



2024-2025 ATHLETE LEADERSHIP TRAINING SCHEDULE (updated Sept 2024)



In Special Olympics Athlete Leadership, we partner with athlete leaders to educate people about the abilities of our athletes, provide leadership and skills training to enable athletes to be successful and support them in leadership roles inside and outside the movement.

2024

Healthy Relationships – Tues/Thur. October 22, 24, 29, 31, 2024 6:30 – 7:45pm (virtual)



These four sessions are designed to inform and empower self-advocates by equipping them with the tools to engage in healthy relationships and communicate about boundaries and safety. The four sessions cover topics such as Understanding and Setting Boundaries, What is Consent, My Body Belongs to Me and Pathway to Help. It is expected that an athlete sign up for attend all four sessions to be registered for the class.

Fitness Captains – October 23, 2024 - In Person 2 hour session – Spring 2025 dates TBD



Fitness Captains are athletes on a sports team who lead the team in activities related to fitness and Healthy Lifestyle. Fitness Captains can use their leadership and communication skills to encourage and empower fellow athletes to be healthy and fit on all Special Olympics teams.

Government Advocacy – Tuesday, November 19, 2024 either 12:00 – 1:00pm or 5:00 – 6:00 pm (Virtual)



Learn how government impacts SOWI and why it is important for you to talk to lawmakers about SOWI. Learn how to meet your lawmaker and tell your story.

Introduction to Athlete Leadership and Understanding Leadership Tues., Dec. 3 and 5, 2024 6:00 – 8:00pm (virtual)

(Also offered Tuesday/Thursday, June 24/26, 2025)

Introduction to Athlete Leadership

This course is an overview of what it means to be an athlete leader. It serves as a guide to help athletes make decisions about their future roles and training in athlete leadership using interactive exercises. This course should be taken prior to any other courses.

Understanding Leadership

This module takes you through the next step of discovering who you are as a leader and recognizing the value you bring as you continue your leadership journey. It will cover the definition of leadership, behaviors of great leaders, and introduces six basic leadership skills that are incorporated throughout other modules. These skills are communication, decision-making, adaptability, relationship building, action focus, and continuous improvement. This course is should be taken along with Introduction to Athlete Leadership course.

Special Olympics Wisconsin

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Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities

2025

(2025 Dates/Classes Tentative)

Athlete Health Messenger – Feb 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025 – Each Wednesday for four (4) weeks, 6:00 – 8:00 pm – Virtual
(Also offered Thur. May 1, 8, 15, 22, 2025 and Tues. October 1, 8, 15, 22, 2025 each for 4 weeks same time – virtual)



A Health Messenger is a Special Olympics athlete or unified partner who has been trained to serve as a health and wellness leader, educator, advocate and role model within their Special Olympics communities and the community at large. The Athlete Health Messenger workshop focuses on the Fit 5 Curriculum (hydration, nutrition and physical activity) and strong minds.

Athletes-As-Coaches – Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025 (In-person Site TBD – typically Madison)*



The Athletes-As-Coaches (AAC) Program is designed to help train and certify Athletes to become coaches in the Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI) system.

Bank of America Better Money Habits – April – Date TBD



Join employees from Bank of America to learn personal money management skill.

Athlete Leader Reunion held at Summer Games – Saturday, June 6, 2025 UW Whitewater 5:00 – 7:00 pm

All athletes who have attended an athlete leadership class in recent years are invited to come connect with other athlete leaders through food and fun!



You can build on the Introduction Classes with these advance leadership modules. Virtual topics/dates/time TBD.



Understanding Emotions – In this module, athletes learn the importance of recognizing and managing emotions to build and maintain good relationships.



Managing Time – This module explores the importance of effective time management through establishing goals, prioritizing, and organized planning.



Leading Discussions – This module focuses on collecting input from peers and engaging in and leading conversations. Includes listening to feedback and summarizing them into themes and common ideas.



Engaging with Others - Athlete Leaders learn how to effectively interact with individuals and teams and influence others to follow their lead.



Unified Leadership - Athlete Leaders learn about advocacy and how to become a Unified Leader.

Global Messenger – (public speaking) Mon/Wed., Nov. 10, 12, 17, 19, 2025 6:00 – 8:00 pm (Virtual)

(Also, offered Mon/Wed., January 12, 14, 19, 21, 2026)



The role of an Athlete Spokesperson is to promote, educate, and inform others about the mission, benefits, and direction of Special Olympics. It goes beyond giving public speeches and interviews, it is about spreading the word about the Special Olympics movement through different outlets.

For more information contact:

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**Mentors are encouraged to attend workshops, but it is not required except for Athletes-As-Coaches. Mentors can be a parent, coach, family friend or other support person that can assist athlete in completing assignments and practicums.*