



## AREA 16 FACT SHEET

### SPECIAL OLYMPICS MICHIGAN FACTS

- 21, 719 athletes
- 26 sports offered
- 7 state-level competitions
- 3 district basketball tournaments
- More than 900 local and regional competitions statewide
- Training and competitions are year-round
- Program provided at no cost to athletes or their families

### AREA 16 FACTS

- 806 athletes
- Area 16 offers the following sports programs: Alpine Skiing, Athletics, Unified Basketball, Bocce Bowling, Cross-Country Skiing, Golf, Gymnastics, Pickleball, Powerlifting, Soccer, Snowshoeing, Softball, Swimming, and Volleyball.

### GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Special Olympic programs are offered in all 83 counties in Michigan. Area 16 encompasses all of Kalamazoo and Calhoun Counties. Area 16 currently has an average of athletes involved in the program.

### AREA CONTACTS

If interested in becoming involved or if seeking further information, please email us at [area16@som.org](mailto:area16@som.org)

### THE MISSION

Special Olympics Michigan's (SOMI) mission is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills, and friendships with their families, other Special Olympic athletes, and the community.

### THE GOAL

To help persons with intellectual disabilities participate as productive and respected members of society at large, by offering them a fair opportunity to develop and demonstrate their skills and talents through sports training and competition, and by increasing the public's awareness of their capabilities and needs.

### THE BENEFITS

Athletes who participate in Special Olympics improve physical fitness and motor skills, develop self-esteem and confidence, make friends, and increase family support. Special Olympics athletes carry these benefits with them into their daily lives at home, in the classroom and on the job. Families become stronger as they learn a greater appreciation of their athlete's abilities and community volunteers find out what a good friend athletes can be.

### FUNDING

Special Olympics Michigan is a non-profit organization supported almost entirely by private funding. The generosity of organizations, individuals, and businesses enable the program to continue.

### VOLUNTEERS

Thousands of volunteers contribute their time, energy, and expertise to make the Special Olympics program a reality in Michigan. All areas rely on the dedicated support of volunteers who offer their time and talents in a number of ways, including coaching, chaperoning athletes at events, assisting with fundraising, and helping run local events and games.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Special Olympics Michigan training and competition is open to every person with intellectual disabilities who registers to participate in Special Olympics as required by the Special Olympics General Rules.