

Special Olympics Maryland Area Memo

February 5, 2021

**Special
Olympics
Maryland**



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Welcome

If there are any members of your Area's leadership who are not currently receiving the Area Memo, please send their names and email address to jabel@somd.org.

(NEW) Towson University Health Research Opportunity

A graduate student at Towson University College of Health Professions is conducting research on the experiences and perspectives of Special Olympics Athletes, as well as their understanding of audiology. Please distribute the link below to your athletes to participate:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QXJ933M>

(NEW) Virtual Unified Champion Schools Youth Leadership Summit

On March 6, 2021, the Unified Champion Schools team at Special Olympics Maryland will be hosting our first Youth Leadership Summit for high schools. All high schools from across Maryland are encouraged to form teams of up to 4 students (of all abilities!) to participate. Participants will take part in activities to help them foster more interactive and inclusive school communities through Unified Sports, Youth Leadership, and Whole School Engagement!

Topics will include: Group dynamics and development, Public Speaking, Advocacy, Team Building, Meeting Facilitation...and More!

Schools interested in attending should email ucs@somd.org for registration!

Note: Pre-registration is required. This event is only open to participants in Maryland High Schools.

(NEW) Update to SOMD Skiing Group Rates at Whitetail (and other Vail Properties locations)

Special Olympics Maryland communicated with the coaches and Area Leadership earlier this year regarding the discounted rates available at Vail Properties (Whitetail, Round Top and Ski Liberty) for both SOMD organized training opportunities as well as additional Area organized Special Olympics training sessions. The

properties have graciously offered discounted rates to Special Olympics Maryland in the past and will hopefully be able to continue offering the group rates in the future. However, as we all know, the past year has been a difficult one for many individuals and businesses.

Due to the travel restrictions to/from Pennsylvania (currently eliminating any and all SOMD or Area organized activity in PA), along with the protocols in place within Special Olympics Maryland due to the pandemic, the discounted rates will only be available if/when Special Olympics Maryland is able to conduct an On-Snow Training for the coaches, partners and athletes. The ski properties are under numerous restrictions related to the current pandemic and are only able to operate at a significantly reduced capacity. SOMD values the strong decades-long partnership and support with Whitetail Resort and respect and support their need to adjust their business operations during this very difficult time.

Until further notice, **there will not be any discounted group rates for any Special Olympics Programs at these locations.** In the event that SOMD On-Snow Training session(s) is able to be offered, as *tentatively* scheduled during the third weekend in February, the discounted rates will be in place and will only be handled through SOMD HQ by way of the registrations received from the Area/County Programs in the required timeframe.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during these trying times and we hope to be able to be on the snow later in February.

(UPDATED) Area Director COVID Calls- 2021

Our Bi-Weekly Calls for Area Directors will resume this **Wednesday, 2/10/2021 at 6:30pm**. Please use the link below to join:

https://somid.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMtdumtr34uGNUKt3A_xkd3lnPX0wrz2fLr

2022 USA Games – Advanced-Level Coach Requirement for All Coaches and Teams

As noted during the rollout of the SONA Sport Education and Development model and in other forums, coaches must have earned and maintained Advanced-Level Coach Sport Certification in order to apply for any position for an event above the state level. In addition, in order for any team to be considered for possible selection for an event above the state level, its coach must have earned and maintained such certification.

So, as a friendly reminder, **if you have a team (*basketball, cheerleading, flag football, soccer, softball*) which your Area wishes to be considered for selection to Team Maryland for the 2022 USA Games, the Head Coach must have earned/maintained Advanced Coach Certification** (and any additional coaches must earn/maintain as well).

Also, **any coach who wishes to be considered for one of the Head Coach or assistant coach positions for individual sports on Team Maryland (*athletics, bocce, bowling, powerlifting, golf, swimming, tennis*) must have earned/maintained Advanced Coach Certification in the sport for which they are applying.**

Advanced Sport Certification requires successful completion of the Principles of Coaching course, the next virtual session for which is scheduled on Saturday, February 13 (to register [please click here](#)). There is a maximum capacity of 20 for this course (first registered, first accepted). Additional courses may be added in March if needed.

