

August 2015

Newsletter

Special
Olympics
Iowa



Sammons Partnership Brings Coach into the SOIA Softball Family

The Special Olympics Iowa State Softball Tournament has been sponsored by Sammons Financial Group since 2010. The company not only donates money to keep the event going, but lines the softball fields with volunteers each summer.

One of those volunteers loved the event so much, he became a coach for one of the Link Associates team. Rick King is a process improvement consultant for Sammons and has coached softball and baseball for 15 years.

"I coached baseball teams back in Boston with adults and with Special Olympics, so I decided to jump in here," King explained. "It's been great."

All together, he has spent seven years as a Special Olympics coach — two with SOIA and five with Special Olympics in Boston.

King likes to help mix things up at practices, making sure the 30 or more athletes he sees on the field get the training they need to improve their skills. They conduct drills with the help of the Link staff in hitting, fielding and other key elements of the game.

"We push them to the edge of their comfort zone," said King. "These athletes are quite inspirational. They're always willing to take on more and give it their all."

What King enjoys most is something the staff at Special Olympics Iowa hear often ... he gets more out of the experience than he gives.

"My favorite thing is seeing how happy the athletes get," King explains. "They are able to enjoy them-



Rick King (center) became an SOIA softball coach when he learned of the opportunity through Sammons Financial Group.

selfs and be with friends. We just have a good time."

The Special Olympics Iowa State Softball Tournament presented by Sammons Financial Group will be held Sat., Aug. 8 at the Prairie Reidge Sports Complex in Ankeny. The tournament will begin at 8:45 a.m. with the Opening Ceremony, featuring the ceremonial first pitch from Sammons.

The tournament is free and open to the public. The community is encouraged to come cheer on the athletes and enjoy a great day of softball.

SOIA Will No Longer Print or Mail Newsletters after December 2015. Sign up for our E-Newsletter Today!

We have been talking about it for a while...and the time has come. The Special Olympics Iowa newsletter will be moving to an all electronic format in 2016. Newsletters will not be printed or mailed after December 2015.

To ensure that you continue to receive articles, notices and updates, please visit our website at www.soiowa.org and click on Newsletters in the About Us droplist. Click on the link to Subscribe to our E-Newsletter to have your email address added to our distribution list.

You may also send your email address to Lauri Pyatt at lpyatt@soiowa.org to have it added to our system. Thank you!

Go Over the Edge for Special Olympics Iowa Sept. 16

The fear of heights is one of the most common phobias in the world...but why let that stop you? Over the Edge is a unique opportunity for individuals and organizations to raise money and support SOIA athletes by rappelling off the 345-ft Financial Center in downtown Des Moines!

The whole event is an experience you'll never forget, and one you'll want to share with others! Help us recruit rappellers or find another way for everyone to be involved:

- Rappel Solo
- Rappel as a Team
- Corporate Challenge
- Toss Your Boss
- Sponsor
- Volunteer
- Recruit



Register online at
www.soioa.org/overtheedge

Participants must raise a minimum of \$1,000 to guarantee a rappel spot. Space is limited so fundraise early!

Want to toss your boss? Your fearless leader may not seem so fearless when it comes to dangling over the side of a 345-ft building. Start a petition and generate excitement in the office so that your boss can't say no!

SOIA Featured Monthly on ABC Local 5 Midday News

If you have seen some of our athletes on the news lately, it may have been part of a new partnership between Special Olympics Iowa and ABC Local 5 News in Des Moines.

Since February, SOIA has been featured in a series of live interviews during the midday news. The segments appear on the second Wednesday of every month at approximately 11:50 a.m.

"This has been a wonderful opportunity for us to not only create awareness of and for Special Olympics Iowa and the events we offer to individuals with intellectual disabilities, but to really focus the inclusion spotlight on our athletes," said SOIA CEO Gary Harms. "Sabrina Ahmed, Elias Johnson and the entire WOI team have been great to work with and truly make the athletes feel comfortable in front of the lights and cameras."

Topics covered during the segment have included Summer Games, Unified Relay Across America, Plane Pull and more.

While our Global Messengers are used to giving speeches that they have written in advance, the live segments have given them the opportunity to practice their public speaking skills in a new way.

"I think that by being on live TV, for some it does put on a bit of pressure," said SOIA Global Messenger Tyler Leech, "but I just acted like the cameras weren't even there and I was talking to a friend. No conversation is scripted, really."

