



2025
ANNUAL REPORT

**Special
Olympics**
Florida



UNSTOPPABLE TOGETHER

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LETTER TO OUR CHAMPIONS

Every year, Special Olympics Florida grows stronger because of the athletes, families, volunteers, and partners who believe in a world where all people are treated with dignity and respect. In 2025, that belief showed up in powerful ways across our state—in packed competition venues, in local communities, in schools, and in health screenings where athletes received life-changing assistance.

Together, we continued to expand opportunities and raise expectations for people with intellectual disabilities. From sports to health to leadership, our mission came to life in every corner of Florida, from Key West to Pensacola.

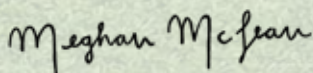
This year, we held 159 competitions across Florida, offering athletes the chance to participate in 25 sports—from pickleball to equestrian to flag football and more. Our State Summer Games and State Fall Classic once again brought thousands of athletes and Unified partners together in Central Florida for unforgettable competition and celebration.

In total, we served more than 86,000 athletes, continuing our growth as the largest Special Olympics state program in the United States. We also conducted nearly 12,000 health screenings through our Healthy Athletes program, helping ensure our athletes have access to the care they need to live healthy, active lives.

Beyond the numbers, the year was filled with extraordinary moments. Athletes represented Florida on the world stage in Alpine skiing at the 2025 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy. Others shared their voices through leadership roles, media opportunities, advocacy events, and community engagement. Across the state, athletes continued to inspire us with their courage, determination, and joy.

Our successes are highlighted in the pages that follow. We hope you take time to read them and celebrate all that was accomplished. As we reflect on 2025, we also look ahead with excitement and confidence. I am deeply honored to step into the role of President and CEO, and I promise we will continue to work tirelessly to create the most rewarding and highest quality experiences for every one of our athletes.

With gratitude and optimism,

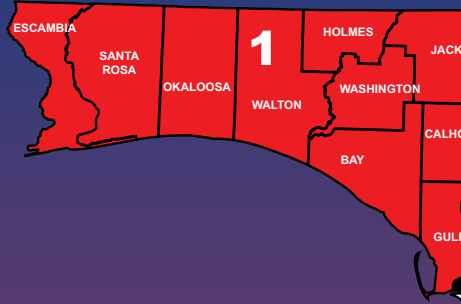


Meghan McLean
President and CEO
Special Olympics Florida



REACH

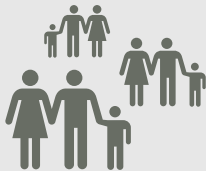
We work to build a community where everyone has the lifelong opportunity to develop physically, emotionally, and socially through sports, wellness, and leadership training.



