

**Special
Olympics**
Iowa



50 YEARS
1968 - 2018

Summer Games



The Summer Games are Special Olympics Iowa's largest event of the year, with more than 2,600 athletes, 1,200 coaches and 2,000 volunteers converging on the campus of Iowa State University in Ames.

The three-day event begins with the Torch Run Final Leg bringing the Flame of Hope from downtown Des Moines to Hilton Coliseum for the Opening Ceremony presented by Hy-Vee.

Also featured at the games is an Olympic Festival, which is an area for athletes to relax between competitions and interact with sponsors and partners through games and activities. Healthy Athletes screenings will also be provided to athletes by healthcare professionals for eyesight, dental, hearing, overall health and fitness and more.

Event Details

Date: May 17-19, 2018

Location: Iowa State University, Ames

[Tentative Schedule of Events](#)

SOIA Athletes Compete for First Time at Drake Relays



By Stephanie Kocer

On Friday, April 27, eight Special Olympics Iowa (SOIA) teams from across the state competed at the 2018 Drake Relays at Drake Stadium on Drake University's campus in Des Moines. The teams ran a 4×100 relay race.

The Special Olympics teams included:

- Scott County Adult Females
- Arc of Story County Females
- Griswold Tigers
- Grandwood Hawks
- Waterloo Goodwill
- Cedar Rapids Park and Rec Cheetahs
- Clinton County Special Olympics
- Des Moines Roosevelt Roughriders

This was the first time in the history of the Drake Relays that Special Olympics teams competed. All athletes were given a Drake Relays medal for participating. For more photos from the day, check out the [SOIA Facebook page!](#)

[More on this event](#)

First-Ever DMPS Unified Sports Day



By Emma Finn

The Des Moines Public School District hosted its first-ever Unified Sports Day on April 19 at the Knapp Center on Drake University's campus. The event is sponsored by **Principal Financial Group**, who also provided volunteers to make it possible.

In December of 2017, all ten Des Moines Middle Schools became active Unified Champion Schools, meaning that in partnership with Special Olympics Iowa they committed to pursuing Unified Sports, Student Leadership and School-Wide Awareness of intellectual disabilities. Next year, the district will register a number of elementary schools as Unified Champion Schools as well.

The goal of this initiative is to build upon and promote to students the concept of inclusion and acceptance across the school district. Unified Sports Days gives people with and without intellectual disabilities to join together to compete on the same team. [Continue Reading](#)

Meet Team Iowa: Brandon Baier

By Emma Finn

Twenty-six year old Brandon Baier (pictured on left) of Atlantic, Iowa will be representing team Iowa at the 2018 Special Olympics USA

Games in Seattle, Washington. The USA Games will take place July 1-6, 2018. Over 3,500 Special Olympics athletes from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, 1,000 coaches, 10,000 family members, 10,000 volunteers, and an estimated 50,000 spectators will be at the event.

This is Brandon's first year at the USA Games. He will be competing in track and field in the 100, the 4X100, shotput and javelot events.

Brandon explained how he has been preparing for the USA Games by running every day and also practicing the specific events. Brandon will be accompanied by his mother Bernice Baier to the USA Games.



"I am excited for the competition and to meet new friends," says Brandon.

Brandon has been involved with and competing in the Special Olympics since he was nine years old. Brandon competes in a number of events such as soccer, softball, basketball, bicycling, bowling and flag football.

"My favorite Special Olympics memory is when I was competing in a relay, we were behind but then came back and won the race," says Brandon. [Continue Reading](#)

Drake University Unified Sports Day to Take Place May 3



By Stephanie Kocer

Special Olympics Iowa's 24th annual Drake Unified Sports Day will be taking place on Thursday, May 3 at Drake University in the Bell Center and Field House, where people with and without intellectual disabilities are joined together to compete on the same team.

Dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition, Unified Sports creates teams that are made up of similar ages and abilities. The teams are made up of approximately an equal number of Special Olympic athletes and athletes without intellectual disabilities; these are called partners. The idea behind Unified Sports is to eliminate the preconceived notions and false impressions of Special Olympics athletes.

This event has over 500 participating athletes and Unified Partners from more than 18 schools across Central Iowa. They will pair up to compete in several sports, including 3-on-3 basketball, golf, relay races, volleyball, pass-punt-kick football, bocce and more.

This one-day event will host more than 125 volunteers to help coordinate the event, including Drake University football players and representatives from businesses across Central Iowa.

The Unified Sports movement has spread to more than 4,000 middle schools and high schools throughout the United States, along with 70 percent of Unified Schools engaging in Unified Sports, too.

Event Details

Where: Drake University's Knapp Center

When: Thursday, May 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

What: Drake Unified Sports Day

[More info on Unified Sports](#)

ISU Ames Greek Polar Plunge Raises \$295,000 for SOIA



The 22nd annual Ames Greek Polar Plunge was held on Friday, April 6 at Iowa State University. **The Polar Plunge** is a signature fundraiser for Special Olympics and offers a unique opportunity for individuals and organizations to raise money and support Special Olympics Iowa (SOIA) athletes by plunging into frigid waters.

