

# SOPA Reorganization Update

## Leadership 2020

**Susan Wyland**

SOPA Chief Financial Officer

***Special Olympics***  
*Pennsylvania*



# Agenda



- Welcome - Introduction
- Background
- Preparing the Region
- Launching the Region
- Pre-Region Planning
- Questions
- Wrap Up

# Approved Regional Structure



# Introducing the Pilot Region



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Pennsylvania



**Greater Lehigh Valley  
& Pocono Region**

*Serving Berks • Bethlehem • Carbon • Lehigh • Monroe • Northampton • Schuylkill*

**Over 3,400 Total Athletes**

**In 7 Chapters:**

Berks Chapter

Bethlehem Chapter

Carbon Chapter

Lehigh Chapter

Monroe Chapter

Northampton Chapter

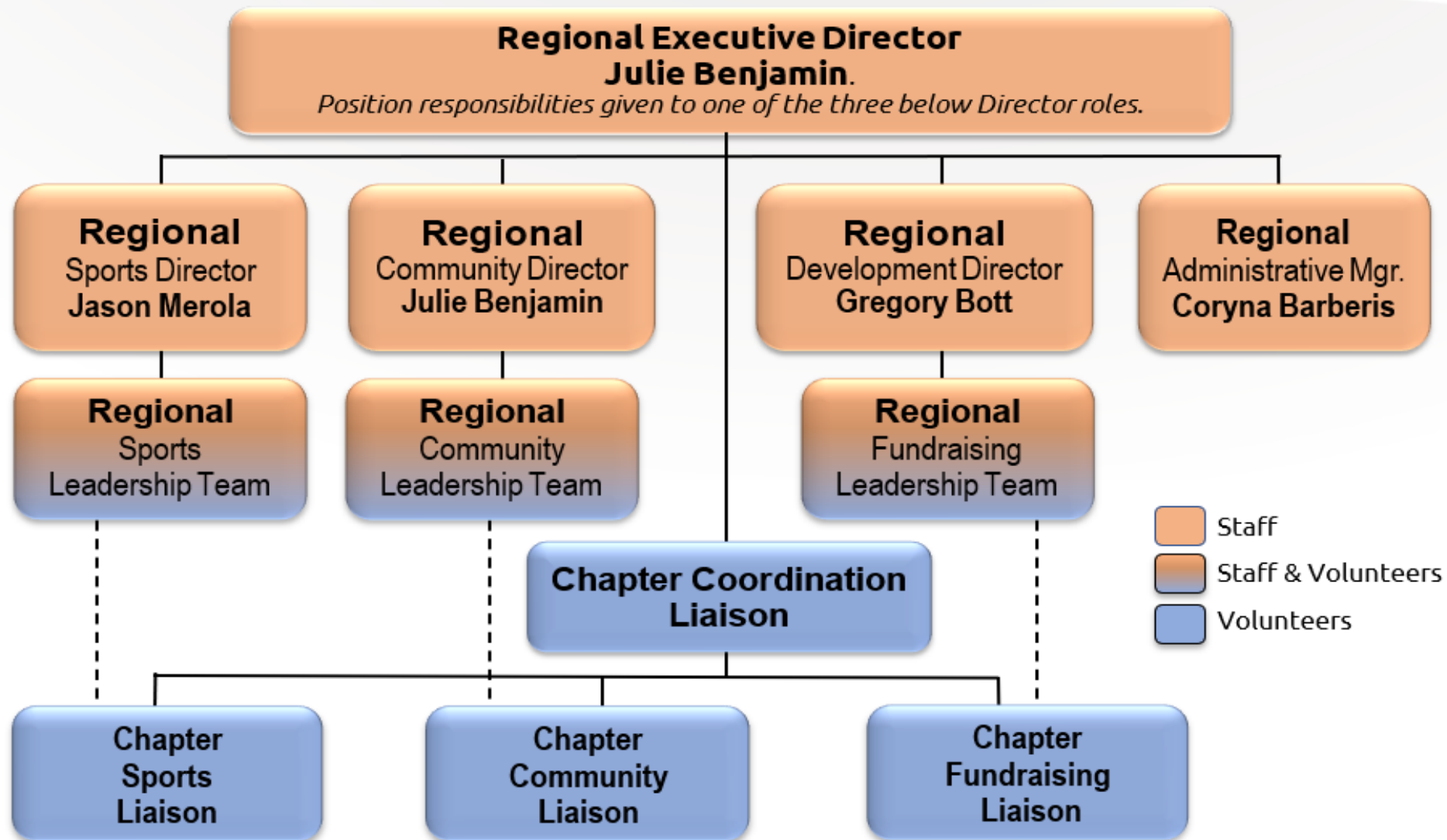
Schuylkill Chapter



# Regional Structure Overview



# GLVPR Functional Chart





# GLVPR Chapter Leadership



**Regional Executive Director**  
**Julie Benjamin**

**GLVPR Coordination Liaisons**  
**Julie Benjamin**

<b>Barks</b>	Heather Foltz	<b>Monroe</b>	Taraz Crowley
<b>Bethlehem</b>	Alice Moat	<b>Northampton</b>	Amanda Sechrist
<b>Carbon</b>	Lisa Cooper	<b>Schuylkill</b>	Christine McNavage
<b>Lehigh</b>	Suzanne Vincent		

**GLVPR Sports Liaisons**  
**Jason Merola**

<b>Berks</b>	Vacant
<b>Bethlehem</b>	Dana Lindsey
<b>Carbon</b>	Vacant
<b>Lehigh</b>	Vacant
<b>Monroe</b>	Joe Princetta
<b>Northampton</b>	Linda Lechner
<b>Schuylkill</b>	Jason Langkam...

**Sports Head  
Coaches**

**GLVPR Community Liaisons**  
**Julie Benjamin**

<b>Berks</b>	Vacant
<b>Bethlehem</b>	Elizabeth Dellers
<b>Carbon</b>	Maureen Foster
<b>Lehigh</b>	Vacant
<b>Monroe</b>	Dale Morris
<b>Northampton</b>	Renee Heckman
<b>Schuylkill</b>	Megan Lengle

**Athlete  
Leadership  
Team**

**Outreach &  
Volunteers**

**Family &  
Social  
Activities**

**GLVPR Fundraising Liaisons**  
**Greg Bott**

<b>Berks</b>	Vacant
<b>Bethlehem</b>	Vacant