A listing of individuals who have earned Advanced Coach Certification is available on the SOMD Coach Resource Page (www.somid.org/coach/coach-resources/) in the Coach Education & Development section (along with the lists of all certifications and training courses completed).

Competitive Fitness (CompFit) to Launch for Community Programs in February

SOMD is excited to launch CompFit, its competitive fitness program that can be done 100% virtually. The general program was reviewed during the November Area Director meeting and provides both a training and a competition experience for athletes interested in fitness. Participants will each select three fitness events from a list of 15, will train in those events and then compete based on the degree of improvement they have in the event. SOMD will coordinate competition sessions and, while the Area will need to provide at least one coach for each program, SOMD will assist in recruiting additional volunteers for training programs (if desired) and competitions.

A review session will be held on Thursday, February 11 at 7:00 p.m. (register [here](#)). Areas interested in possibly holding such a program are encouraged attend.

Phase Movement Tracking Document

As was discussed on last week's AD Covid Call, protocol has been laid out for programs to progress (or regress) in phases!

The requirements for programs to move into Phase 2 include:

- 2 weeks in Phase 1
- 7 consecutive days at a 'yellow' or 'green' risk level defined by the Harvard multi-metric covid risk map.
- Site Assessment done by SOMD Staff member

Jeff will be tracking risk levels daily--- and you can keep track of your program by visiting:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1s4Y3v_-yH6WBXcM1AsI7YR4_eJgxrwmITLhTufGM_vU/edit?usp=sharing

Remember, coaches and Area Leaders should work together to determine when they feel comfortable moving into a less-restrictive phase. Additionally, programs MUST continue to operate in their current phase until they receive written approval to progress from Jeff.

Return to Activities Website

Please use the site below as a resource for your Athletes, Coaches, Volunteers, and Families! SOMD's Return to Activities Website is filled with resources to help our state successfully and safely get our athletes back on the field!

<https://virtualsomd.com/return-to-play/>

Coaches Training – CSOA and PoC Sessions

Coaching Special Olympics Athletes (CSOA) -- SOMD is pleased to offer virtual training sessions for Coaching Special Olympics Athletes, a requirement for all Coaches. (*Due to the conversational and interactive nature of this course, we must have **a minimum of 7 registrants at least 3 business days prior** to the course in order for it to be held.*)

Saturday, February 27, 2021, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Virtual Session (limit of 20 participants)

To register for this session, [please click here](#).

Principles of Coaching (PoC) - SOMD is pleased to host additional sessions of the Principles of Coaching course, a required course for all coaches wishing to take teams/athletes or serve as a coach to any competition above the state level (including USA Games, World Games, NITs, NIRSA events, etc.). This free course is intended for

coaches with a *minimum of two years coaching experience* and, along with appropriate sport-specific training, serves to certify a coach as an Advanced coach. (*Due to the conversational and interactive nature of this course, and the need to send "hard copy" course materials to participants in advance of the session, we must have a minimum of 7 registrants at least 5 business days prior to a virtual PoC course in order for it to be held.*)

Saturday, February 13, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Virtual Session (limit of 20 participants)

To register for this session, [please click here](#).

Important Note On All Virtual Training Sessions: *Given the interactive nature of these courses, if a course gets changed to a virtual training session, participants **MUST** be able to join the Zoom meeting with a webcam, speaker and microphone so we can see and hear everyone during the course. Please also check in advance of the session that Zoom works properly for your computer (with webcam, microphone and speaker) as we will have limited opportunity to provide tech assistance during the session. (Zoom’s online help has been good.)*

(UPDATED) Pre-Season and Pre-Competition Webinars

The dates and time for Pre-Season webinars have been set for the upcoming seasons. Please share this info with your coaches and sports volunteers.

