

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2011 – 2012 ?

Special Olympics Inc. (SOI) has built a framework of five Pillars of work that ultimately link together to provide a consistent and quality experience for Special Olympics athletes. There are three Mission Driving Pillars: Advance Quality Sports and Competitions, Build Communities and Connect Fans & Fun. There are two Enabling Pillars: Develop Movement Leadership and Establish Sustainable Capabilities. These Pillars drove Special Olympics Wisconsin's (SOWI) strategic plan entitled *Inspiring Greatness --- 2012-2015* which will serve as the guiding document for the Special Olympics movement in Wisconsin for the next four years.

An immediate, important change to note from the plan was to align the names of our offices and competitions with SOI and the WIAA. SOWI will begin using the term "*Region*" or "*Regional*" to refer to what was previously termed "*Area*". In addition to describing SOWI's office locations, such as North Central *Region 2*, the new term will be used to describe all levels of competitions. For example, *Area* Competitions will now be referred to as *Regional* Competitions. What was formerly called *Regional* level Competitions will now be called *Sectionals*. *District* competitions will keep the same title; however, SOWI will now refer to the *Spring Games* as the *Hometown Games*.

In addition, there are several new staff – please review the Staff Contact list in the pocket inserts.

Agency Management

1. Updated Agency minimum standards reflect new policies for the 2011-2012 Program year.
2. Continue to watch for Agency best practices on the SOWI website.
3. The Agency treasurer position description has been revised to comply with In-House accounting needs.

Athlete Policies

1. The Outdoor Sports Tournament medical deadline is now June 1st.
2. The Release Form is now available in Spanish on the SOWI website.
3. An athlete medical expiration report is mailed out six weeks before a medical deadline listing the athletes whose medical will expire prior to the last day of competition for that State Tournament.
4. Athlete Eligibility Frequently Asked Questions are now listed under the "Athletes" link on the SOWI website.

ALPs

1. Athletes-as-Coaches who no longer participate in training and competition as an athlete must keep their Class A volunteer status current but do not need to keep their athlete medical forms current.

Training

1. The coach's training and certification program has been enhanced and the quality training we have always provided will be more consistent and will align SOWI with the new Special Olympics North America requirements. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with these and pass the information on to all of your coaches.
2. We have clarified the age requirement for minor coaches who wish to become certified in a sport, chaperone and attend games.

Finance

1. The Finance section now only includes information for Agencies with In-House accounts, servicing all Agencies who raise money in the name of Special Olympics Wisconsin.

Outreach

1. Project UNIFY ® (the US Department of Education funding) is now focusing more on schools and has defined what a true Project UNIFY School consists of. While there is this

- focus, SOWI is still providing the initiatives (i.e. Young Athletes, Spread the Word to End the Word [R-Word] Campaign and Camp Shriver) and funding to local Agencies and communities.
2. Healthy Habits, a local version of Healthy Athletes, will be hosted by at least one tournament per Region in 2012. This program is based in education (no direct service provided) but we hope that by providing a more local initiative we can continue to educate athletes on healthy living styles.

Communications & Public Relations

1. Social networking sites can be a great tool and join online communities together. SOWI has now created policies and guidelines to help you and the Agency navigate the ever-changing social media landscape.

Competition

1. Review the Key Changes and Reminders page of the Competition section for details on competition changes and updates.