If you are in the ABC Local 5 News viewing area, look for the next SOIA segment August 12!



SOIA athlete Tyler Leech (center) talks about the Unified Relay Across America with CEO Gary Harms (right) and anchor Elias Johnson (left) on the ABC Local 5 News segment on June 10.

Win a Free Pizza in Our Casey's Cup Photo Contest!



Special Olympics Iowa athletes and law enforcement officers are being showcased on the 44-oz. cups at Casey's General Stores throughout the state! The cups will be available in stores through Labor Day with a portion of the proceeds from each Casey's Cup sold going to SOIA.

Casey's and SOIA are challenging customers to take photos of themselves with the cups! Each week, a winner will be chosen to receive a free Casey's pizza. A grand-prize winner will be chosen to receive a one night stay at the Ramada Tropics Resort in Urbandale and a year of free pizza from Casey's. To enter:

1. Take a photo with the Casey's Cup (be creative!) and tweet it to @soiowa and @caseysgenstore with the hashtag #soiacaseyscup15.
2. OR post the photo to the SOIA Facebook page (www.facebook.com/specialolympicsia) with the hashtag #soiacaseyscup15.



Special Olympics Iowa Day Kinnick Stadium Discounted Iowa Football Tickets!

Iowa vs. Illinois State Sept. 5, 11 a.m. Kickoff

SOIA athletes and their families are invited to Iowa's season opener at great discounted group rate pricing.

SOIA Youth (high school and younger): \$25
SOIA Adult: \$40
Regular single game rate: \$55

ORDER TODAY!

Call Bravo Sports at 319-626-8286 or order online through the link at www.soiowa.org. All orders will be seated together.



SOIA Athlete Brian Rolek Competes in Principal Charity Classic

Special Olympics Iowa athlete Brian Rolek received the opportunity of a lifetime when he was asked to compete at the Principal Charity Classic Pro-Am. A Pro-Am takes place before the professional event and joins ordinary golfers on a team with a PGA Tour golfer and, sometimes, a celebrity.

A self-taught golfer, Rolek held his own and even out-drove Champion's Tour professional Jay Don Blake on a hole or two. Also on his team was NASCAR Camping World Truck Series champion Matt Crafton.

"It made me very proud to represent Special Olympics," said Rolek. "I got to use skills I learned in Special Olympics such as how to interview and be comfortable with new people. It was great to be on the golf course and play as well as the other men. Special Olympics gave me the confidence and practice."



State Equestrian Meet at Jester Park Sept. 26



The SOIA State Equestrian Competition will be held at the Jester Park Equestrian Center in Granger Sept. 26. Please note the change of date and location.

Athletes from across the state will compete in events including horsemanship, egg and spoon, barrel race, ball drop, key hole race, pole bending and baton relay. Balance, stability and the right communication between the horse and the rider are key elements for success.

Kayla Craun has been an equestrian athlete since 2011 and says her favorite part about Special Olympics is riding horses.

"I have worked with a horse named Lakota at the Cedar Falls Equestrian Center for many years," said Craun. "This year was my first year with a horse named Dude. His owner (Allie Allspach) is really nice for letting me work with him."

Craun also trains with the Aspire Therapeutic Riding Program, where she competes tasks such as delivering mail on horseback. The training has helped her in competitions like Special Olympics and the Blackhawk County 4H Fair.

The Opening Ceremony will begin at 9:30 a.m. with competition beginning at 10 a.m. The event is free and open to the public. We encourage everyone to come out and cheer on our athletes.

Registration forms are due to the state office by Aug. 14. In order to compete in the State Equestrian Meet, an athlete's Application for Participation must be valid through Sept. 27, 2015.

COACHES CORNER...

Area Coaches Meetings Set

Coaches meetings for the local areas will be held this fall throughout the state. If you have any questions, please contact your local area director.

Central	September 15	Marshalltown
East	August 26	Davenport
East Central	August 12	Cedar Rapids
North	September 10	Spirit Lake
North Central	September 3	Fort Dodge
Northeast	September 1	Cedar Falls
Northwest	September 8	Sioux City and Sioux Center
South Central	September 8	Creston
Southeast	September 1	Mt. Pleasant
Southwest	September 3	Council Bluffs
West Central	September 9	Grimes

Coaches Training Certification Clinics

The goal of the SOIA Coach Education Program is to give all athletes the benefit of quality coaching. Results of the program include an improvement in the competitions, better awareness of rules and better training of the athletes. Training will be offered on the following dates:

September 29 at 4:30 p.m.

