

## WHAT'S NEW FOR 2014 – 2015 ?

Special Olympics, Inc. 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 & Funds. 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 serves as the guiding document for the Special Olympics Movement in Wisconsin.

After reviewing the information gathered from the Agency survey last year regarding management team roles, length of volunteering and succession plans, SOWI is charged more than ever to set the organization up for continued success in the future. SOWI continues to build resources to assist with managing local programs, expanding online training opportunities and resources, and simplifying the *Agency Manager Handbook* and *Competition Guide* to be more user-friendly. SOWI also recognizes that Project UNIFY® is growing; school programs, youth and teacher leaders are searching for similar resources already created for Agencies. In the next year, SOWI hopes to start to align this growth, and the resources required, with our traditional Agencies.

### Front Pocket

1. Within the last year, several new people joined SOWI's staff. Refer to the staff list in the front pocket or on the "Contact Us" page on the SOWI website and join us in welcoming them.

### Agency Management

1. Updated Agency minimum standards reflect new policies for the 2014-2015 Program year.
2. SOWI has heard from many Agencies that they are infusing health into their local programs in various ways. Therefore, a position for the Agency Athlete Wellness Manager has been added to the Agency Management Team. SOWI hopes this position description can help an Agency create a sustainable next step if adding wellness opportunities.
  - a. If an Agency wants to add a wellness aspect, there are funds available through a Healthy Communities Mini-Project. Applications for this are now included in the *Forms for Duplication* section.

### Athlete Policies

1. According to Special Olympics, Inc. guidelines, athletes (or parents/guardians for athletes who are minors and/or not their own guardian) are required to sign an addendum to the *Official Special Olympics Release Form* indicating they are aware of Special Olympics, Inc. housing information for overnight activities/tournaments. Athletes who have signed the *Official Special Olympics Release Form* printed after August 2013 do not need to sign the addendum.
  - a. A report indicating which athletes are in need of the addendum was included in the August issue of the *Agency Times*. Agencies will also be given the addendums at the fall Leadership Forums, which must be signed and mailed to the SOWI Headquarters office. Addendums will be included in mailings to Agencies who are unable to attend the fall Leadership Forums.
  - b. Approximately six weeks prior to every medical deadline a report will be mailed to Agency Managers and/or Agency Medical Directors indicating which athletes are still in need of the addendum. If you have any questions please contact the Athlete Records Manager.
2. The Unified Sports® Partner Form is no longer required. However, anyone who wishes to be a Unified Sports partner must be Class A registered by the medical deadline for the sport in which they intend to participate.

## ALPs

1. Athlete Input Council (AIC) members are rotating off the committee at the end of 2014. If you know an athlete that would be a great fit for the committee or you'd like to bring ALPs opportunities near you, please contact your Director of Field Services.

## Volunteer Policies

1. The Unified Sports® Partner Form is no longer required. However, anyone who wishes to be a Unified Sports partner must be Class A registered by the medical deadline for the sport in which they intend to participate.

## Training

1. It is no longer required to report the 10 hours of practical coaching experience when a Class A volunteer applies to be a certified coach.
2. It is no longer required that one coach per sport offered by the Agency has completed the Principles of Coaching training by December 31, 2015. Rather, various aspects of this training have been incorporated into other coaches training sessions. This course is still a valuable aspect of training and will still be taught for those wishing to deepen their coaching skills.

## Finance

1. SOWI's auditors have asked that Agencies submit the *Money Handling Accountability* form for all fundraisers at the time a deposit is made. The reason for this is that there are times when there is significant money received at special events such as souvenirs and concession sales. Having this money on site poses many risk management issues including loss of cash, theft of cash, personal safety for those in charge of the money and public perception of accountability. In order to reduce these risks, the form is required.
2. Monthly financial statements are available on the Agency log in page of the website (financial statements are no longer mailed or e-mailed). These statements will be available on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the following month. For example, January reports will be posted on or before February 10<sup>th</sup>. These reports will show all expenses and revenue for the month. If you need more specific reporting, please contact the Accounting Manager.

## Outreach

1. There are funds set aside for "Starting the Conversation" between existing Agencies and schools to implement Project UNIFY goals of youth leadership, school-wide engagement (i.e. R-word campaign) and Unified Sports.
2. There are funds set aside for Agencies to conduct "Mini-Projects" through Healthy Communities, bringing health education and resources to members of the Agency. The Mini-Project application and information is now available in the *Forms for Duplication* section.
3. Unified Sports opportunities will be available for schools in Unified Bowling, Unified Flag Football, Unified Snow Shoe Relays, Unified Indoor Triathlon, Unified 4x100 Relay. There are limited funds available for schools to host a Unified Invitational of their sport of choice in any of the three models: Competitive, Player Development, and Recreational.

## Communications & Public Relations

1. To ensure Agency materials align with the reset branding, SOWI has created an *Agency Branding Order Form* to assist you in designing new uniforms. We have also created a newsletter, press release, report cover, PowerPoint, and fact sheet template all available on the Agency log in page of the website.
2. SOWI's Communications and Public Relations department is committed to helping you maximize earned media opportunities in your community. The Director of Communications will work with you to craft, finalize and distribute press releases to your local media. To get started, visit the Agency log in on the website to view the press release template and then contact the Director of Communications.

#### Insurance

1. Please note that obstacle runs have been added as a fundraising exclusion.

#### Forms for Duplication

1. Forms for training, finance, insurance, sports, and fundraising are updated yearly. Please use the forms in this section for the upcoming Program year and recycle anything you may have printed copies of from the previous year's handbook.

#### Competition

1. Review the Key Changes and Reminders page of the Competition Guide for details on competition changes and updates.
2. Multi-Agency Competition Grants are now available when hosting Unified Sports competitions.

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