



**Special
Olympics**
Pennsylvania



SPECIAL OLYMPICS PENNSYLVANIA

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020



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OVERVIEW

Our Mission is as relevant today as it was almost 50 years ago when Special Olympics was founded. Sport is still the primary way Special Olympics drives change, supported in more recent times by our work in health which has become critical to our mission. Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides training in 21 sports and offers hundreds of competition opportunities each year to approximately 20,000 athletes of all ages and ability levels around the state through its state offices and 56 local Programs. However, despite progress, **people with intellectual disabilities (ID) still face stigma, discrimination, social isolation and injustice every day of their lives.**

At the core, Special Olympics is a sports organization that uses the power of sport as a catalyst for social change. As Nelson Mandela said, “Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does... Sport can create hope, where once there was only despair... It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination.”

Through sport, we challenge society. By highlighting how the needs of people with ID are not being met, we expose inequity and exclusion. By drawing attention to the gifts of people with ID, we break down misperceptions and tackle negative attitudes. The focus for Special Olympics therefore needs to be on both providing a high quality sports experience and engaging key influencers and communities with that experience in ways that help create positive attitudes and bring about permanent change towards inclusion of people with ID.

PROGRESS AND OUTLOOK

It takes a team of literally thousands of dedicated volunteers and state and local staff to deliver the Special Olympics mission throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Together, we made significant progress against the goals in our 2012-2015 Strategic Plan. But, there is much more we need to do together! This strategic plan has been created to help build on the progress from that plan, align with the overall strategic direction of the Special Olympics global Movement, and do “more and better” for the athletes of Special Olympics Pennsylvania.

We developed a list of six SOPA “core values” using input from staff, Board members, and volunteers. These core values, listed on the next page, summarize what we hold most important as an organization and they will serve as a set of guiding principles to shape our behaviors and actions.



SOPA'S CORE VALUES

AS WE BEGIN IMPLEMENTING THIS STRATEGIC PLAN, EVERYONE MUST PLAY A ROLE IF WE ARE TO BE SUCCESSFUL. AT THE LOCAL PROGRAM LEVEL, WE ASK EVERYONE TO DEVELOP AND ADAPT DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES IN WAYS THAT ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THIS PLAN. AT THE STATE OFFICE LEVEL, WE WILL DO ALL WE CAN TO LEAD THE ORGANIZATION BY PROVIDING CLEAR DIRECTION AND GUIDANCE AND OFFER SUPPORT AND RESOURCES TO HELP LOCAL PROGRAMS ACHIEVE THE GOALS OUTLINED IN THIS PLAN.

HEALTH & FITNESS

RESPECT

INCLUSION

SPORTSMANSHIP

TEAMWORK

PASSION





OUR MISSION

To provide year-round sports training and 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 a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

OUR VISION

“Our vision is to use sport to open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities all over the world.”

We will strive for this vision in Pennsylvania by providing better quality sports opportunities, supported through health initiatives. At the same time, we will step up efforts to use our work to ‘tell the world’ about the talents and abilities of people with ID. When we combine high quality sports with a wider audience, and connect more people with our athletes, it changes attitudes. **What we ultimately seek is to be a driving force for social inclusion.** For us, this means people with intellectual disabilities are welcomed in their community and join with others to learn, work, compete and play with the same rights and opportunities as others.

We will use two powerful and impactful programmatic tools to achieve our goal of social inclusion – Unified Sports and Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs). Unified Sports is important because attitude change naturally occurs when individuals with and without intellectual disabilities are equal teammates, and ALPs is important because when athletes develop leadership skills and are placed in meaningful leadership roles, the broader community begins to see their talents and abilities in a different light. Thus, Unified Sports and ALPs will be critical focus areas within our overall strategic plan for the next five years.

However, increasing inclusion does not mean focusing on athletes of one ability level over another or replacing our traditional programs – we will continue to recognize the talents of athletes of all abilities. Even as we focus on expanding Unified Sports and ALPs opportunities, our traditional training and competition will remain a central part of what we do. In fact, through enhancing the quality of our traditional programs, which collectively engage the largest numbers of both athletes and volunteers, we will provide better experiences for all and thereby foster even more inclusion.

STRATEGIC GOALS



OUR GOALS

Our new strategic plan is aligned with the global plan but tailored specifically to meet the needs of SOPA, including the state office and our local Programs. There are three goals we aim to achieve over the next 5 years. The goals are listed below, and the remainder of this document will describe the strategies and tactics associated with each goal and outline how we will define success.

