - \$19,999)

Bank of America Matching Gifts
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Delaware Orthopaedic Specialists
Delaware State Fair, Inc. (in-kind)
Delaware State Troopers Association
Discover
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Longwood Foundation
Chris Lundin
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New Castle County Fire Service
Quiet Resorts Charitable Foundation
St. Andrew's School (in-kind)

CHAMPION (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Above Expectations LLC
American Online Giving
Baltimore Orioles
Brandywine Realty Trust (in-kind)
Cape Gazette (in-kind)
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SC Associates
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WSFS Cares Foundation

COMMUNITY (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

ABC Delaware
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Artesian Water Company
Asplundh Engineering Services, Inc
BDO
Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, P.A.
Blue Knights - Chapter 1 (in-kind)
BNY Mellon Community Partnership
Boardwalk Buddy Walk
Caesar Rodney High School (in-kind)
Chesapeake Utilities Corporation

Citizens Bank
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Delaware Chiropractic Services Network
Delmarva Power
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Rommel Motorsports Delaware, Inc.
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Sheridan Auto Group
Smack Consulting
Standard Distributing Co., Inc.
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Katherine Sykes
Walmart Transportation
Weis Markets, Inc.
WSFS Bank

Your investment changes the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and the communities they live in.

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Aire Serv Heating and Air Conditioning
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Atlantic Sands Hotel
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Jean and Will Beck
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Bradford Bugher
Connie Callahan
Mary Kate Campbell
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SPECIAL OLYMPICS DELAWARE

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Lisa Miller
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& Healthy Communities*

Andy Mitchell
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