Location: Council Bluffs

Training for bowling, basketball and athletics.

September TBA

Location: Corydon

Training for athletics, bowling and cycling.

November 7 at 9 a.m.

Location: Sioux City

Training for bowling, basketball, athletics, bocce and soccer.

November 17 at 4:30 p.m.

Location: Urbandale

Training for athletics, basketball, bowling and cycling.

To download a registration form, go to www.soiowa.org. Online courses are also available.

Questions? Contact Rhonda Schwarzkopf at 515-986-5520 or rschwarzkopf@soiowa.org.

New Look to SOIA Website

The screenshot displays the SOIA website's new design. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the SOIA logo and links for Competitions, Special Programs, Ways to Give, Get Involved, and About Us. Below this is a large hero image of athletes with the text "Inclusion for All" and "Training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding." Underneath the hero image are three main navigation tabs: "Participate", "Volunteer", and "Support". The main content area features a "Special Olympics Iowa News" section with several news items and a "View More News" button. To the right is an "Upcoming Events" section with a list of events and a "View More Events" button. Below the news and events sections is a "TORCHBURN" logo. Further down, there's a "IOWA PRIDE" section with a photo of athletes and a "WIN A FREE PIZZA" section with a photo of a pizza. At the bottom, there's a "OUR CHAMPION STATEWIDE SPONSORS" section with logos for HyVee, GORHAM'S, and others.

You have been waiting for it and it is finally here!
Take a look at our new and improved website at

www.soiowa.org

You will notice:

- dynamic, sliding photos
- unique tabs for participants, volunteers and sponsors
- special section for news and upcoming events
- highlighted area for our statewide sponsors

Some quick tips:

- From anywhere on the site, click on the logo in the top left corner to go home.
- The tabs for Participate, Volunteer and Support directly below the rotating graphics are a one-stop shop for any information you may need in those areas.
- Clicking on View More Events in the Upcoming Events section will take you to our full calendar.

New SOIA Van is on the Roads

Mercedes-Benz of Des Moines has provided SOIA with a brand new 2015 Sprinter cargo van. This valued partnership not only allows Special Olympics Iowa to upgrade our aging vehicle fleet but provides us with a mobile billboard to enhance Special Olympics awareness across the state of Iowa.



Are You Ready for Some Football? Pigskin Madness Tickets on Sale Now!

We're gearing up for the NFL season and our annual Pigskin Madness tickets are on sale now! For just \$20 you have eight chances to win each week of the regular NFL season — that's 17 weeks of play!

HIGHEST Three Team Total	\$225
Second Highest	\$100
Third Highest	\$70
Fourth Highest	\$40
Fifth Highest	\$35
Sixth Highest	\$30
Seventh Highest	\$25
Eighth Highest	\$20
LOWEST Three Team Total	\$15
Second Lowest	\$10
Third Lowest	\$5

Want to help your friends get in on the fun? We will send you a book of 25 tickets to sell — you do not need to pay anything up front. Just turn in the sold tickets and money to the SOIA state office.

Questions? Contact Jeanette Steinfeldt at 515-986-5520 or jsteinfeldt@soiowa.org.

Arnold Begins Vice President Role at SOIA

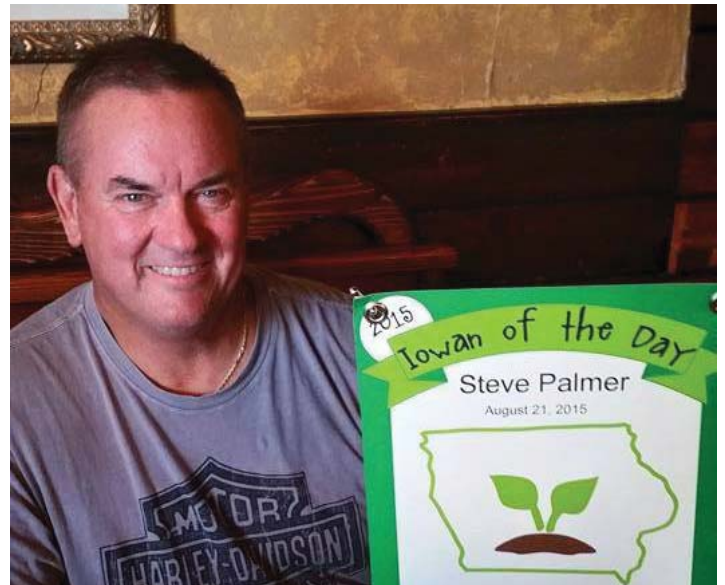


John Arnold has been named the vice president of program services and athlete experiences for Special Olympics Iowa. He began his new role in August.

