

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Special Olympics



CONTENTS

GLOBAL IMPACT

06 2020 Year in Review

REGIONAL YOUTH SUMMITS

10 SOEE Regional Youth Summit

12 SOLA Regional Youth Summit

14 SOMENA Regional Youth Summit

REGIONAL IMPACT

18 Special Olympics Africa

22 Special Olympics Asia Pacific

26 Special Olympics East Asia

30 Special Olympics Europe Eurasia

34 Special Olympics Latin America

38 Special Olympics Middle East North Africa

42 Special Olympics North America

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

46 Digital Engagement

INNOVATION GRANTS

54 Innovation Grants Overview

56 Special Olympics Africa

56 Special Olympics Asia Pacific

57 Special Olympics East Asia

57 Special Olympics Europe Eurasia

58 Special Olympics Latin America

58 Special Olympics Middle East North Africa

59 Special Olympics North America

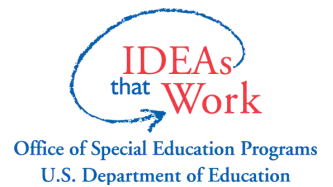
LOOKING FORWARD



FUNDING PARTNERS



p.png
[Click here to visit the page.](#)



p.jpeg
[Click here to visit the page.](#)




GLOBALIM



PACT



GLOBAL IMPACT 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Africa celebrate their role as pioneers for the Unified Generation

In a year like no other, Special Olympics Youth Leaders continued to spread the message of inclusion around the world to inspire and unite the Unified Generation. At the beginning of 2020, Youth Leaders from the Special Olympics Middle East North Africa, Europe Eurasia, and Latin America Regions gathered together for their Regional Youth Leadership Summits. Schools around the world hosted Unified Sports competitions and created opportunities for students to develop the skills of inclusive youth leadership.

Starting in March, Special Olympics Youth Leaders were quick to adapt to changes and found ways to engage with their peers on different platforms.

While physically distanced, youth stayed socially connected through a variety of new digital programming. Members of the Unified Generation launched virtual Youth Innovation Projects, hosted digital Youth Leadership Summits, and led conversations about inclusion on social media.

Through their activation, Special Olympics Youth Leaders continued to empower their peers and their efforts to create communities of equity. With their work, they also enhanced their Youth Leadership skills and encouraged best practice sharing to create connections with others.

EW



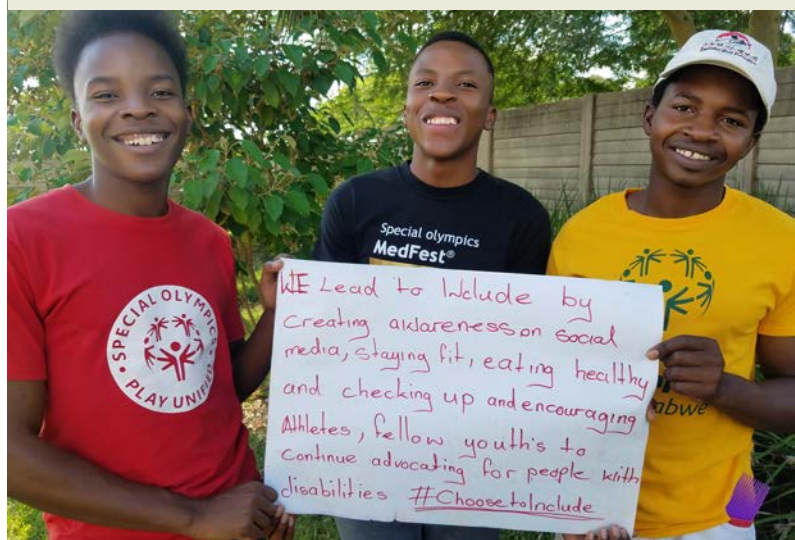
The emergence of COVID-19 demonstrated the importance for creating communities of inclusion and attitudes of respect for individuals with intellectual disabilities. For many individuals with ID, 2020 was not the first time they experienced isolation. However, COVID-19 required Youth Leaders to think critically and act quickly to develop new opportunities for innovation in their Special Olympics Programs.

Throughout the year, advancements in Youth Leadership programming provided chances for youth around the world to build and improve their* skills. Now more than ever, inclusion is critical to supporting the growth of the Unified Generation and developing change makers ready to be life-long advocates of acceptance.