All three goals are interrelated and critical to achieving our vision. We cannot build positive attitudes without empowering our athletes to demonstrate their capabilities and their best effort, and in order to provide high quality and empowering athlete experiences we need to generate sustainable financial and human resources. Because each goal is critical, all will be given equal priority.

2016-2020 STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Enhance athlete opportunities to achieve their best

Goal 2: Build positive attitudes towards people with ID

Goal 3: Build capacity through generating more **resources** and strengthening **leadership** at all levels of the Movement, including **athlete leadership**

We must do a better job engaging all of our stakeholders. We will place particular emphasis on engaging athletes, families and young people as we implement every aspect of this plan, especially in leadership roles.





GOAL 1: Enhance athlete opportunities to achieve their best

Special Olympics Pennsylvania will improve the quality of our programs and broaden access to them. This means strengthening our focus on sports programming, supported by our health work, so that athletes are fit and healthy, master skills, build confidence and self-reliance and perform at their best. We look to improve access to the effective programs we already have rather than creating new ones. Improvements in quality will help us retain existing athletes and attract new ones. Additionally, we will seek targeted growth in places where our presence is low.

STRATEGIES:

Enhance athlete performance levels by improving sports programming.

We will offer opportunities to athletes of all abilities and focus on retaining existing athletes and recruiting new ones by delivering high-quality Special Olympics experiences, while promoting sportsmanship, camaraderie and respect. We will support sports programming in schools, universities, colleges and local communities that will allow us to shift from an 8-week training mindset to one of year-round, lifelong fitness and training. We will encourage athletes to improve their performance and compete at their “personal best.”

We believe coaching is a key to high quality sports participation. Therefore, we will offer more training opportunities for volunteers as well as improve the accessibility and quality of our training offerings. We will also focus on recruiting and certifying more coaches.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

- By the end of 2020, all teams will have at least one (1) certified coach (team sports) and there will be at least one (1) certified coach per 25 athletes for skills and individual sports. To accomplish this outcome, we will need to:
 - Recruit at least 500 new coaches.
 - Increase certifications. Goal is at least half of our coaches will be certified.
- Develop and implement a statewide Coaches Education Training Plan to ensure consistent, high-quality training is delivered for all SOPA coaches (both certified and assistant coaches).
- Every sport will have an active Sport Director leading its Sport Management Team (SMT) by the end of 2017. The SMT will develop/refine a “Coaches Training Progression Plan” and build clinician teams to lead training schools.
- Coaches will work with athletes to develop individualized annual sports improvement goals skills, fitness and/or performance). Efforts begin immediately with target that all SOPA athletes are setting annual goals by 2020.
- All SOPA local Programs will have an athlete serving as Fitness Coordinator by the end of 2017. As envisioned, this will be a “stand alone” position and not a member of the Management Team, but local Programs may structure as desired to meet local needs.
- Develop and implement strategies to retain existing athletes. Since good metrics don’t currently exist, as a starting point we will focus on retaining (defined as athletes who obtain new medicals) at least 50% of the athletes who have medicals expiring in the current year PLUS an additional 10% of those who expired in the prior year but hadn’t yet renewed by year end.





Increase inclusion through Unified Sports and Young Athletes, particularly in schools, and expand to new areas.

Unified Sports and Young Athletes promote communities of acceptance, but we need to broaden access because these effective programs are not currently available to many of our athletes.

Unified Sports brings together people with and without intellectual disabilities as teammates on sports teams. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to understanding, acceptance and friendship. We will expand Unified Sports by focusing at the local level on schools, colleges, and universities as well as our existing community-based local programs to find new resources, increase training and competition, and provide greater visibility. The aim is to have Unified Sports available as an optional choice for all athletes, both in youth and adulthood (i.e. Unified will never replace our traditional Special Olympics training and competition programs). In schools, we will focus on three elements: inclusive sports, youth leadership and whole school engagement. We will connect youth activation with our local programs and provide support and resources to ensure the long-term growth and sustainability of Unified Sports.

We will grow Young Athletes in order to promote lifelong opportunities for inclusion and encourage fitness from an early age. Young Athletes will serve as an entry point into our sports programs and assist us in recruiting the “next generation” of SOPA athletes.