The **Iowa State University Greek Community** were the sole participants in the Plunge as part of their annual Greek Week. The Greek Community raised a total of \$295,000 for SOIA with the Plunge this year.

The Polar Plunge is the single largest fundraising event for Special Olympics Iowa. Participants jumped into State Gym's pool due to weather conditions. Athletes were also given the opportunity to plunge with their Greek Week teams whom they had been paired with all week to participate in events with.

Thank you to the Iowa State Greek Community for all of the hard work for this year's Polar Plunge!

Check out more photos on our [Facebook Page](#).

Statewide Partner Hy-Vee Continues to Employ Athletes Across the State

Special Olympics Iowa (SOIA) Champion Statewide Partner Hy-Vee has had a long-standing tradition of

employing individuals with intellectual disabilities, including many SOIA athletes. Hy-Vee has provided funding, volunteers and resources to Special Olympics Iowa athletes for decades.

As a Champion Statewide Partner, Hy-Vee has provided more than \$300,000 over the years to support events like Summer Games, the Mid-Winter Tournament, Winter Games, Team Iowa at the USA Games, the Plane Pull, and Polar Plunges®. Not only does the corporation provide financial support, but local Hy-Vee stores throughout Iowa also generously donate food for Special Olympics Iowa events.

In addition to financial support and food donations, Hy-Vee provides dietitians at Special Olympics Iowa events who offer free education and resources to athletes and families regarding healthy eating and lifestyle choices. Many Hy-Vee employees also volunteer for SOIA.



Meet some of our Iowa athletes that work at local Hy-Vee stores across the state!

Rob Beard, Marshalltown

Rob has worked at Hy-Vee for 22 years. His job is maintenance, everything from cleaning to putting things back on the shelf! Rob likes working at Hy-Vee because of how great the staff and customers are. Hy-Vee does a good job working with his Special Olympics schedule, while also celebrating his accomplishments. [Continue Reading](#)

USA Games



SPECIAL OLYMPICS
USA GAMES
SEATTLE 2018



On July 1-6, 2018 – more than 4,000 Special Olympics athletes and coaches from all 50 states and the District of Columbia will gather in Seattle to compete before tens of thousands of spectators and volunteers. The 2018 USA Games will showcase the limitless talents of people with intellectual disabilities while promoting the barrier-breaking power of sport to promote inclusion and acceptance.

Among those 4,000 athletes and coaches will be [Team Iowa](#).

The USA Games kick off with the spectacle of the Opening Ceremony at Husky Stadium on July 1, 2018 and will offer 14 Olympic-type sports: athletics (track and field), basketball, bocce,

bowling, flag football, golf, gymnastics, powerlifting, soccer, softball, stand up paddle boarding, swimming, tennis and volleyball.

Competitions will be held at venues across the Seattle area including the University of Washington, Celebration Park, Kenmore Lanes, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University, Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center and Willows Run Golf Club.

“The 2018 Special Olympics USA Games will showcase the life and society-changing power of Special Olympics,” said Marc Edenzon, president and managing director of Special Olympics North America. “There is no better way to begin Special Olympics’ 50th anniversary global celebration in July of 2018 than with this world-class event that will demonstrate to the nation how we use sport to change hearts and minds and build communities of inclusion for all.”

[Continue Reading](#)

Truck Raffle for SOIA



Buy a \$5 Ticket for
Your Chance to Win This
2018 Ford F-150!

Purchase Tickets From Any Special
Olympics Iowa Delegation

-Or-
From the State Office
Give Us A Call At 515-986-5520 or
email info@soiowa.org.

RECONCILIATION FORMS:

Ford F-150 Best Practices for the Field
Delegation Reconciliation Forms

50 For 50 Years

\$50 FOR 50 YEARS



GIVE \$50 TO
CELEBRATE
50 YEARS OF
SPECIAL OLYMPICS
& GET YOUR
CHOICE OF GOLD
PIN OR COIN!



2018 marks 50 years for the Special Olympics. That means 50 years of our volunteers, staff, and supporters working tirelessly to achieve our mission – a world without discrimination. A world where individuals with intellectual disabilities can tap their untold potential and live their lives to the fullest.

Special Olympics Iowa asks you to join us in celebrating 50 years of bliss, bravery and empowerment by donating in our **\$50 for 50 campaign** in honor of the 50th Anniversary of Special Olympics. With each \$50 donation, donors will get their choice of a limited-edition commemorative 50th Anniversary Gold Pin or Gold Coin.

Special Olympics Iowa is so proud of what has been accomplished over the past 50 years. With 5 million served in over 172 countries, we have changed many lives all over the world. Help us continue to make a difference in athlete's lives.