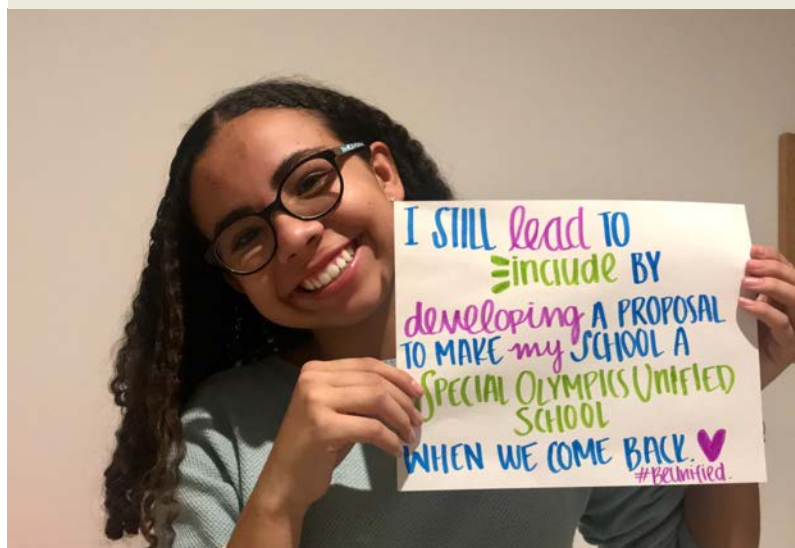
YOUTH LEADERS AROUND THE WORLD SHARE HOW THEY STILL LEAD TO INCLUDE DURING A PANDEMIC



"I still Lead to Include by social distancing. Stay safe, stay healthy."
- Rihtik, Special Olympics Bharat



"We Lead to Include by creating awareness on social media, staying fit, eating healthy, and checking up and encouraging Athletes. fellow youths to continue advocating for people with disabilities. #ChooseToInclude"
- Tino, Kennedy & Munya, Special Olympics Zimbabwe



"I still Lead to Include by developing a proposal to make my school a Special Olympics Unified School when we come back. #BeUnified"
- Sofia, Special Olympics Mexico

REGIONAL SUMMITS



SPECIAL OLYMPICS
LEAD TO INCLUDE

**MIDDLE EAST
NORTH AFRICA**

WWW.SOMENAGAMES.COM

YOUTH



SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPEAN YOUTH



Unified Sports is a core part of the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia Youth Activation Strategy, and this theme echoed during the first-ever **European Regional Youth Leadership Summit**. Youth Leaders and adult mentors from nine Special Olympics Programs gathered in Östersund, Sweden. The goal was to learn more about the combination of Youth Activation, Youth Leadership, and Unified Sports development and encourage youth to serve as role models, activators, and coaches.

During the three-day Summit, youth were equipped with the skills needed to return to their Programs and create inclusive communities through the power of youth leadership and Unified Sports.

Participants were offered a platform to collaborate, share, and plan activities to engage other youth in Special Olympics activities. At the European Youth Leadership Summit, participants discussed attributes of leadership, learned about the importance of quality coaching, and practiced a variety of Unified Sports.

The Summit gave Youth Leaders an opportunity to collaborate with their adult mentors to develop project plans that they would implement in their school or community upon return from the Youth Summit. Through these Youth Innovation Projects, youth activation will continue throughout the Europe Eurasia Region.

SUMMIT



Participants at the European Youth Leadership Summit gather together for the first session of the day

BY THE NUMBERS



24 Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities trained



9 Special Olympics Programs represented at the Youth Summit

97%

of youth participants feel they were better equipped to lead with an **inclusive group of peers**

97%

participants were satisfied with opportunities to **collaborate and network** with other Youth Leaders in their Region

91%

of youth participants feel they learned skills they will use in **other areas of life**



A Unified Pair from Special Olympics Sweden welcome participants on the first day



Participants warm up for an afternoon of Unified Sports exercises



Youth Leaders work together on a leadership building activity

SPECIAL OLYMPICS LATIN AMERICA YOUTH



For the first-ever Special Olympics **Latin America Regional * Youth Leadership Summit**, Youth Leaders and adult mentors from ten Special Olympics Programs gathered in Guatemala City to develop skills to lead activities that promote respect and inclusion in their home countries.

During the three-day Summit, participants engaged in Youth Leadership and project management sessions. In these sessions, conversations were centered around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). Participants discussed how their Youth Leadership skills could be leveraged to create more sustainable and inclusive communities around the world.

Alongside the trainings, representatives from the World Scouts Organization and the Organization of American States led a variety of activities that provided additional opportunities for team building and collaboration among participants.

Once trainings and activities concluded, Youth Leaders met with their adult mentors to develop project plans for implementation into their schools and communities upon return from the Youth Summit. Through trainings and activities, participants enhanced their relationships and empowered each other to be leaders of the Unified Generation.