Expansion of Unified Sports and Young Athletes will help us increase the number of athletes we serve. We will also focus on areas of the state where we currently serve less than 3% of the estimated eligible population. Together, we aim to increase the number of athletes we serve to at least 23,000 (approximately 15% growth) by the end of 2020.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

- Expand Interscholastic Unified Sports (IUS) statewide reaching at least 180 schools by the end of 2020.
- Implement “SO College” in the Philadelphia area and initiate regional tournament by 2017. Expand to other markets and offer a statewide tournament by 2019.
- Increase the number of SOPA local Programs offering Unified Sports opportunities so that all are offering at least one Unified sport by 2020. This should be aligned wherever possible to facilitate the transition of athletes from school-based (IUS) programs into SOPA community-based programs (thus helping retain existing athletes).
- Expand competitive Unified Sport opportunities with a goal of creating Unified division at all state-level events.
- By 2020, Young Athletes and/or “My First Sports Moment” experiences are offered at all statewide competition events.
- By the end of 2020, at least 15 SOPA local Programs offer Young Athletes programs utilizing the home, community, or school-based model. When new programs are created, they will be developed in a manner that facilitates the transition of Young Athletes Participants to existing school-based or community-based programs.
- Increase the number of Young Athletes (2015 Baseline: 225, 2020 Target: 400)
- Total number of SOPA athletes (including Young Athletes but not counting Unified Partners) is at least 23,000 by the end of 2020.
- By the end of 2020, all local Programs will be serving at least 3% of the estimated eligible population in their area.





Grow our health program to support athlete participation in sport and society.

Research has shown that people with ID are consistently left out of health systems that are ill-equipped to diagnose and treat them. This directly impedes our vision of inclusion through sport, as any athlete needs to be healthy to compete at their best.

As with any strong sports organization, we will focus on the health and fitness of our athletes. We will build better, healthier communities through a more holistic approach to health, fitness, nutrition, and inclusion.

We will expand our health programs and help create better access to health care for our athletes so that they can achieve their full potential. We will offer more opportunities for athlete health screenings and expand and steward partnerships to ensure our athletes receive follow-up care. We will also focus on educating athletes and families about the importance of nutrition and a healthy lifestyle and ensure athletes have individual performance plans to continually help them improve their conditioning and skills.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

- Establish partnerships with health care organizations to offer “health fairs” and/or offer screenings in their clinics in at least two market areas of the state.
- Offer “Healthy Habits” stations at statewide competitions beginning in 2016. Expand to all sectional and statewide competitions in 2017 and at least 10 invitationals or local competitions by 2020.
- Add at least 2 additional events/competitions where Healthy Athletes screenings are held with a goal of offering at least 5 Healthy Athlete events each year. Increase the average number of screenings conducted annually to 1,200 by 2020.
- Provide support to athletes requiring follow up care after a Healthy Athletes screening. Use digital technology, such as text messaging, to encourage follow-through on care post-event. Establish networks and contacts for follow-up care providers to help athletes who need care but do not have their own Primary Care Provider (PCP). Goal by 2020 is to have a referral network robust enough to assist at least 50% of athletes without their own PCP within a reasonable distance from their home connect with a provider willing and able to assist them.
- Offer Health, Fitness, and Nutrition courses at ALPs University to train athlete Fitness Coordinators and Healthy Athlete Assistants starting in 2016.
- Local Program Fitness Coordinators will develop year-round local fitness programs for athletes, Unified Partners, and families by 2018 by collaborating with local partners as appropriate and available in their area (Department of Parks and Recreation, local gyms, etc).
- Encourage coaches to integrate health, fitness, and nutrition into ongoing training programs through the introduction of a “health/wellness” program that can be easily implemented without additional formal training. Program development will occur in 2016 with rollout of turnkey program in 2017.



GOAL 2

GOAL 2: Build positive attitudes towards people with ID

When people witness our athletes participating in sports and engage with them in other ways, their attitudes about people with intellectual disabilities change. It is essential that we improve awareness of what Special Olympics athletes can achieve. We need people to see our athletes competing and athletes leading the way as the face and voice of our Movement. That is what opens hearts and minds and ultimately drives inclusion in communities, friendships, health, education and jobs.

STRATEGIES:

Improve external awareness through PR, celebrities and government engagement.

