

Special Olympics
Northern California



IMPACT REPORT

2024





A *Special* YEAR OF GROWTH

Special Olympics Northern California is proud to lead an inclusive movement that brings people of all abilities together through sports.

OUR *Impact*



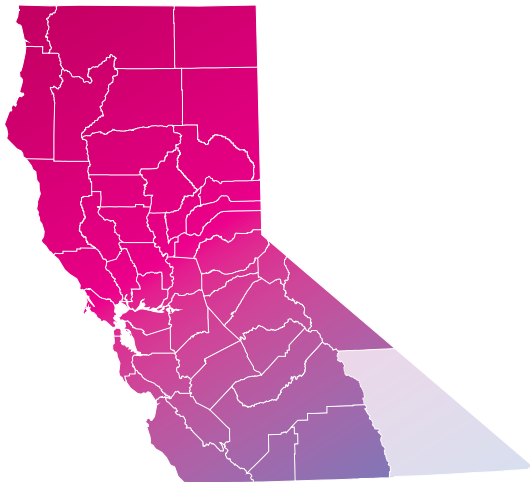
TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK.

Athlete Leader Cristhian said it best! At Special Olympics Northern California, our dream is to use sports to jump-start change and spark joy. We do this by putting our athletes first in everything that we do and fostering a passionate and connected community around them.

With year-round sports as the foundation of our programs, we offer inclusive schools programs, critical health screenings and resources, and leadership trainings to enrich the lives of people with intellectual disabilities on and off the field. Our athletes benefit from these programs free of charge thanks to a broad network of partners, supporters and friends.

Thank you for being a part of our team in 2024!

OUR REACH



31K+
PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS



182K+
STUDENTS
IMPACTED



4
REGIONS SERVING
41 COUNTIES



21K+
VOLUNTEERS

New Office Locations!

Offices in Pleasant Hill, West Sacramento, and new in 2024 - San Jose & Fresno County!



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“

El trabajo en equipo hace que el sueño funcione!

”

-Cristhian,

Special Olympics Northern California
Athlete, Contra Costa County

SPORTS

Supporting *Win-Wins*

Meet Sophia. She's one of more than 23,000 athletes who participate with Special Olympics Northern California. Sophia competes in swimming, soccer and basketball and has attended Summer Games multiple times. Sophia brightens up any room with her smile and represents the joy of Special Olympics. Not only has she found a team with Special Olympics NorCal, but she has also spoken at numerous high-level events and even threw out the first pitch at a San Francisco Giants game.

Our free sports programs provide an opportunity for people with intellectual disabilities, like Sophia, to improve their physical fitness, build friendships and discover their fullest potential.

2024 Sports Highlights*

- **30+** Competitions & Counting
- **300+** New Volunteer Coaches
- New Assistant Coach Program
- Piloted Special Olympics with Adult Day Programs in Stanislaus County
- Partnered with San Jose Earthquakes & Sacramento Republic FC for Unified Soccer seasons

**as of 10/1/24*



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Because of my disabilities, I sat on the bench and didn't get to play. I felt sad and excluded. So I got involved in Special Olympics. It's like a big family! It is inclusive and everyone gets to play.

- Sophia,

Special Olympics Northern California
Athlete, San Francisco County





Summer Games

- Santa Clara University & Cupertino High School
- **2,000+** athletes, coaches, volunteers & families
- **35** counties represented
- **4 sports competitions** including Bocce, Swimming, Tennis, and Track & Field
- Debuted the Sports Expo highlighting new and potential Special Olympics NorCal sports
- Young Athletes Fair, Healthy Young Athletes screenings and new Family Health Forum
- **1,200+** health screenings

GUEST PERFORMER:
Las Vegas Headliner **Jeff Civillico**



GUEST SPEAKERS: Olympic Gold Medalists
Connor Fields & Brandi Chastain



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To the Special Olympics athletes: you are special people first. What you are doing is really incredible. The amount of time you have decided to endeavor into sports, and being the best you can be on a daily basis, is remarkable.

- **Brandi Chastain,**
Two-time Olympic gold-medalist and
World Cup Champion

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SCHOOLS

Coaching *Beyond* the Classroom

Students with and without disabilities deserve the same opportunities to make friends, compete in sports and be a meaningful part of their school's culture.

This year, through our Special Olympics **Schools Partnership Program**, we significantly surpassed our goal of expanding our program into new schools, reaching more students than ever before. The program includes the **Unified Champion Schools Program**, which joins students of differing abilities together on the same sports team, as leaders in school and community activities, and as organizers and participants in school-wide activities.

Congratulations to Antelope (Calif.) High School for being named a Nationally-Recognized Banner School! A **Unified Champion School** receiving national banner recognition is one that demonstrates a commitment to inclusion by meeting 10 national standards of excellence.

2024 Schools Highlights*

- **589** Participating Schools
- **233** Unified Champion Schools
- **712** Inclusive Events
- **182,500** Students Impacted
- Expanded partnership with the California Interscholastic Federation to grow Unified Sports



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The Unified Champion Schools Program gives students a fuller experience of high school that everybody deserves. It's probably the best part of the school, in my opinion.

