



SOWI ATHLETE LEADERSHIP FAQ

What is Athlete Leadership?

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.

What do you mean by AL?

AL is the shortened version of Athlete Leadership.

Who can do Athlete Leadership?

Any athlete who is at least 14 years old.

What does Athlete Leadership do for my athlete?

It helps them gain self-confidence, give them a voice, and show that their voice matters. And it provides access to more opportunities off the sports field.

What can I do as an athlete leader?

There are many opportunities for AL:

- Ambassador for SOWI at events (Jersey Mikes Day of Giving, Polar Plunge)
- Give speeches/MC Opening Ceremony
- Be on committees, councils, liaison, etc. (Ex: Athlete Leadership Council [ALC], Law Enforcement Torch Run [LETR], Games Management Team [GMT])
- Assist with giving presentations—from government to grassroots
- Other opportunities as they come up

Do I have to take Introduction to Athlete Leadership and Understanding to Leadership first?

Also known as Intro to AL/Understanding. It is a recommendation that it is your first class to take, as it helps you understand Athlete Leadership and what it all entails. It is a requirement for some AL roles/opportunities to have this class completed.

How are AL Classes offered?

Most of our classes are online through Zoom, unless a Local Program requests us to do one in person for their program. Because of the class structure, Athletes As Coaches is held in person.

Is transportation offered?

Transportation is something that is considered by how you answer the question 'do you have transportation?' at the Activation Station. Depending on your answer, you may or may not be asked to do in person events.

What is the Activation Station?

It is a table at State Games run by our Athlete Leadership staff to connect with existing athlete leaders. We want to make sure their information is up to date and learn how they have been active in being a leader at the local and/or state level. At this station, we encourage other athletes who might be interested in learning about Athlete Leadership to stop by and talk to us.

What/Where are Activation Stations held?

They are held at Spring, Summer, and Fall State Games. Sometimes they might be at a regional event but that is case by case.

What does it take from the Local Program?

The only thing we ask is to share information to your athletes on upcoming classes, events, or other opportunities. Athlete Leaders shouldn't be a burden to your program; it should help strengthen your program! Our Athlete Leadership staff might reach out with a question about an opportunity for your program or about inquiring about an athlete for a certain role. Consider having at least one athlete leader in your local program team!

**SOWI staff is responsible for the classes and managing AL opportunities. If you are unsure whether you have athlete leaders in your program, please reach out to the Athlete Leadership team (below) and we can provide a list of completed courses and certifications for athletes within your program.*

Who do we contact if we have more questions?

Our athlete leadership email at: athleteleadership@specialolympicswisconsin.org
or our Unified Leadership Specialist Lexi Galarowicz at mgalarowicz@specialolympicswisconsin.org