We need to be more thoughtful and creative about how we engage key influencers and the power of sports to challenge and transform people's attitudes. Through personal interaction with our athletes, including at the local program level, we will engage government leaders and celebrities to advocate for improving the lives of people with ID. We will work with media partners, athletes, celebrities and youth and improve how we use social media and digital marketing to make sure that far more people hear about, take part in, and watch our activities. We will utilize the 50th anniversaries of Special Olympics, globally in 2018 and in Pennsylvania in 2020, as unique opportunities to raise awareness about Special Olympics as an organization that promotes social change through sports.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

- Unified Sports Experiences are hosted at state, sectional, and local events enabling key influencers to engage directly with our athletes.
- At least 6 regional or statewide celebrities (sports, entertainment, or media) actively support SOPA annually.
- More local and state government leaders become actively involved with SOPA. Goal is bi-partisan support – mayors, the governor's administration, state and federal legislators, city/county councils – with "champions" willing to support our policy and/or development objectives.
- Social Media Committee formed that includes representation from the SOPA Board, staff, local volunteers, and athletes.
- Add at least 6,500 new followers on key social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter.
- Our 50th anniversary celebrations increase awareness and lead to growth in funding as well as volunteer and athlete recruitment.





Connect the Movement so we can harness our power and speak with a collective voice.

We have an incredible number of athletes, families and volunteers involved in SOPA, but no easy way to connect and activate them as a whole. We will implement new digital tools that improve the way we collect and use people's data and enable us to respond quickly when new people interact with us so that we can turn their passion into action. Utilizing technology, we will empower our athletes and families and make it easier for them to tell their stories and engage their communities.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

- Fully implement new volunteer database (V Sys) by the end of 2016. Migrate to new SOI digital platform enabled by Microsoft when available (target is 2019).
- All SOPA webpages (state and local) and Facebook pages are mobile-friendly and present a common "look and feel" with correct brand usage.
- We collectively (state and local) work to enhance the "experience" for all stakeholders (for example, there is prompt, consistent follow up when a new person registers as a volunteer at any level anywhere in the state).
- The Social Media Committee will be tasked with identifying tools to analyze and measure social awareness, engagement and website traffic by monitoring metrics such as reach, re-tweets, comments, replies, shares and clicks.

Maximize external impact of Games and competitions to showcase athletes' abilities.

Summer Games, Fall Festival, and other large competitions like Area M's Fall Classic and Columbia/Montour's Bocce Bash are important opportunities to highlight the skills and talents of our athletes. Built around a positive athlete experience, we will focus on providing more and better ways for people to witness and experience the transformative power and joy of sport. We will focus on delivering high quality and consistent competition experiences by optimizing our existing mix of sports and competition offerings and by engaging our athletes in all aspects of the Games. As we leverage these events to achieve mass market external awareness, athletes will be front and center in a variety of leadership roles from emceeding ceremonies and serving on organizing committees to serving as coaches and officials. Additionally, we will develop plans to ensure there is a "legacy" from key events and use Games to attract new supporters and influencers to our movement.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

- Minimum of 2 athletes (or Unified athlete/partner pair) serve on all state-level Games Organizing Committees by 2017.
- Athletes serve as lead emcee for all state competitions by 2020 (may have celebrity as co-emcee but athlete is lead).
- Cultivation plans are developed and implemented to engage key government leaders (legislators and policy makers), corporate leaders, foundations, and media at SOPA events (including involving them in Unified Sports Experiences).
- Athletes and Unified Partners utilize social media and their networks to encourage friends and family to fill the stands at SOPA competitions.
- We will refine our sports and competition offerings with a focus on improving quality and consistency across the state. Changes under consideration include adding a new indoor Winter Games in 2017 and starting Flag Football competition estimated to begin in 2018.

GOAL 3

GOAL 3: Build capacity through generating more resources and strengthening leadership at all levels of the Movement, including athlete leadership

Special Olympics Pennsylvania today is strong, healthy, and vibrant. But, our current funding does not support the growth and quality enhancements we envision. Incremental growth is not sufficient; we need to identify new, larger, and more sustainable sources of funding in order to be able to fully deliver on the promise of the goals of this strategic plan. We also know that strong staff, volunteer, athlete, and youth leaders at all levels of SOPA – local Programs, state office, and the Board of Directors – are critical to our success.

STRATEGIES:

Generate more resources.