Sports



Health



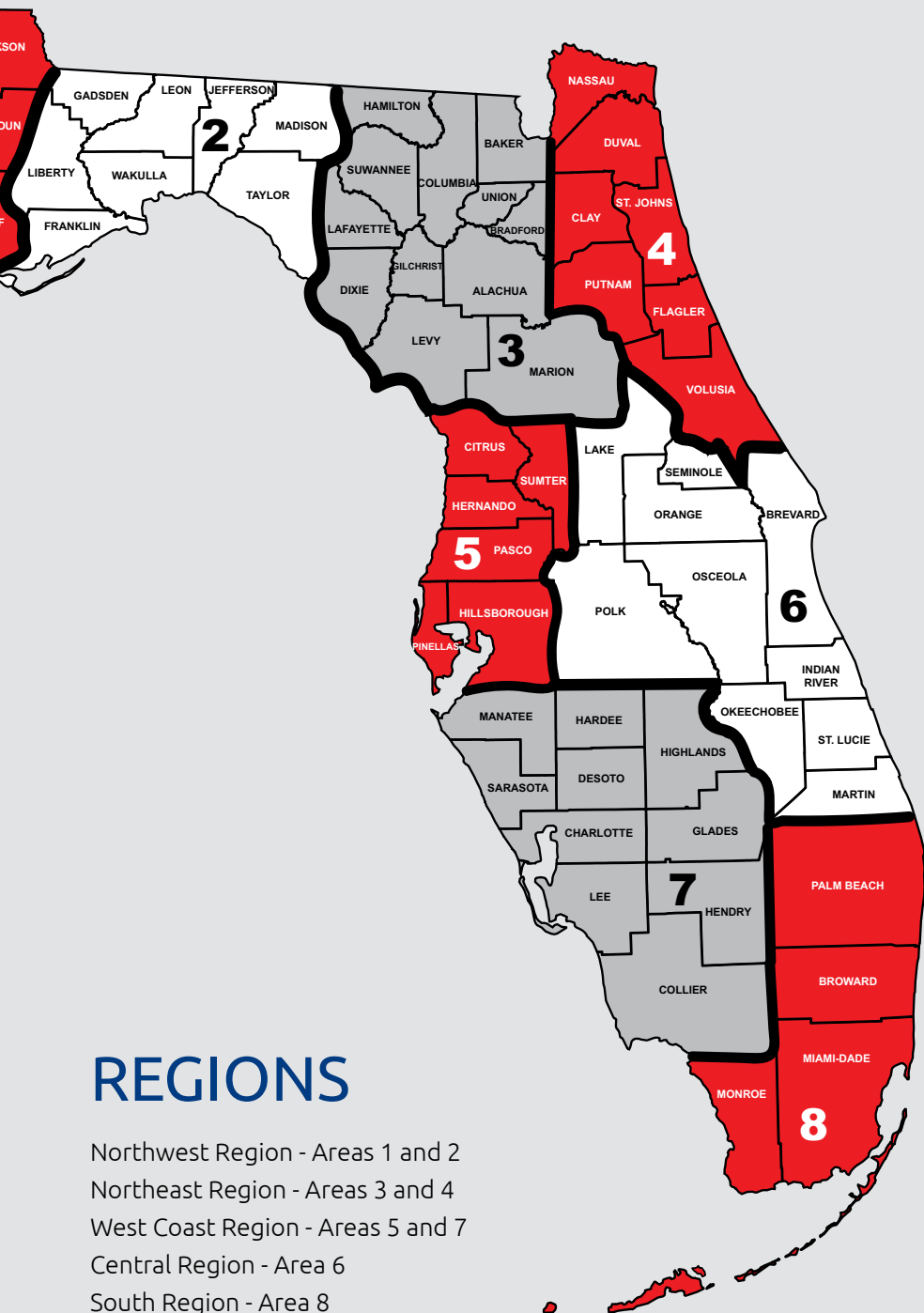
Community



Education

“We are united behind the belief that everyone is valued, everyone is welcome, and everyone deserves a chance to be celebrated.”

Eunice Kennedy Shriver
Special Olympics Founder



REGIONS

Northwest Region - Areas 1 and 2

Northeast Region - Areas 3 and 4

West Coast Region - Areas 5 and 7

Central Region - Area 6

South Region - Area 8

PROVIDING QUALITY SPORTS TRAINING AND COMPETITION

Since 1972, Special Olympics Florida has empowered people with intellectual disabilities to demonstrate their unlimited potential by providing top-notch athletic training and competitions. Our programs promote inclusion and acceptance and provide a platform for athletes to showcase their talent, courage, and tenacity.

Our athletes participate in a diverse lineup of Olympic-style sports, including:

Alpine Skiing	Figure Skating	Soccer
Athletics	Flag Football	Softball
Basketball	Golf	Stand Up Paddle
Bocce	Gymnastics	Surfing
Bowling	MATP *	Swimming
Cheerleading	Open Water Swim	Tennis
Cornhole	Pickleball	Triathlon
Cycling	Powerlifting	Volleyball
Equestrian		

* The Motor Activity Training Program is designed for athletes with disabilities whose physical and/or behavioral limitations preclude participation in traditional sports competitions. In 2025, there were 5,527 athletes enrolled in this unique program across the state.

ATHLETES

86,738

SPORTS PARTICIPATION

(includes athletes playing multiple sports)

108,855

VOLUNTEERS

55,839

COMPETITIONS

159

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

Special Olympics Athlete Oath





BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Improving the lives of people with intellectual disabilities means ensuring they have access to the healthcare they need and deserve. Collectively, our athletes face greater health risks than the general population, yet they often face challenges in finding appropriate health services. To fight that inequity, Special Olympics Florida provides health screenings, classes, and services to our athletes and individuals on the APD waiting list across the state.

In 2025, those programs provided:

HEALTH SCREENINGS

11,749

HEARING AID VOUCHERS

57

PRESCRIPTION GLASSES

663

PRESCRIPTION SPORTS GOGGLES

11

SUNGLASSES

200

INSOLES

764

DOCTOR REFERRALS

1,960

FLUORIDE TREATMENTS

1,578

MOUTHGUARDS

565

FINANCIAL IMPACT

More than \$2M



Special Olympics
Healthy Athletes®

PROMOTING YOUTH AND EDUCATION



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**

The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools® program operates on the principles of inclusion and acceptance. It uses inclusive sports—which bring athletes of all intellectual abilities together—youth leadership, and whole-school engagement to create communities where everyone is respected, appreciated, and treated with dignity.

