

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **YORK COUNTY ATHLETE COREY MARKLE INDUCTED INTO SPECIAL OLYMPICS PENNSYLVANIA HALL OF FAME; DEBRA GABLE NAMED COACH OF THE YEAR**

(Norristown, PA, August 29, 2019) – Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) recently honored two York County residents during SOPA’s annual Leadership Conference Banquet at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center in State College, PA on Saturday, August 17, 2019. Corey Markle, a York County athlete who has been participating in Special Olympics for more than 30 years, was inducted into the Special Olympics Pennsylvania Hall of Fame as a member of the Class of 2019 and Debra Gable, a York County tennis coach, was named the 2019 Coach of the Year.

During his 30-plus years of participation in Special Olympics, Markle has competed in every single sport that York County offers. Among the many sports in which Markle has participated are: Alpine Skiing, Athletics, Basketball, Bowling, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Kayaking, Roller Skating, Soccer, Softball, Tennis and Volleyball.

For the past 15 years, Markle has competed at SOPA’s annual Summer Games at Penn State University and Fall Festival at Villanova University. One of the highlights of his athletic accomplishments came in 2014, when Markle helped his 5v5 soccer team earn a gold medal at the USA games in New Jersey. In addition to being an athletic dynamo, Markle is one of the top fundraisers for the York County Polar Plunge year after year. Even though his trophy case is filled with medals, he is not motivated by the reward. Instead, he cares most about his teammates.

In 2016, after frequent bouts of sickness and numerous tests, Markle was diagnosed with cancer. He continued to participate in each sport as much as possible until the time came when he could only sit and watch. When he could no longer participate in bowling, he gave up his spot on the team to ensure that they would be as successful as possible. While poor health has limited Markle’s on-field participation, he continues to attend practices regularly and came to this year’s Summer Games to cheer on his county. Through everything, he has never stopped supporting his teammates and is a shining example of exactly what it means to be a Hall of Famer.

“He has certainly fulfilled our mission by demonstrating courage in never giving up and continuing to share his friendship with his fellow athletes,” said Karen Plappert, a York County coach and friend of Markle’s.

As for the 2019 Coach of the Year, Gable truly embodies what it means to be a leader in the community. In addition to providing her athletes with world-class training on the tennis court, she has spearheaded her hometown school’s participation in the Unified track & field program and encourages students throughout the school to actively participate in Special Olympics events, including the local Polar Plunge and Spring Games.

Gable is a strong proponent of the Fit 5 fitness program and constantly emphasizes the importance of exercise, nutrition and hydration with her athletes at every practice. Always one

to be present for others, she makes it a point to visit Markle frequently during his battle with cancer and spend time with him and his family. In every sense of the word, Gable uplifts her community and her team.

“In my 30 some years with Special Olympics York County, Deb Gable is the one coach that I most admire,” Karen Plappert, York County volunteer.

#### **About The Hall of Fame Awards**

The Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) Hall of Fame awards honors athletes and volunteers who have made outstanding contributions both on and off the field of competition. This prestigious event is held during our annual Leadership Conference and Banquet in State College, PA. Learn more at <https://specialolympicspa.org/events/hall-of-fame>

#### **About The SOPA Leadership Awards**

SOPA Leadership Award recipients were chosen by a statewide panel of business and community leaders representing both the private and nonprofit sectors. Nominations come from local Special Olympics programs throughout Pennsylvania. The event is part of a yearly Leadership Conference designed to provide ongoing training and recognition for Special Olympics athletes and volunteers.

#### **About Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to nearly 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For more information about how to be a fan, visit our website at [www.specialolympicspa.org](http://www.specialolympicspa.org).

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