To improve quality and access to our programs, we will strengthen and grow our relationships with partners and sponsors whose financial support plays a crucial role in the success of the Special Olympics movement in Pennsylvania. We will continue to use collaborative fundraising (both internal to SOPA between the state office and local Programs and externally working with Special Olympics International /Special Olympics North America) and our work with the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) to generate additional resources and partner in new ways. The state office will support local program fundraising efforts through training, resources, and mentorship in order to ensure healthy, sustainable programs are active statewide and able to offer a consistent, quality athlete experience everywhere.

We will use the power of the Special Olympics mission and our brand awareness along with the impact of key programmatic initiatives such as Unified Sports, Young Athletes, ALPs, and Healthy Athletes/Communities to develop new strategic, multi-year partnerships with corporations, foundations, government entities, and individuals. We will establish Unified Sports, Young Athletes, and Healthy Communities Funds to supplement our existing Athlete Leadership Fund for this purpose. We will also focus on doing a better job of lifetime stewardship of our donors. We will leverage our current mid-level donor base in order to develop a sound and sustainable pipeline for major gifts.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

- Annual LETR-generated revenue exceeds \$1.9 million by 2020
- By 2020, we will have multi-year relationships with at least 8 additional statewide partners (individuals, corporations, foundations), each generating over \$50K per year. (Goal is to have 4 at \$100K or above with overall corporate and foundation funding exceeding \$2.25 million annually.)
- Increase revenue from individuals to more than \$250,000/year by end of 2020 (goal is at least 5 individuals giving \$10,000+/year).
- Increase government funding (combined state and federal) to more than \$1 million/year by end of 2020.
- Total annual shared revenue (funds to local Programs) exceeds \$400,000 by 2020 with at least 80% of local Programs receiving some tangible (\$500 or more) shared revenue.





Strengthen leadership.

Special Olympics Pennsylvania is athlete-led and volunteer-driven. A strong, well-trained, sustainable volunteer base is critical for our success. As we recruit and develop our leaders, we will also ensure that youth and athlete leaders will have opportunities to lead at every level. Because the health and safety of all Special Olympics participants is of paramount importance, we must remain committed to providing appropriate and safe environments for our athletes, volunteers, and employees.

We need to improve the tools and practices we use to recruit, train, and retain the right leaders and volunteers. We must increase public awareness of ongoing volunteering needs, conduct targeted recruitment campaigns to attract year-round volunteers, simplify our volunteer registration process, and improve volunteer training and recognition at every level. Succession plans for key Board members, staff and volunteer leaders will be implemented to ensure our long-term health and vitality.

Teamwork is a SOPA core value. We will work to improve trust and collaboration between the SOPA state office and local Programs, enhance communication, and promote “best practice” sharing among local Programs in order to drive “program excellence.” Working collaboratively with each program, we will use our Local Program Partnership Agreement to set clear goals and deliver quality experiences to our athletes. The state office will provide appropriate support and resources to local Programs, and recognize those making major improvements in quality.

We also must activate more athlete and youth leaders, building toward an “inclusive leadership approach” and leveraging our current Athlete Leadership Programs to foster a truly athlete-led and athlete-centric Movement. We will broaden and deepen our existing Athlete Leadership University (“ALPs U”) curriculum, foster and promote quality mentorship as a critical element of effective leadership development, and offer a greater number of meaningful leadership opportunities.

Key indicators of success over the next five years include:

Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition and Retention:

- Implement a mentoring program by the end of 2016 for local Program managers, ensuring all new local Program managers are assigned a mentor from outside their local Program to offer advice, assistance, and facilitate the sharing of “best practices.”
- We will develop and use Volunteer Management Plans to assist with recruitment, recognition, and retention.
 - By the end of 2016, all local Programs will have program-specific Volunteer Management Plans with volunteer recruitment strategies, including targeted recruitment campaigns, to address ongoing volunteer needs.
 - By the end of 2019, Programs will develop and implement volunteer recognition components of their Volunteer Management Plans.
 - By the end of 2020, all Volunteer Management Plans will include Program-specific volunteer retention components
- By the end of 2017, volunteer registration for all commitment levels (day of, seasonal, and year-round) will be simplified and conducted electronically to the maximum extent possible. Clear and concise details about roles and expectations will be provided to volunteers prior to registration.