<b>Carbon</b>	Vacant
<b>Lehigh</b>	Vacant
<b>Monroe</b>	Viola (Gigi) Rue
<b>Northampton</b>	Janelle Pemberton
<b>Schuylkill</b>	Vacant

**Fundraising  
Event  
Volunteers**

# Revised Timeline



## **2019-2021 – Greater Lehigh Valley & Pocono Region (GLVPR)**

- Pilot Region Established and Staffed
- Developing Playbook of Processes & Procedures
- Liaison Teams are meeting

*\*\* Review and assess the process*

## **Jan. 2022 – 2 additional Regions (Announcement mid 2021)**

*\*\* Review and assess the process*

## **Jan. 2023 – 3 additional Regions**

*\*\* Review and assess the process*

## **Jan. 2024 – Final Regions on board; Re-Org Transition Complete**

*\*\* Ongoing review and improvements*



# Transition Team

## **Carol Erzen**

Management Team Member-Allegheny County  
Reorganization Team Member

## **Ernest Roundtree**

Athlete Representative - Monroe Chapter  
SOPA Board Member

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# Transition Team Process



## **The Transition Team was comprised of:**

- Volunteers
- Athletes
- Staff members

## **Key elements of the success of the team was**

- Collaboration and an equal voice among all team members
- Support from SOPA staff
- Utilizing existing resources within the organization



# Transition Team Process

## Lessons learned:

- As with many processes of getting something from a conceptual to a working model , there were things that did not work out as planned, but the ability to be flexible, and willingness to make changes along the way helped improve the end results.
- The steps may not take the same amount of time, or work in the same order as we move to other regions, but through the collaboration of everyone – staff, volunteers, and athletes – the pilot has a good start, and will continue to improve in our pilot region and throughout the state regionalize other areas.

