

Special Olympics Maryland Area Memo

March 26, 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) *Return to Play Protocol- Athlete Trainings*

As the weather gets warmer and spring sports begin, we think it's a good time for a reminder of our Return to Play protocol for athletes. 2 sessions will be offered:

- Monday 3/29 at 6:30pm:
<https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMtceytpzqwHtTCJKR0Wb9Cc48QvDfixB3d>
- Wednesday 4/14 at 6:30pm:
https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEldeCupjMiHd1rOGbQm1ghT540_a4YBBK

(NEW) *Call for Nominations- Unified Champion Schools Banner Recognition Committee*

The Unified Champion Schools team is actively soliciting student and/or recent alumni (completed high school within 5 years) nominations for the UCS Maryland Nomination Committee. The Maryland Nomination Committee, composed of SOMD staff, current or former students, and school system representatives, is the "managing group", overseeing all state-level functions of the UCS National Recognition Program. To submit nominations (self-



**Special Olympics
Unified Champion
Schools**

**CALL for NOMINATIONS
Committee Service –**
Nominations received on/before April 1 will receive priority.
To submit nominations (self-nominations are welcome), visit:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MarylandUCS>

nominations are welcome), visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MarylandUCS>.

For complete details, visit the announcement [HERE](#).

- Nominations received on/before April 1 will receive priority.
- Questions? Concerns? email UCS@somd.org.

(NEW) USA Games Selection Process – Update from March 20 AD Meeting

Thank you to the several groups who were instrumental in the development of proposed changes to SOMD's selection process for Team Maryland for the 2022 USA Games (Area Directors, Athlete Leadership Council, SOMD Sports Committee, group of Former Delegation Members). We are in the process of updating the process documents and wanted to share some highlights:

- Initial Area vetting of athletes to potentially be included in the selection pool will be aided by:
 - Additional time for vetting during which Areas are encouraged to include coaches who know the athletes in the process
 - A narrative (w/possible video) to help Area leaders who have not been members of a Team Maryland delegation have a more comprehensive understanding of the experience of being a delegation member and what is necessary for an athlete to have a successful USA Games if selected (yes, it is a once in a lifetime experience, but it is also very demanding)
 - A guide to help with the vetting of individual athletes
 - The ability to indicate that a given athlete can be successful at the USA Games with a specific degree of support from coaches, etc. (while a one-to-one support person would not be available to athletes, it is feasible to provide support beyond the standard four-to-one ration to a limited degree)
 - Use of "additional staff" slots for delegation will be more focused on direct athlete support than in previous years
 - In very limited circumstances and only if deemed necessary by the Team Maryland Management Team, an "assistant coach" role may be filled by a person who knows the specific athlete needing additional support (provided the individual meets all other requirements for serving as an assistant coach)
- The introduction of performance standards for Athletics (Track & Field) and Swimming by SONA/GOC will be addressed as follows:
 - Include in selection pool only athletes who:
 - Earned a gold medal in an applicable category event at the 2019 SOMD Summer Games **AND**
 - Met the performance standard for that event either at 2019 Summer Games OR at another 2019 season event for which results are included in GMS **AND**
 - Has another event within the category for they met the performance standard either at 2019 Summer Games or another 2019 season event with results in GMS
(e.g., athlete must have at least two individual events within their "category" for which they meet the performance standard to be included in selection, and must have earned a gold in one of those events at 2019 SOMD Summer Games)
 - After completing pre-selection vetting process described w/issue 1 and athlete has met all the necessary screening criteria
 - Will explore including athletes who are within 5% to 10% of the performance standards
- The requirement from SONA/GOC to designate Team ability levels by March 29 will be addressed as follows:
 - Determine number of gold/silver teams for each level w/in each event from 2019
 - Reconfirm with Areas that they will support team(s) if selected
 - *things may have changed, in either direction, since May/June when last asked*

- Create pool of “levels” with a number of “chits” for each level matching the number of teams from 2019
- Request levels based on that draw
- BB 3v3 Team
 - Likely need to use random draw from 2020 teams (only 1 3v3 female team in 2019)
 - Given composition of teams involved (“just above PDU”), will need to “pre-vet” with Areas to determine if any teams could handle such a trip
 - May result in having to return the quota
- During the review with the Athlete Leadership Council, a request was voiced to include athletes during the initial vetting process (to determine if the athlete should be included in the selection pool) including providing the athlete the ability to advocate for his/her own inclusion in the pool. SOMD is exploring if this is logistically possible and may consider having this as a pilot step within one or two Areas after consulting with the Area leadership.

(NEW) MAC Conference Spring Break Workout

Our friends at the Middle Atlantic Conference (including Hood College and Stevenson University) will be hosting a Spring Break workout on Sunday, 3/28/21 at 2:00pm for Special Olympics athletes in the region. Athletes will enjoy an interactive workout with student-athletes from Middle Atlantic Conference schools.

Registration: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUvduGvqzopHdQCXCUBP0eJVwkCOyi1O9EB>

This event is made possible by the NCAA DIII partnership with Special Olympics.

Communicable Disease Waiver

NEW Requirement for participation in in-person programs is a Communicable Disease Waiver. This waiver will take the place of the existing Acknowledgement of Risk. A copy of both the slide deck for the webinar held for Area Directors (3/8) and the Waiver are attached to this area memo.