Pre-Season Coaches Webinars –

Sport	Date/ Time	Registration / Recording Link
Alpine Skiing	Tue 11/24	Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWBW-gH3UhU&feature=youtu.be
Snow-shoeing	Mon 11/30	Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhLx5DW8mYo&feature=youtu.be
Basketball	Tue 12/01	Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKBxUPrU-F0&feature=youtu.be
Athletics	Thu 3/11 6:30-8:00	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYqfuyuqTkqGta6LcCjSHQ9MbICS552OyIS
Bocce	Thu 3/04 6:30-8:00	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYpcO2tqTwuH9ZSV2ZWePNIWIR3nVjxz9z7
Cheer-leading	Wed 3/24 7:30-9:00	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEscOmqqTopEtTqCpL_GgGEE2PxvuPmTGUW
Softball	Thu 3/25 7:00–8:30	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMrdOuvrTMoHNdE7_TaezKFq36WXMeVqbfP
Swimming	Wed 3/03 6:30-8:00	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwlf-qhpzouG9P287g8RJjaQ6Y8rG5kg4A4
Kayaking	Thu 4/29 6:30-8:00	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJpduuqqDMvH9dbAogPv3WJrW5mqe5uhR-x
Cycling	Tue 7/20 6:30-8:00	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwlc--srDkvG920K713v4vP52RPxLw4wlt3
Bowling	Thu 8/05 6:30-8:00	https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJArduChrDMuGNGPxuGZWmEw16s0U5BoVujY

Pre-Competition Coaches Webinars

Due to the decision to cancel all Winter Games and the SOMD State Basketball Tournament, there is no need to conduct “pre-competition” webinars.

Note: As SOMD and Areas determine specifics for co-hosted competition opportunities in Winter 2021, webinars/web meetings will likely be scheduled prior to those competitions to review what to expect (given the newness of the application of the R2A protocols).

Sports Directors – Assigned Sports

If you have questions regarding a specific sport, coach education, or competition, please work with the corresponding Sport Director.

- **Melissa Anger, Sports Director**
 - manger@somd.org, 410.242.1515 x122
 - Basketball
 - Cheerleading
 - Flag Football
 - Soccer
 - Softball
 - Tennis
 - Locally Popular Sports: Cross Country Skiing, Duckpin Bowling
- **Zach Cintron, Sports Director**
 - zcintron@somd.org, 410.242.1515 x161
 - Bowling (10 pin)
 - Cycling
 - Kayaking
 - Snowshoeing
 - Swimming
 - Locally Popular Sports: Figure Skating, Sailing, Short Track Speed Skating, Volleyball
- **Ryan Kelchner, Sports Director**
 - rkelchner@somd.org, 410-242-1515 x171
 - Alpine Skiing
 - Athletics
 - Bocce
 - Distance Running
 - Golf
 - Powerlifting
 - Locally Popular Sports: Dance, Equestrian Sports, Floor Hockey

Questions?

If You Have Any Questions on Any Other Non-Sports-Related Issues, please contact a member of the Local Program Team

- **Jeff Abel, Vice President. Local Program Development**
 - jabel@somd.org, 410-242-1515 ex. 121
 - Any general question
- **Melissa Kelly, Sr. Director, Unified Champion schools**
 - mkelly@somd.org, 410-979-5839
 - School engagement & partnerships
- **Mackenzie Irvin, Young Athletes Program Director**
 - mirvin@somd.org, 857-939-4867
 - Young Athletes Program, Elementary School programming
- **Veronica Smaldone, Unified Champion Schools Coordinator (Western MD)**
 - vsmaldone@somd.org
 - Inclusive Youth Leadership & Whole School Engagement

- **Emma Bush, Unified Champion Schools Coordinator (Eastern Shore)**
 - ebush@somd.org
 - Inclusive Youth Leadership & Whole School Engagement

- **Sam Boyd, Volunteer Director**
 - sboyd@somd.org, 443-766-9245
 - Volunteer Recruitment, Retention, Training

- **VACANT, Healthy Communities Manager**
 - healthyathletes@somd.org
 - Healthy Athletes, Fitness Programs

- **Pat Cullinan, Northern Chesapeake Region Director**
 - pcullinan@somd.org, 410-242-1515
 - Harford, Cecil, and Kent Counties

- **Mike Myers, Baltimore Region Director**
 - mmyers@somd.org, 410-242-1515
 - Baltimore County and City

- **Tyler Martin, Western Region Coordinator**
 - tmartin@somd.org, 717-321-3642
 - Frederick, Washington, Allegany, Garrett Counties