



SPECIAL OLYMPICS MISSOURI UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER

HIGHLIGHTS

October brought many opportunities for Unified Sports, Inclusive Youth, Leadership and Whole School Engagement. Students from across the state participated in sports competitions at Special Olympics Missouri's annual State Outdoor games including Unified Golf, Unified Flag Football, Unified Tennis and Unified Softball. These events were supported by student volunteers from Jefferson City Public Schools, Blair Oaks HS, and Helias HS. Odessa HS and South Callaway HS garnered whole school engagement when athletes and student leaders worked together to host track meets and invited neighboring schools to come compete. Students in St. Louis participated in bowling competitions with the support of Missouri Association of Student Council (MASC) volunteers from several schools including Union HS, Windsor HS and Grandview HS. At SOMO's Training for Life Center in Jefferson City Flag Football competitions began with fierce competition between Camdenton, Capital City, and Eldon. Thank you to all the schools who participated or hosted events this month!

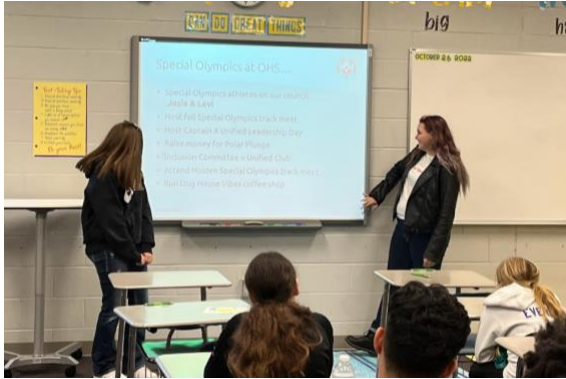
OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

Applications for the **Statewide Youth Activation Committee (YAC)** are now open. This student committee will meet monthly via Zoom (first Thursday of the month with opportunities at 7am or 4pm) to gain leadership skills and collaborate on providing inclusive opportunities to impact students across the state. Please encourage Unified pairs (one athlete and one Unified partner) from your school to work together to submit an application before December 15th. (application: <https://form.jotform.com/222913978614061> adult recommendation: <https://form.jotform.com/222973928252060>)





Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**



Now is the time to start registering for **Area Bowling and Area Basketball** competitions. Schools who participate in these competitions are eligible to advance to Regional Basketball and State Indoor Games which will be held this March in St. Charles. First, contact your area program director (<https://somo.org/areas/>) or check the calendar (<https://somo.org/calendar/>) to learn competition dates and registration deadlines. School based teams are encouraged to participate in Unified sports because when students with and without intellectual disabilities practice and compete together on the same team they build relationships, gain more skills and build a stronger school culture of inclusion.

Young Athlete Program (YAP) is a fantastic way for high school students to have a positive impact on younger students in your district. YAP is for children ages 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities to learn motor skills, social skills and get exposure to sports. Connect with the SOMO team to receive training for executing a one day or series event with your students.

NATIONAL BANNER PROGRAM

A Special Olympics Unified Champion School has an inclusive school climate and exudes a sense of collaboration, engagement and respect for all members of the student body and staff. A Unified Champion School receiving national banner recognition is one that has demonstrated commitment to inclusion by meeting 10 national standards of excellence. These standards were developed by a national panel of leaders from Special Olympics and the education community.

(<https://www.specialolympics.org/what-we-do/unified-champion-schools/banner-recognition-program>)

Tip for Standard #3 An adult coach for each sport has received training on Special Olympics Unified Sports. This standard can be met by completing free online training from National Federation of State High School Associations (<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/coaching-unified-sports>).

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



RESOURCES



Bookshare

A BENETECH INITIATIVE

Do your students experience a barrier to reading? They may find it difficult to decode words, see printed text, or physically hold a book or turn its pages. [Bookshare](https://www.bookshare.org) is an eBook library that makes reading easier. People with reading barriers like dyslexia, blindness, and cerebral palsy can read in ways that work for them with a huge collection of titles in audio, audio + highlighted text, braille, and other formats. Bookshare is **FREE** for all qualified U.S. students and schools.
(<https://www.bookshare.org/cms/>)

UPCOMING EVENTS

St. Louis Metro Area - contact Jocelyn Diehl (diehl@somo.org) (314)-961-7755

December 2nd STL Metro SSD Bowling Medal Tournament Unified

Central Area – contact Tim Schuster (schuster@somo.org) (573)-635-1660

November 3rd Central Area UCS Flag Football Tournament

November 4th Central Area UCS Flag Football Tournament

November 14th Central Area Bowling Tournament Salem

December 3rd Central Area Bowling Tournament

December 8th Central Area Lexington Local Basketball Tournament

December 9th Central Area Owensville Local Bowling Tournament

Kansas City Area - contact Meg Ward (ward@somo.org) (816)-535-9610

November 5th KC Metro Area Bowling Tournament

November 12th KC Metro Basketball Clinic

November 22nd Chicken and Pickle NKC Dine out fundraiser



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**

December 17th KC Metro Basketball Clinic with Rockhurst University

North Area – contact Todd Stutzman (stutzman@somo.org) (816)-233-6232

November 5th Area Bowling Tournament Chillicothe

November 12th Area Bowling Tournament St. Joseph

Southeast Area – contact Scott Williams (swilliams@somo.org) (573)-339-6733

November 19th Area Bowling Tournament Cape Girardeau

December 3rd Southeast Area Bowling Tournament

Southwest Area – contact Jana Fornelli (fornelli@somo.org) (417)-624-5505

November 8th Area Bowling at Sunshine Lanes

November 10th Area Bowling at Sunshine Lanes

November 13th Area Bowling at Sunshine Lanes

November 17th Area Bowling at 4th Street Bowl

November 18th Area Bowling at 4th Street Bowl

December 8th SW Area Bowling at 4th Street Bowl

December 9th SW Area Bowling at 4th Street Bowl



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**

MESSAGE FROM ME

We are so grateful for Missouri Association of Student Councils (MASC)! It is incredible to see how motivated the next generation is to be inclusive. MASC is one of our statewide partners and this month it has been so much fun traveling to their advisor and district conferences across the state. I saw inclusive youth leadership in action when an Odessa athlete and Unified partner lead discussions about hosting inclusive events at the Trails West District Convention. Missouri Student Council Association members have risen to the challenge to include people with intellectual disabilities on their councils, host inclusive sports competitions and participate in our annual Polar Plunge Fundraiser. MASC members can apply for our School of Character Award by January 25th (<https://www.masc1.org/charity-of-choice>).

Want practical ideas for becoming a more inclusive school? Let's meet! My goal is to provide you more information about the Unified Champion School program and meet you where you are with inclusive next steps. If you would like to meet in person or via Zoom please reach out to me!

CONTACT INFORMATION



Emma Thomas

Unified Champion Schools Manager

573-469-7832

thomas@somo.org

305 Special Olympics Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65101



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**

Join the Generation Unified App

from Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®

What: A new way for Unified Champion School students to engage with social-emotional learning skills from their phones!

When: Have your students start using the app this fall!

How: Work with your Special Olympics Program to "opt-in" your school. Then you will receive tutorial videos and other information so your students can enjoy and you can oversee their engagement.

Features Include: Challenges to play, Inclusion Tiles, Leaderboards, Connecting with Friends

Try the app for yourself before opting-in your school! Access it through one of the ways below. When you register, select "no" for the "Do You Go to a UCS?" question.



Look for this logo in
your app store!



Scan this QR Code!

Email Caroline Chevat (cchevat@specialolympics.org) with any questions!