[**DONATE NOW**](#)

Athlete Karaoke!



**KARAOKE NIGHT
AT JEANNIE'S BOTTLE
TUESDAY, MAY 8TH
4-7PM**

**PRIZES
POP & SNACKS**



Jeannie's Bottle

Merle Hay Road • Des Moines, IA

3839 MERLE HAY ROAD, DES MOINES, IOWA

Upcoming Fundraising Events at SOIA

**LETR Crappie Tournament Fundraiser May 2 and
3**

Come join us on Wednesday, May 2 and Thursday, May 3 for the annual LETR Crappie Tournament. May 2 is a practice day, the steak fry, and a raffle to raise money for Special Olympics Iowa! May 3 is the big tournament date! The steak fry and raffle will start at 6:00 p.m. May 2 at The Lodge located at the Three Mile Lake Recreation Area. Bring plenty of cash for raffle tickets!

The entry fee is \$70.00 per person. Rules are



with each two-person team weighing their 20 biggest crappies (To minimize the number of fish killed, each team should sort on the lake and bring only 20 fish to the weigh-in site). Entry fee covers the cost of the steak fry, big fish contest, and prize money. \$30 from each entry fee will be donated to Special Olympics Iowa. \$5 from each entry fee goes toward the Biggest Crappie prize!

[More Info](#)

Casey's Promotion



Casey's General Stores has teamed up with Coca-Cola and will launch a corporate wide in-store fundraising campaign during the month of June benefiting Special Olympics!

Funds will be raised by the sale of \$1 pinups in-store sold during the month of June.

Be sure to stop by your local Casey's store this summer and thank the managers and employees for their support of Special Olympics Iowa! More info

Plane Pull

Get a team together and pull a plane! Teams of up to 10 will test their strength against a Delta CRJ-900 airplane weighing more than 80,000 pounds. Teams will compete to see who can pull the airplane 12 feet in the fastest time.

**Teams will get to pull twice, with fastest time counting as final time. Both pulls will be consecutive.

Event Details:

Date: Saturday, June 23rd, 2018

Location: Endeavor Air/South Cargo Ramp, Des Moines International Airport

Time: 9:30 a.m. – Opening Ceremonies with first pull to follow

Cost: \$500 per team (\$50 per person for a team of 10)

Registration: [Register Here](#)



Dallas County Sheriff's All-Wheel Show

The 10th Annual Dallas County Sheriff's All-Wheel Show fundraiser for Special Olympics Iowa will take place Saturday, June 2 at Downtown Square 8th and Main in Adel.

Date: Saturday, June 2, 2018

Location: Downtown Square 8th & Main, Adel

Cost: Pre-registration – \$15 for the first car – \$5 for every car after that (per owner)

Registration: [Download the event flyer for registration](#)



For more information, contact:
Chad Leonard, Sheriff – Dallas Center
515-202-5468

Coaches Corner

Coaches' Guide Available Online!

The 2017-2018 SOIA Coaches' Guide is now available on our [website!](#)

Trainings

Getting involved as a coach and re-certification is now easier than ever!

Check out our new "Become a Coach" page:

<http://www.soiova.org/get-involved/become-a-coach/>

You can now become certified/re-certified **ONLINE!**

Registration Forms Available Online

Registration forms for Challenge Days and Young Athlete Play Days are now available online! Go to the [Participation Forms](#) page on our website to view registration forms for all SOIA events.

Bocce Skills Revised

There has been a change to bocce skills at Summer Games. The event will now be measured in **feet**, not meters. Please contact Sally Briggs at sbriggs@soiova.org or 515-986-5520 with questions.

Share Your Story!

Do you know someone with a great story to share? We're always looking to share our athletes' stories in the newsletter. If you have a story idea for us about an athlete, coach, volunteer, or family please email Stephanie Kocer at skocer@soiova.org for a chance for them to be featured in the newsletter!

Event Calendar

Visit our [online calendar](#) for event updates!

May

- 1- Davenport Young Athlete Play Day
- 3- Drake University Unified Sports Day
- 3- Crappie Tournament Fundraiser
- 7- Camp Courageous
- 17- State Summer Games
- 18- State Summer Games
- 19- State Summer Games

June

- 1-30- Casey's Promotion
- 2- Emmetsburg Challenge Day
- 16- Vinton Unified Mini Golf
- 23- Plane Pull Fundraiser
- 23- Des Moines Register Sports Awards

July

- 12- Softball Skills Competition- Manning
- 12- Softball Skills Competition- Muscatine
- 13- River Hills Young Athlete Play Day
- 14- East Central Conference Softball Tournament
- 14- West Regional Softball Tournament
- 21- Dubuque Unified Golf
- 21- West Central Conference Softball Tournament

Thank You to Our Partners!

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Special Olympics Iowa



www.soiowa.org