- During the 2024-2025 school year, there were **507** schools and **15** colleges enrolled as Unified Champion Schools.
- 95% of Unified Champion Schools liaisons felt that the program has created a more socially inclusive environment.
- 91% of liaisons indicated that the Unified Champion Schools program reduces bullying and teasing.
- 96% of liaisons reported increased participation of students with intellectual disabilities in school activities.
- High schools that implemented Unified Champion Schools had a 2.6% increase in graduation rates for students with disabilities and a 1.3% increase for students without disabilities.





EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



Special Olympics
Young Athletes

Our Young Athletes program uses sports-play activities to help children ages 2-7 develop physically, cognitively, and socially. Participating preschoolers with intellectual disabilities hit important milestones three times faster than those not enrolled in the program. For children with autism, the gains are nearly four times as great.

There are **28,127** athletes and Unified partners participating in **48** counties and **458** schools.

Healthy Kids at Play encourages elementary-age athletes to develop lifelong healthy habits. Children are introduced to healthy lifestyle choices, such as nutritious eating, hydration, and exercise. The goal is to help them grow into health-conscious adults.

“ *The joy this program brings to our participants is immeasurable. The smiles, the hugs, the sense of accomplishment, growth, and most importantly, the essence of community makes an impact that is felt by all of those involved. As an educator for over 40 years, I have never felt more on the receiving end of such an experience. I came into this thinking I would be helping others, when in truth it turns out that I was the one being helped. Compassion, patience, bonding, and the pure unconditional admiration of all involved is something that I perceive as a gift that was given to me.* **”**

Coach Mike Fritton, Bolles School, Duval County

DEVELOPING LEADERS

Special Olympics Florida's Athlete Leadership program helps athletes develop leadership skills and use their voices and abilities to take on meaningful leadership roles, influence change in the Special Olympics movement, and create inclusive communities. Athlete Leadership breaks down barriers, giving our athletes opportunities to shape the direction of our programs. Athlete Leaders serve in a variety of roles, including:

- Global Messengers (spokespersons)
- Health Messengers (spokespersons)
- Coaches
- Officials
- Fundraisers
- Volunteers
- Board and Committee Members

Athletes can also become Community Leaders. These athletes do not take our Athlete Leadership courses but, instead, complete a certification to become a designated Community Leader.

Our leadership programs embrace a Unified Leadership philosophy, teaching individuals of all abilities to value and learn from each other. Unified Leadership teaches people without intellectual disabilities to:

- Value people with intellectual disabilities (ID) as contributors, leaders, and partners to learn from
- Create environments where people with ID can succeed in meaningful roles
- Share power and let people with ID lead



NUMBER OF TRAINED ATHLETE LEADERS

298



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

BY THE NUMBERS

Special Olympics Florida surpassed 86,000 athletes, making it the largest Special Olympics state program in the United States.

We held 159 local, regional, and state-level competitions across the state, providing athletes opportunities to compete at world-class venues and showcase their skills.

Nearly 12,000 health screenings were conducted through our Healthy Athletes program, with many athletes receiving critical referrals for follow-up care.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Behind every health screening is an athlete whose life is impacted by access to care. Across Florida, athletes received eyeglasses, hearing aids, dental care, and medical care as a result of attending our screenings. These efforts reflect our continued commitment to athlete health, wellness, and opportunity—both on and off the field of play.

STARRING ROLES

Special Olympics Florida athletes took center stage in *Lights, Camera, Friendship!*, a new film celebrating inclusion and connection. Athletes Stephen Lepore, Aubrey Kay, James Holder, and Tim Rabbu joined a week-long experience filled with cooking, dancing, travel, and friendship-building. The film delivered a simple but powerful message: everyone deserves friendship and joy.

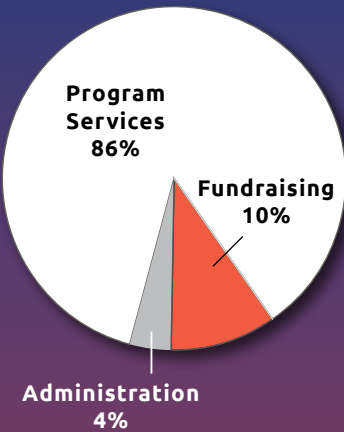
SHINING A LIGHT ON OUR MISSION

Special Olympics Florida continued to receive strong support from key partners, including Publix Super Markets—our Premier Sponsor and champion of the annual Torch Icon Campaign, and Orlando Health—the Official Central Florida Health Home of Special Olympics Florida and sponsor of health screenings at State Summer Games and State Fall Classic. These partners continue to demonstrate a deep and lasting commitment to our athletes and mission, helping expand opportunities across the state.