Submitting CDW forms

- A process very similar to the process developed for AOR forms will be used for CDW waivers.
 - Areas will scan (*PDF format please*) and individually name each CDW using the naming convention below
 - CDW_XX_LastName_FirstName_YYYY_MM_DD
 - XX = Area’s two-character code (e.g., AA for Anne Arundel, etc.)
 - YYYY_MM_DD = 3 years from date of participant’s signature
 - Within each Area’s folder on the K:\ drive is a folder which will be renamed to be “000__CDWs_and_Screen_Logs” into which the scanned form should be placed
 - (*formerly “000__Acknow_of_risk_and_Screen_Logs*)
 - These changes will take place between Monday, March 8 and Wednesday, March 10

CDW GMS-related updates

- CDW forms will be tracked in GMS in a manner very similar to what was used for the AOR forms.
 - The certification currently used for AOR will be converted to track CDW certifications
 - After exporting the data to a file to be saved for future reference, all AOR certifications will be stripped from the GMS Database
 - The current “Acknow of Risk” certification will be renamed “CDW” certification
 - All SOMD created report/export templates will be adjusted to pull the CDW certification in the location of the former AOR certification
 - Lack of a valid CDW will cause a participant to be in their Area’s “NOT REGISTERED” delegation (in training and competition games)

- At some point in the future, it is expected that the CDW will be part of the medical/volunteer certification and will cease to be tracked separately.
- These changes will take place between Monday, March 8 and Wednesday, March 10

Submitting Forms – Reminder of Naming Conventions

With the addition of the new CDW certification we thought it worth reminding folks of the naming conventions for the various PDFs of forms being submitted. In each case, please adhere to the format indicated and utilize PDFs. Also, in each example, “XX” indicates the Area’s two-character code (e.g., AA for Anne Arundel)

- Medical Forms
 - MED_XX_LastName_First_Name_YYYY_MM_DD
 - Date is three years from the date of the physical exam
- Volunteer Applications
 - VOL_XX_LastName_First_Name_YYYY_MM_DD
 - Date is three years from the date of the volunteer signed form
 - For Minors, the date is the individual’s 18th birthday
- CDW Forms
 - CDW_XX_LastName_First_Name_YYYY_MM_DD
 - Date is three years from the date of the individual/guardian signed form
 - For Minors, the date is the individual’s 18th birthday
- Concussion Certifications
 - ONC_XX_LastName_First_Name_YYYY_MM_DD
 - Date is three years from the date of the individual completed the course
 - Note: it is also fully permissible to have the volunteer just forward the email of course completion from CDC or NFHS

Towson University Health Research Opportunity

A graduate student at Towson University College of Health Professions is conducting qualitative research on the experiences and perspectives of Special Olympics Athletes, as well as their understanding of audiology. The brief survey asks questions related to---- attending healthy athletes, understanding what an audiologist does, and positive or negative feelings about visiting doctors. Please distribute the link below to your athletes to participate:

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

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.

(UPDATED) Area Director COVID Calls- 2021

Because of feedback received when we cancelled the last scheduled AD COVID Call, we are changing the format of our Area Director COVID Calls to **MONTHLY** rather than bi-weekly. In months where there is an Area Directors Webinar/Meeting, that will take the place of that month's COVID Call. Unless otherwise noted, these calls will take place at 6:30pm.

Link to Join: <https://somd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlscegggDwjGdNOLt4bjukYmAKjUAVMM5h0>

Schedule for our calls:

- April 21, 2021
- May 19, 2021
- June 16, 2021
- July 12, 2021 (JULY AD Webinar- 7:00pm)
- August 18, 2021
- September 5, 2021
- October 20, 2021
- November 8, 2021 (NOVEMBER AD Webinar- 7:00pm)
- December 15, 2021

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_eJqxrwmITLhTufGM_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/>

(UPDATED) 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.)*

Sunday, April 11, 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.*)

Sunday, April 18, 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 |
|---------------|-----------------------|---|
| Basketball | Tue 12/01 | Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKBxUPrU-F0&feature=youtu.be |
| Athletics | Thu 3/11 | Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNFWJVp7siw |
| Bocce | Thu 3/04 | Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUqpLrEfgw0 |
| Cheer-leading | Wed 3/24 | Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYUbAIAq2UM |
| Softball | Thu 3/25 | Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkRJ2ZUoBEo |
| Swimming | Wed 3/03 | Recording: https://youtu.be/BJH7_H210lo |
| Kayaking | Thu 4/29 6:30-8:00 | https://somid.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlpduuqqDMvH9dbAogPv3WJrW5mqe5uhR-x |
| Cycling | Tue 7/20 6:30-8:00 | https://somid.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwlc--srDkvG920K713v4vP52RPxLw4wlt3 |
| Bowling | Thu 8/05 6:30-8:00 | https://somid.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJArduChrDMuGNP XuGZWmEw16s0U5BoVuYjY |

Pre-Competition Coaches Webinars

Note: As SOMD and Areas determine specifics for co-hosted competition opportunities in Spring 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
- **Kayla Shields, Healthy Communities Manager**
 - healthyathletes@somd.org
 - Healthy Athletes, Fitness Programs
- **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