Youth Leaders from the SOLA Region celebrate the conclusion of their first-ever Regional Youth Leadership Summit

BY THE NUMBERS



20 Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities trained



10 Special Olympics Programs represented at the Youth Summit



96% of participants were very satisfied with the **Youth Leadership training** they received



100% of youth participants feel **very confident** in their ability to lead a project **to promote inclusion**



99% of youth participants feel they learned skills they will use in **other areas of life**



A member of the World Scout Organization shares about her experience with youth leadership



Participants discuss their Youth Innovation Project plans



Youth Leaders create a leadership web by talking through their leadership skills

SPECIAL OLYMPICS MIDDLE EAST NORTH YOUTH SUMMIT



The **Middle East North Africa Regional Youth Leadership Summit**, brought Youth Leaders and adult mentors from eight Special Olympics Programs together alongside the first-ever Pan African Games in Cairo, Egypt to develop youth leadership skills and drive initiatives that promote respect and inclusion

During the three-day Summit, participants were able to learn more about Special Olympics programming and develop their Youth Leadership skills. Attendees also learned about the importance of social transformations in schools and communities from a representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Youth Leaders met as delegations to develop their project plans. After talking through elements of their projects, the youth from each delegation prepared "project pitches" to share with the entire group. As individuals shared their plans, members of the audience asked questions or shared ideas on how to make the largest impact within their schools and communities.

At the conclusion of the Youth Summit, participants identified ways they could share the information they learned across the MENA Region to foster conversations around inclusion and grow the Unified Generation.

AFRICA



Participants at the SOMENA Youth Leadership Summit listen to others share about inclusive communities

BY THE NUMBERS



20 Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities trained



8 Special Olympics Programs represented at the Youth Summit



of youth participants feel they gained skills to make sure **everyone's ideas are heard** in a group



of participants were very satisfied with the **Youth Leadership training** they received



of youth participants feel **very confident** in their ability to lead a project **to promote inclusion**



A Special Olympics Lebanon Youth Leader talks about what inclusion means to him



Participants work together to complete an activity focused on teamwork



A Unified Pair describes how they would lead activities as part of their Youth Innovation Project

REGIONAL



IMPACT



SPECIAL C

AFR

We have had the opportunity to be Special Olympics Youth Leaders since 2018. As a Unified Pair, we are both working diligently to share what we have learned through Special Olympics. Though this year has been marked by the COVID-19 health crisis, we have been able to work together to promote inclusion.

We had the opportunity to attend the 2020 Special Olympics Middle East North Africa Regional Youth Summit in Cairo, Egypt as representative for the Africa Region. At this Summit, we developed our leadership skills and prepared to lead a Youth Innovation Project in Cote d'Ivoire. Following the Summit, we identified and collaborated with trainers, schools and activities on our youth project to promote inclusion in schools.

This September, we organized a sensitization campaign on good hygiene for the female athletes of Special Olympics Cote d'Ivoire. This campaign included the development and circulation of a training video to over fifty families through the different digital platforms of Special Olympics Cote d'Ivoire, as gatherings were not allowed.

The aftermath of the presidential election in Cote d'Ivoire as well as the global coronavirus pandemic has made it difficult to implement projects in our country, but Marie and I showed enormous dedication in carrying out our projects.

In the face of much uncertainty in 2021, we are determined to remain optimistic and innovative. We will continue to be torchbearers for Inclusion and for the Youth of Cote d'Ivoire.

Jessica Tiade & Marie Madeleine Dadié

Unified Pair

Special Olympics Cote d'Ivoire

OLYMPICS

ICA



SPECIAL OLYMPICS AFRICA



Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Zimbabwe joined two schools together to promote inclusive activities through the Stronger Together Initiative

In the Special Olympics Africa (SOA) Region, a total of five Digital Youth Summits occurred in 2020. Two Regional Digital Youth Summits invited over 130 individuals to participate in conversations about Youth Leadership and Unified Leadership.

Special Olympics Cote d'Ivoire hosted a Digital National Youth Summit in August where participants discussed civil engagement and promotion of inclusive activities. In September, Special Olympics Zimbabwe invited 45 participants to their Digital National Youth Summit where participants engaged in conversations about

sexual health and reproductive rights. The Youth Summits created platforms for African Youth with and without intellectual disabilities to connect and expand their knowledge on a variety of topics. In total, about 200 youth were involved in the Summits.

In August, Special Olympics Rwanda officially launched the the expansion of Unified Champion Schools as part of a global project with support from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. Special Olympics Rwanda was selected as the first Program in the Africa Region to participate in this inclusive project.