(Continued on Page 18)

2025 FINANCIALS

(\$ in thousands)



Program Services:

Games	\$8,070
Training	2,872
Health, Unified Champion Schools, and Developmental Sports	3,611
Other Programs	4,943
Total Program Services	\$19,496
Management & General	1,001
Fundraising	2,293

Total Expenses \$22,790

STRATEGIC GOAL

Serve 85,000 healthy athletes supported by 40,000 volunteers through inspiring fundraising that generates \$18M+ supporting cash revenue and \$20M cash + in-kind revenue.



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

(Continued from Page 16)

WORLD CHAMP

Athlete Kellie Matthew represented Special Olympics Florida on the world stage at the 2025 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy. She captured two gold medals in Alpine skiing in Giant Slalom and Slalom, and placed fourth in Super G, showcasing extraordinary determination and skill.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Coach Val Lundin received the Special Olympics North America Annette K. Lynch Lifetime Achievement Award for more than 40 years of service. Val has served in numerous roles within the organization, including coach, games director, and volunteer, and has coached 11 different sports throughout her career.

TEAM FLORIDA

Nearly 200 athletes and coaches gathered in Central Florida for Training Camp in preparation for the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games in Minnesota. The camp provided an opportunity for Team Florida to train together, build connections, and prepare for competition on the national stage.

HALL OF FAME

Andrew Ahearn, Lee Corso, Josh D'Amato, Marci McAdams, Jim Payne, Tim Rabbu, Harris Rosen, and Patrick Rosser were inducted into the Special Olympics Florida Hall of Fame, which honors athletes, coaches, and volunteers who have made lasting contributions to the movement. The inductees represent decades of dedication, leadership, and service to Special Olympics Florida and its athletes.

A UNIFIED MISSION

Unified Champion Schools continued to grow with the addition of 48 new schools, bringing the statewide total to 507 schools and 15 colleges during the 2024-2025 school year. Eleven schools earned Banner School designation, a national recognition awarded to schools that meet rigorous standards for inclusion, respect, and student engagement. These programs continue to build more inclusive school communities across Florida through sports, leadership, and youth engagement.



ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT

RYAN AYTONA

A Special Olympics Florida athlete from Polk County, Ryan has quickly made a name for himself in the world of endurance sports. He joined Special Olympics Florida in 2018 and began competing in triathlons just two years later. Since then, his drive and determination have set him apart.



Ryan likes to test his limits—both physical and mental. He is part of a select group of athletes who have completed an Ultraman race – a mind-boggling challenge that requires competitors to swim 6.2 miles, bike 261 miles, and run 52.4 miles over two days. It's a feat that is accomplished by fewer than 100 people each year.

Ryan's success is no accident. Coaches and family members describe him as focused, disciplined, and driven to succeed. "Ryan loves to compete and his mindset is always to win," his father says.

His achievements are about more than endurance—they're about possibility. Ryan is a testament to what can happen when talent is matched with support, determination, and belief.

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT

MEGAN BELL

A Jacksonville-area athlete, Megan began her Special Olympics journey at age 9 and has been competing for 26 years. She has competed in a wide range of sports, including surfing, stand up paddle, equestrian, bowling, soccer, pickleball, and golf. She earned a bronze medal in stand up paddle at the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games.



In 2025, Megan was named Special Olympics Florida Athlete of the Year—an honor that reflects her athletic accomplishments, as well as her leadership and service. She is a Global Messenger, Health Messenger, Athlete Leader, and representative on the State Athlete Leadership Council.

Megan is also a certified Zumba instructor and teaches classes in person and online. She has volunteered at major events, spoken at conferences and on Capitol Hill, and served as a powerful advocate for inclusion in her community. She has also broken barriers in the workplace as the first person with an intellectual disability hired by the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce. Megan is a role model to everyone she meets. She leads with energy, lifts up others, and shows what is possible when passion meets purpose.

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT

KELLIE MATTHEW

Kellie began competing at 9 years old. Two decades later, she has grown into a world-class athlete in Alpine skiing—no small feat for someone who trains in sunny South Florida. At the 2025 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy, Kellie delivered a standout performance, capturing two gold medals in Giant Slalom and Slalom, and finishing fourth in Super G against a strong international field.