- By the end of 2020, succession plans are in place for key Board, staff, and volunteer leaders:
 - Key local program management team positions have been identified and succession plans are developed and implemented for every local Program.
 - Succession plans for critical staff positions are developed and reviewed annually by the CEO and Board.
 - The Board will continue utilizing their "Board Diversity Profile" to manage Director recruiting. Board will vote on committee memberships and elect officers at their annual meeting in November.

Enhance trust, collaboration, and sharing of “best practices:”

- By the end of 2016, all local Programs will have a Partnership Agreement in place with clearly understood goals tied to this strategic plan.
- Every local Program will have a Senior Leadership Team member or Board Director attend a local event by the end of 2020.
- Before the end of 2016, evaluate internal processes specifically as they relate to local Program administration (i.e., Event Registration, Approval of New Assistant Managers, review of Misconduct Reports, etc.). Identify key stressors and streamline processes for better efficiency / less redundancy. We will identify the top four “stressor” processes and make effective changes by 2020.

Culture of Safety and Awareness:

- Continue education and awareness around Mandatory Reporting requirements for Class A volunteers (pursue online training opportunities for all SOPA volunteers).
- Provide safety awareness resources developed specifically for athletes. Consider developing an Athlete Leadership Safety Training course to be part of ALPs U (and targeted at training local Program Athlete Reps).

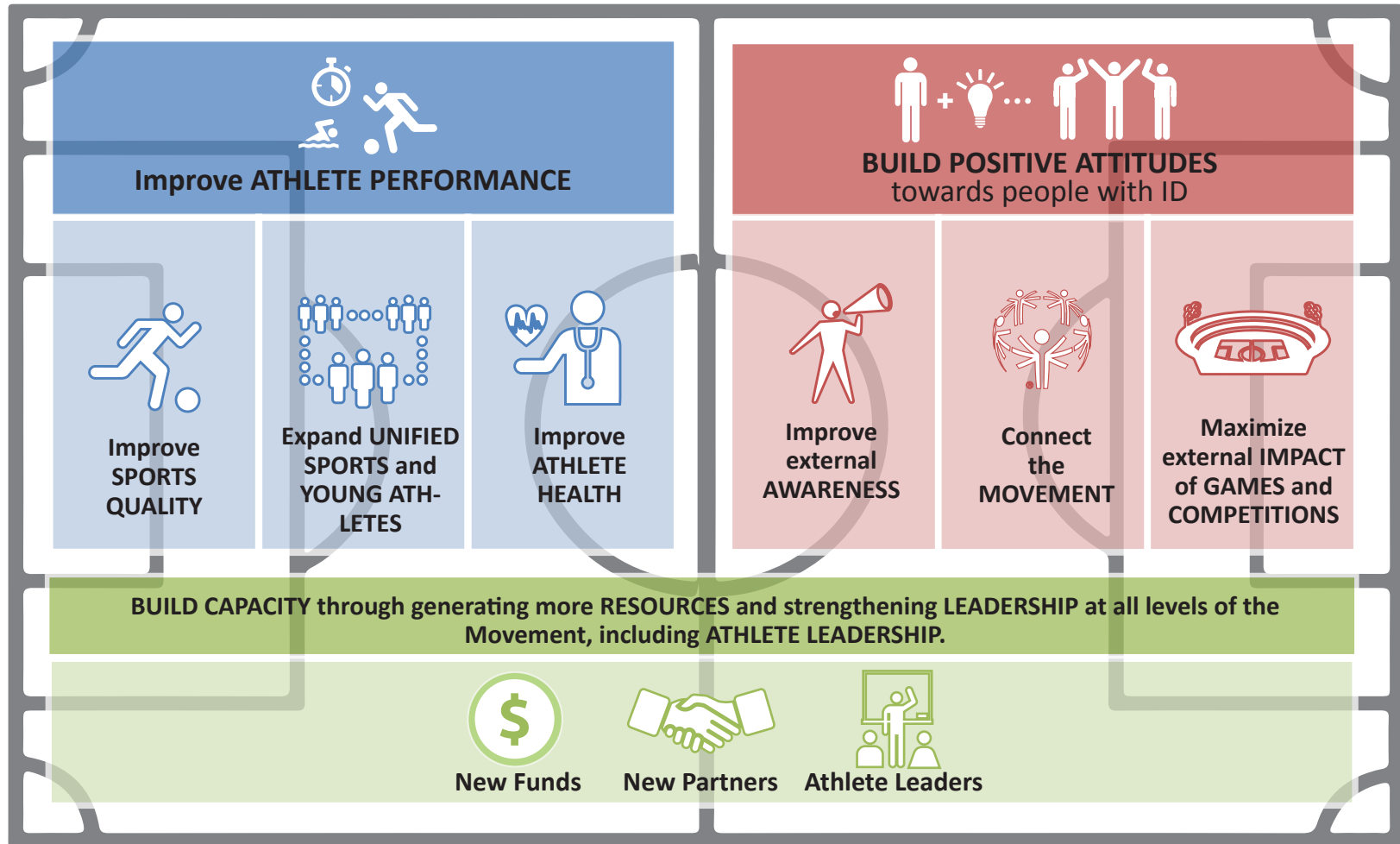
Athlete/Youth Leadership:

- Establish a statewide Unified Youth Committee (UYC) in 2016 with one athlete/partner pair serving on the SOPA Board’s Programming Committee.
- ALPs University will be expanded. Curriculum will include advanced Global Messenger (GM) and Athlete Representative (AR) courses as well as new courses for Health, Fitness, and Nutrition (to support athletes as local Program Fitness Coordinators and Healthy Athlete Assistant) and Athlete to Coach.
 - Each local program will certify at least one athlete as a coach by the end of 2020.
 - At least 175 athletes complete basic (GM I or AR I) ALPs U courses and 150 athletes complete advanced (GM II or AR II) ALPs U courses by the end of 2020.
 - At least 12 Mentor trainings are offered at Leadership and/or during ALPs U to foster and promote quality mentorship.
 - At least 40 athletes will be trained and qualified to serve as primary ALPs U instructors.

The figure on the following page graphically depicts SOPA’s overall strategic framework for the period 2016-2020.

Special Olympics Pennsylvania Strategic Framework, 2016 - 2020

“Our vision is to use sport to open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities all over the world.”



SOPA CORE VALUES

- 
HEALTH AND FITNESS
- 
RESPECT INCLUSION
- 
SPORTSMANSHIP
- 
PASSION
- 
TEAMWORK



IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The Special Olympics Pennsylvania Board of Directors sets the strategic goals for the organization and is therefore the “owner” of this plan. The President and CEO is responsible for executing the strategic plan and achieving the goals it establishes. But, to be successful in achieving the goals set forth in this plan, the collective efforts of ALL stakeholders will be required. In particular, good collaboration between the state office and local Programs will be necessary in order to collectively reach our goals.

A companion roadmap/scorecard document has been created that breaks the plan down into discrete annual action steps, with associated targets or measures, for each of the five years of the overall plan. This will make implementation more manageable by enabling us to better establish our annual priorities and to determine financial resource needs more effectively when budgeting. We will use it operationally to help us monitor progress toward our goals.

We will track and report our progress to the Board of Directors at each of their quarterly meetings.





HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The development of this plan started in September 2014 at our annual Leadership Conference where we asked more than 300 athletes, volunteers, coaches, local management team members, Board members and staff to share their thoughts on the most important priorities for SOPA. From these “vision board” inputs we identified some major themes that have been incorporated into our strategic plan.

To ensure as many voices as possible were heard during our planning process, we conducted an online strategic planning survey in the Spring of 2015 that gathered inputs from more than 500 individuals. With the help of MBA interns from Yale and Wharton, the results were analyzed and compared with data from similar surveys conducted in 2009 and 2012. To gain more insights in specific areas, the interns also conducted interviews with some additional stakeholders.

Using these results and a preliminary draft of the global strategic plan, we developed an initial “framework” outline for SOPA’s next strategic plan. This framework then guided numerous conversations with athletes, volunteers, coaches, local Programs, Board members and staff as we developed comprehensive tactics, action steps, and key success measurements for the new plan. Along the way, these conversations also helped revise the framework itself. All of this collective input was then captured and summarized in a preliminary draft of the actual strategic plan.

The preliminary draft was shared with the Board and all stakeholders prior to the Leadership Conference in 2015. Several sessions were held during the conference to solicit feedback, and a dedicated email address was used to gather input electronically from other stakeholders. Several revised drafts were developed, reviewed, and modified until the final version of the plan was presented to and approved by the Board at their meeting in November of 2015 during Fall Fest at Villanova.

Thank you to the hundreds of stakeholders who contributed to the creation of OUR Special Olympics Pennsylvania strategic plan for 2016-2020!