"Inclusion is giving equal opportunities and resources to everyone despite race, colour, or ability in every aspect of life."

- Daphane H.
Special Olympics Zimbabwe

Over the coming years, 400 schools across Rwanda will participate as Unified Champion Schools. In October, the "Conversations with my Hero" series launched. This series of video interviews invited Youth and Athlete Leaders in the Africa Region to ask their personal heroes questions about inclusion across society. Conversations occurred in nine Special Olympics Programs where Youth and Athlete Leaders asked their heroes how they choose to include. The discussions include highlights from the sports field, the classroom, the work place, and even the performance stage.

The series was launched officially on 23 October 2020 on the Special Olympics Africa Region Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and Medium channels, as well as on a dedicated [Special Olympics page](#).



"Inclusion means taking time to understand everyone despite their challenges. Inclusion means taking time to listen. Most of all, inclusion is when my voice or presence does not silence anyone."

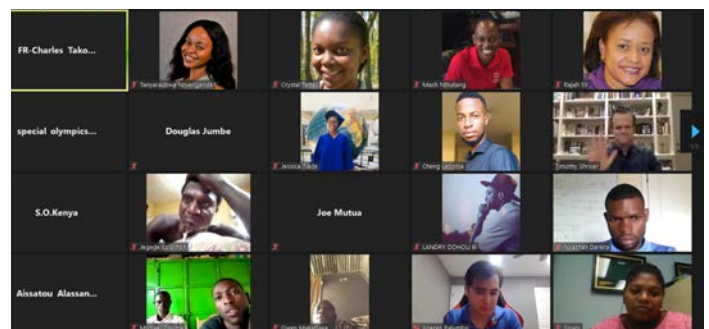
*- Wadzanai T.
Special Olympics Zimbabwe*



Special Olympics Senegal Youth Leaders gather supplies to lead their Youth Innovation Project



Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Cote d'Ivoire prepare to lead activities for their Youth Innovation Project



Participants gathered for final Africa Regional Digital Youth Leadership Summit

SPECIAL C ASIA P

We all know that 2020 has probably been the most challenging year of all time. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have not been able to see our friends and family, and interactions and physical training for our athletes came to a halt. Our athletes residing in remote areas with low network connectivity have been most adversely hit.

However, the pandemic did not stop the youth in Asia Pacific from learning and innovating. We have witnessed the determination and drive shown by our youth leaders with and without intellectual disabilities, as they continue to spread positivity and inclusivity across the Region.

At the Regional level, the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Athlete and Youth Input Councils worked closely together to launch the 'How To' webinar series, engaging participants in arts and crafts workshops and yoga sessions to build solidarity and promote mental wellbeing. What started off as a youth-led origami crane webinar evolved to a global #1000CranesForInclusion campaign that has generated almost 10 million social media impressions, reached 2.2 million social media accounts across the world. We are proud to have engaged key partners, such as Asian Development Bank, FWD Insurance, Microsoft, Bounty Agro Ventures, Inc., Aravind Eye Hospital, PPDK Kudat, and even the Indonesian Minister of Social Justice and Governor of Central Java. This campaign has showed us that we can each do small things to achieve great impact together.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the folding of thousands of cranes of inclusion. You have shown us the immense strength of the Special Olympics movement and a true sense of community. Thanks to our Special Olympics Asia Pacific family and all our partners for supporting us through thick and thin. Looking forward to another amazing year ahead!

Satyananda Kusuma & Simran Sahni
Co-Chairs, Regional Youth Input Council

Carmelo (Dacki) Sandiego & Grace Payne
Co-Chairs, Regional Athlete Input Council

OLYMPICS PACIFIC



SPECIAL OLYMPICS ASIA PACIFIC



Youth from Special Olympics Thailand present cranes they created for the #1000CranesForInclusion Campaign

2020 has been an eventful and innovative year for the Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) Region. To stay connected with Youth Leaders digitally, the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Youth Network was launched on Facebook, where over 500 members exchanged learning resources and best practices. With the establishment of the new term of Regional Athlete and Youth Input Council members, there was a series of trainings and consultations across the year that have informed youth engagements in 2020. Asia Pacific Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities have been meaningfully engaged in key Regional

events, including a Regional Webinar on Athlete and Youth Leadership, Regional Leadership Conference and strategic planning. Council members have exemplified youth-led and inclusive leadership with the launch of the 'How To' Webinar Series and #1000CranesForInclusion – which has grown to a global advocacy campaign with almost 10 million social media impressions, spreading the message of solidarity and inclusion during these trying times. The Councils also fundraised approximately 10,000 USD for the Region and engaged corporate partners Microsoft and FWD Insurance with #1000CranesForInclusion.