Without natural snow, Kellie and her teammates train on makeshift slopes created with plastic sheets, water, and soap—an innovative approach that requires focus, resilience, and imagination. Through hard work and perseverance, she has mastered the sport and proven she can compete with the best in the world. When Kellie crossed the finish line in Turin, she was, in her mother's words, "beaming from ear to ear." It was a moment that reflected not just victory, but years of dedication, support, and belief – a powerful reminder that with determination and opportunity, anything is possible.

Off the slopes, Kellie works at Park Summit Retirement Facility and enjoys giving back through volunteer work in her community. She is known for her positive attitude and the joy she brings to those around her.

VOLUNTEER COACH SPOTLIGHT

VAL LUNDIN

Val has dedicated more than 40 years to empowering athletes and strengthening the Special Olympics movement. She has served in numerous roles, including event volunteer, county director, games director, and coach in 11 different sports. In recognition of her extraordinary service, Val was honored with the Special Olympics North America Annette K. Lynch Lifetime Achievement Award, which celebrates coaches who have made a lasting impact.



While her accomplishments are significant, Val is known most for her humility and her belief in her athletes. She often says she has learned as much from them as she has taught them, describing their daily courage and determination as a constant source of inspiration.

Val has also been a tireless mentor for new coaches and volunteers. Introducing others to the mission and the athletes she loves has always been one of Val's greatest goals. Through her leadership, mentorship, and unwavering commitment, Val has helped build not only stronger athletes, but a stronger Special Olympics community. Her legacy is measured not just in years of service, but in the lives she has touched along the way.

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Kyle Muzina, Special Olympics Florida Athlete

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2025 MAJOR GIFTS

1ST US VOLUNTEER CAVALRY REGIMENT - ROUGH RIDERS, INC	BRIDGFORD FOODS CORPORATION
ACCENTURE LLP	BRIGHTLINE
AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	BROWN & BROWN OF FLORIDA, INC
AJ NASSAR	BRUCE M. KEIR
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BAPTIST HEALTH SOUTH FLORIDA	CRAIG SHOUP
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2025 MAJOR GIFTS

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 UNIVERSAL ORLANDO FOUNDATION
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 VAST DATA
 VERDE FARMS, LLC
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IN HONOR OF:

Alex Beckett
William D'Onofrio
Connie Francis
Darin Granthum
Michelle Oglesbee
Patrick Sallarulo
Paul Sallarulo
Renee Stillman
Curt Walters

IN MEMORY OF:

Andy Alexandre
Mark Allison
Janet C. Bell
Gary Blandino
Wayne Blanton
Jack Bolen
Judy Bolton
Lois Brady
Susan Caruso
Ron Cason
William S. Coleman
Catherine Conroy

Kathleen Conroy
BJ Drane
Gail Evans
Jewell Ferguson
Paul J. Friederich
Haley Gens
Darin Granthum
Joel Gray
Theresa Hoyt
Diana Kovarik
Gerald Alan Leeds
Tracy Luman
Kurt Maceikonis
Vytas Maceikonis
Jill Mahoney
Kathleen Mary Newman
Francis Paquette
John Primeau
Walter Ray
Keith Rebarber
Betty Rose
Joanne R. Scavone
Gerald W. Thompson
Kenneth Tribble

2025 MATCHING GIFTS

COMPANIES WHO HAVE MATCHED THE CONTRIBUTIONS
MADE BY THEIR EMPLOYEES

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Bank of America
CHEP
Cisco Systems Inc
HCA Healthcare
Home Depot
Illinois Tool Works
IQVIA

Microsoft Corporation
Munich RE America Services
National Life Group Charitable
Foundation Inc
New York Life Foundation
SiriusXM
The Walt Disney Company
The Wawa Foundation
US Bank

MAKING A DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

Every Special Olympics Florida event and program is powered by something extraordinary: volunteers whose time, passion, and commitment create opportunities for athletes to shine.

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DAY-OF EVENT

They are essential to the success of every competition and event. These volunteers bring the enthusiasm and a desire to ensure life-changing experiences for our athletes.

UNIFIED PARTNER

More than teammates—Unified partners are champions for inclusion, competing alongside athletes to create meaningful connections through the power of sports. Together, they foster teamwork, elevate competition, break down barriers, and build lasting friendships that extend far beyond the playing field.

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Mentors play a vital role in helping athletes grow as leaders, advocates, and role models in their communities, by helping athletes develop their confidence and voice to inspire others.

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