Arnold was previously the president of Midwest Insurance Corporation in Nevada, Iowa. He also spent seven years with Junior Achievement, two as vice president of districts in Central Iowa and five as president of the OKI Partners, located in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area. At Junior Achievement, Arnold was responsible for fundraising, volunteer recruitment, budget and regulatory requirements.

Arnold has been a volunteer for Special Olympics since 1989 and served as a board member in 2014.

Palmer Named Iowan of the Day for the Iowa State Fair



SOIA Board Chair Steve Palmer has been named the Iowan of the Day for the Iowa State Fair on Aug. 21. Palmer was chosen for the honor for his strong work ethic, loyalty to helping others, and an exceptional sense of Iowa pride.

Palmer will be recognized on the Bill Riley stage at approximately 2:15 p.m. Aug. 21. Come out and join us in congratulating him!

Special Olympics Iowa Calendar of Events

August

6	Challenge Day	Council Bluffs
8	State Softball	Ankeny (new location!)
10	LETR Golf Tournament at Echo Valley	Norwalk
12	East Central Area Coaches Meeting	Cedar Rapids
16	Unified Golf Tournament	Spencer
20	Jim Jordan Memorial Golf Tournament at Otter Creek	Ankeny
21	Steve Palmer is Iowan of the Day	Iowa State Fair
26	East Area Coaches Meeting	Davenport
28	Unified Mini-Golf Tournament	Vinton
29	Unified Golf Tournament	Cedar Rapids
29	Cargill Night at the Ballpark (with CR Kernels)	Cedar Rapids

September

1	Southeast Area Coaches Meeting	Mt. Pleasant
1	Northeast Area Coaches Meeting	Cedar Falls
3	North Central Area Coaches Meeting	Fort Dodge
3	Southwest Area Coaches Meeting	Council Bluffs
8	Northwest Area Coaches Meeting	Sioux City and Sioux Center
8	South Central Area Coaches Meeting	Creston
9	West Central Area Coaches Meeting	Grimes
10	North Area Coaches Meeting	Spirit Lake
12	Unified Golf Tournament	Davenport
12	Unified Golf Tournament	Akron
15	Central Area Coaches Meeting	Marshalltown
16	Over the Edge	Des Moines
18	Dunkin Donuts Fundraiser	All Locations Statewide
19	Southwest Area Cycling	Avoca
19	Jester Park Unified Golf Tournament	Granger
25	Northeast Area Soccer Skills	Cedar Falls
26	State Equestrian Competition	Granger, Jester Park Equestrian Center
26	World's Largest Truck Convoy	Des Moines
29	Coaches Sports Training Certification Clinic (Bowling Basketball, Athletics)	Council Bluffs
30	East Area Bowling	Maquoketa

October Highlights

3	State Flag Football	Cedar Rapids
10	State Volleyball Tournament	Ames, Iowa State University
17	Tailgate for the Athletes	Des Moines
17	Polar Plunge®	Davenport
24	Polar Plunge®	Siouxland

View more events at www.soiowa.org/about-us/events.

Connect With Us!

Remember to follow Special Olympics Iowa to receive important updates and stay on top of the latest events and activities.

Be Our Twitter Reporter!

Training for a competition? Volunteering at an event?
Having a great time at a fundraiser? Let us know about it!
Tag your tweets with @soiowa and we will retweet you!



www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympicsIA

Twitter: @SOIowa



Special Olympics Iowa

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Thank You to Our Partners!

Champion Statewide Partners



Premier Statewide Partners



Champion and Premier Statewide Partners provide a comprehensive level of support for all programs and services offered by Special Olympics Iowa (SOIA). Organizations may be recognized at these levels for financial support, in-kind donations or any combination thereof, and are recognized in many other ways. To find out more about our current partnership opportunities or for information on how to become one, visit our website at www.soiowa.org and look under Support Us, or contact the SOIA Vice President of Development Jamie Alt at jalt@soiowa.org or 515-986-5520.