- **Chloe Collins,**
Assistant Principal,
Woodcreek High School (Roseville)

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Elevating Body & Mind

Despite higher health risks, people with intellectual disabilities often face significant challenges in accessing quality health care and obtaining opportunities that promote fitness and wellness.

The Special Olympics Northern California Health & Wellness program aims to help athletes live healthier, longer and more fulfilled lives through Walking Clubs, Family Health Forums, Fitness Seasons, non-invasive health screenings, at-home resources and more. We also worked with community partners such as Stanford University to break down barriers and improve the understanding necessary for healthcare professionals, and students, to treat people with intellectual disabilities.

85% of healthcare professionals agreed that they would be able to provide better care for people with intellectual disabilities after the Healthy Athletes Clinical Director training.

Special Olympics Train the Trainer Survey (2019). Washington DC: Special Olympics, Inc.



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2024 Health & Wellness Highlights*

- **3,800+** Health & Wellness activities
- Distribution of printed Health & Wellness newsletter to **6,500+** athletes
- Introduced Healthy Young Athletes screenings for children ages 2-10
- Special presentation at Summer Games educating supporters on the impact of Special Olympics Northern California's Health & Wellness Program

**as of 10/1/24*

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Because of Health & Wellness programs like the Walking Club, I was able to build up my endurance and now I can walk a mile!

- Bradley,

Special Olympics Northern California Athlete, Sacramento County



DID YOU KNOW?

Special Olympics is the world's largest public health organization for people with intellectual disabilities?

LEADERSHIP

Creating *Confident* Ambassadors

There's nothing more powerful than hearing someone share their own story. Athlete Leaders are local Special Olympics participants who serve as ambassadors for the organization and grow through virtual and in-person skills-based classes, presentation opportunities, and chances to take on leadership roles. These skills and trainings help open doors to succeed at school, work and in the community.

Athlete Leaders represent Special Olympics NorCal at special events, government advocacy trips, health panels, committees, the Board of Directors and more. They are also featured in our award-winning **Do Something Special** campaign and get to meet dozens of high-profile personalities as hosts of **The Special Report**, our inclusive interview series.

2024 Leadership Highlights*

- **105+** Athlete Leaders
- **140+** educational events & activations engaging Athlete Leaders throughout the community
- Athlete Leaders appeared in local news, at the United Nations, at the State Capitol and in presentations to global brands
- Partnered with AbilityPath to host a multi-day, in-person Athlete Leadership Summit

**as of 10/1/24*

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I really feel proud of myself and I feel this experience of giving speeches is making me more and more confident in myself, and not having stage fright or being shaky when talking to people.

- Maggie,

Special Olympics Northern California
Athlete, Alameda County





We're *Better* Together

It takes a powerful team to help Special Olympics Northern California provide all of our programs and services free of charge. Companies like Safeway, Jersey Mike's and dozens of others are instrumental in not only supporting Special Olympics NorCal financially, but through **meaningful employee involvement** and volunteerism. We're also grateful for the support of local community groups; colleges, universities and professional sports teams; individuals; and of course, our dedicated **coaches and volunteers**.

Our inclusive movement has sparked change at the highest levels, including multi-year support from the **State of California** and local counties. Special Olympics is also at the grassroots level with fundraising and volunteerism from **law enforcement**, who have raised more than \$1 billion for our athletes worldwide.

66 *Thank you for showing the world who we are and bridging Special Olympics with communities in Northern California... Special is you!*

-Terence,
Special Olympics Northern California
Athlete, San Francisco County



2024 Community Highlights*

- **\$400,000+** raised through the Law Enforcement Torch Run
- Inclusive partnerships with the Bay Area, Sacramento and San Jose Sports Halls of Fame
- Creation of the Gold Medal Society for planned giving
- Established our first Regional Media Partner with KRON4 in the Bay Area
- Renewal of Santa Clara County partnership and funding
- New San Mateo County Measure K multi-year funding awarded
- Launched multicultural initiative aimed at recruiting new Spanish-speaking athletes via billboards, targeted coach recruitment & bilingual social media campaign

**as of 10/1/24*





Special Olympics
Northern California

Make a Difference

Contact us today to get in the game. We rely on support from individuals, corporations and foundations to change the lives of athletes and their families across Northern California. For more information or to get involved please contact:

SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

3480 Buskirk Ave., #340
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

info@sonc.org

(925) 944-8801

Please consider including Special Olympics Northern California in your Will or Estate Plan. For more information contact plannedgiving@sonc.org



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I've learned so much from my athletes. If they've learned even one-tenth as much from me as I've learned from them, I'd be absolutely thrilled.

- Greg McKinney,

Volunteer Coach & Member
of the Gold Medal Society

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If you are doing something that's making a difference, no matter at what level, whether it's doing something in the world, in your community, or in your school – you are Special.

- Joe Montana,
San Francisco 49ers
Hall of Fame Quarterback

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Watch **The Special Report**, featuring Athlete Leader Ryan's interview of football legend Joe Montana. Catch our weekly content series featuring inspiring conversations between Special Olympics NorCal athletes and the sports industry's biggest icons at [DoSomethingSpecial.org](https://www.DosomethingSpecial.org).



Special Olympics
Northern California

Playing today for a more inclusive tomorrow

#OneNorCal