# Launching the Region

**Greater Lehigh Valley and Pocono Region**

**Julie Benjamin**

Regional Executive Director

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**Coryna Barberis**  
Regional  
Administrative  
Manager



**Jason Merola**  
Regional  
Sports  
Director



**Greg Bott**  
Regional  
Development  
Director



**Julie Benjamin**  
Regional  
Executive  
Director



# Regional Staff

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# Implementation Team: Goals



**Hire Regional Staff**



**Secure Office Space**



**Develop Playbook**





# Implementation Team

**Taraz Crowley**  
Monroe Chapter

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# **Pulling the Region Together**



## **Implementation Team Work**

- **Volunteer & Athlete Participation**
- **Sub-Committee tasks**

## **Transitions**

- **Development of Playbook**
- **Regional Plunge Event**

# Fundraising Perspective

**Lisa Cooper**  
Carbon Chapter

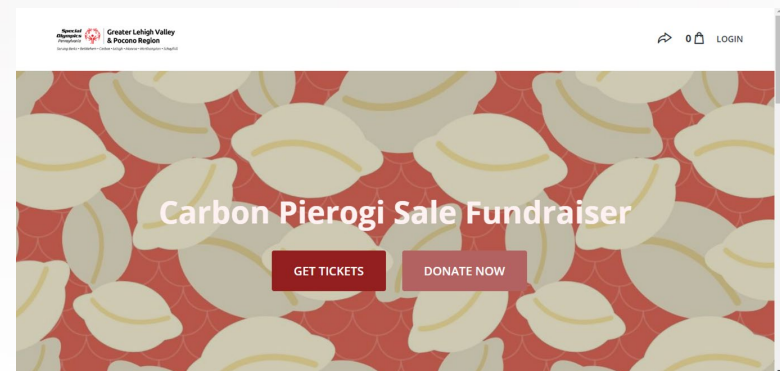
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# Fundraising Perspective



- Successes and challenges for fundraising as a region
- Grant writing - Carbon County Community Foundation and more
- Fundraising Events - Trying Classy for the first time
- Collaboration is key



# Coach Perspective

## **Ashley Amato**

Snowboarding Coach - Bethlehem Chapter  
SOPA Snowboard Co-Sport Director

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# Coach Perspective



## Initiating Snowboarding

- Participating Chapters
- Team Effort
- Athletes win when we collaborate





# Athlete Perspective

## **Amanda Knauss**

Athlete Representative - Bethlehem Chapter  
Regional Input Council Representative  
Greater Lehigh Valley and Pocono Region

## **Jordan Schubert**

Manager of Athlete Leadership & Young Athletes  
Special Olympics Pennsylvania

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*Pennsylvania*



# Athlete Perspective



- Athlete benefits
- Athlete Leadership opportunities
- Regional Athlete Leadership Team





# Lessons Learned

- Importance of feedback
- Cross chapter communication, idea-sharing
- Engagement is key
- It's a marathon, not a sprint

# Pre-Region Work

**Gina Reid**

SOPA Senior Field Director

**Tony Gillespie**

SOPA Board Member

Reorganization Team Member

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# Preparing for More & Better



## 2 AREAS OF FOCUS:

### Focus 1: Your Local Program

- Identify program strengths/opportunities
- Solidify Leadership
- Update program communication/contact lists for athletes/volunteers
- Regular local program communication regarding regionalization

**Your Field Director will be your biggest resource in planning!**

# Preparing for More & Better



## Focus 2: Getting to Know the Region

- Regional contact list shared
- Quarterly meeting focused on sharing program specific data (Content Specific w/Mgr)
  - Fundraisers/Sponsors/Transportation/Preferred Vendors
  - Competitions/Training Sites/Sports Offered
  - Social Activities/Awards Banquets
  - College/Community Partnerships
- Training Site Assessments

**Your Field Director will be your biggest resource in planning!**



# Questions?

**Michelle Boone**

Vice President, Sports

***Special Olympics***  
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# Wrap Up & Thank You