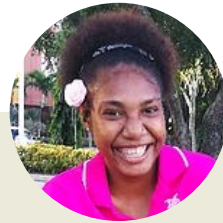


"I have faced and overcome many challenges in my life. This lockdown was no different. I use my YouTube channel to inspire other people with intellectual disabilities to keep growing and achieving their dreams."

*- Shrey K.
Special Olympics Bharat*

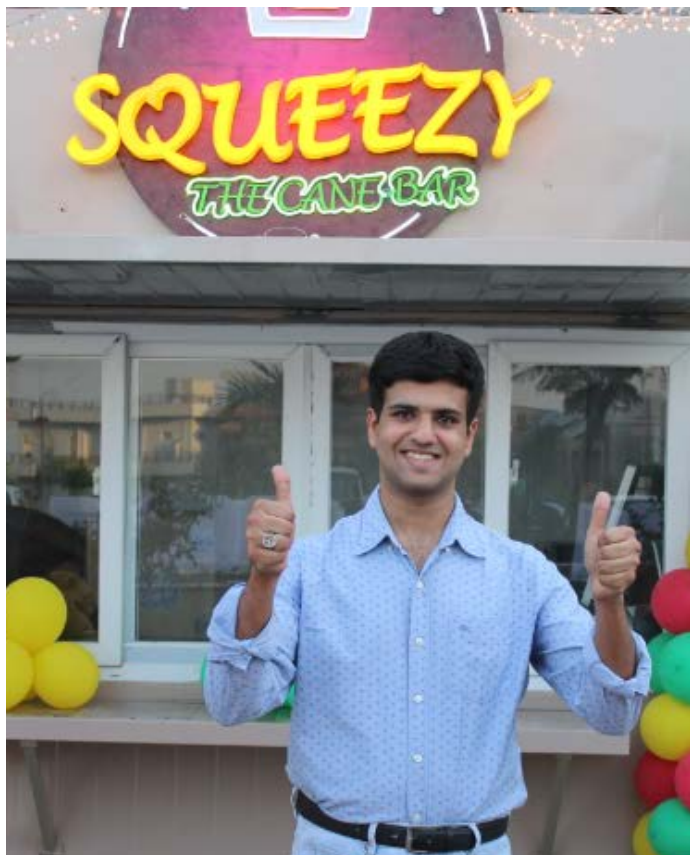
Youth Leaders extended their advocacy beyond Special Olympics. For example, Dacki Sandiego represented Special Olympics on Plan International's Youth Advisory Panel to advocate for inclusive youth employment. Haseeb Abbasi kick-started his career as an entrepreneur and advocated for inclusive employment with Squeezy the Juice Bar. Shrey Kadian represented the voices of Special Olympics athletes on his YouTube channel and the Asian Development Bank's Youth for Asia blog. Brina Maxino who was recognized by the United Nations as a UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Champion for Education and Inclusion, and currently is an ambassador for Colgate's #SmileStrong campaign.

Youth Leaders have inspired many with their relentless energy and immense dedication to never stop learning and advocating regardless of the challenges encountered. More to come in 2021!



"Spending time with Pauline (Athlete Leader) has taught me many things, to have patience to be humble, to respect one and another and be myself. This project has opened up my mind to look at differently at my school and community to ensure any new students with ID feel welcome."

*- Yonk P.
Special Olympics
Papua New Guinea*



Haseeb, a Special Olympics Pakistan Athlete Leader, at the opening of his social enterprise 'Squeezy the Juice Bar'



Members of Regional Athlete Input Council and Regional Youth Input Council gather for a team meeting



Youth from Special Olympics Vietnam discuss their Anti-Bullying App as part of their Youth Innovation Project

SPECIAL C EAST

The unexpected pandemic attacked so many people's lives and forced people to go into a "new normal." 2020 has been hard; it brought insecurity and fear. As young as we are, it is probably not the time yet for us to be first responders and to save people from COVID; we are showing our greatest respect and gratitude to them by doing small things, such as paying attention to our personal hygiene.

When we were in quarantine, we were bored and worried because of all the uncertainties. We could not go out to play with our friends. In terms of our Unified projects and other events to promote inclusion, we had to make drastic adjustment to ensure safety. However, that did not stop us. We switched a lot of the activities and events to digital platforms, which was a real-life lesson to use our coping skills to accept the unchangeable and to think of ways to make the best out of it.

Our SOEA Youth Digital Engagement Committee members devoted our time to planning and leading online initiatives with the support from our mentors, Program staff, and Regional staff. In spite of the time and energy we have invested on these meetings and initiatives, we feel proud of ourselves when seeing more and more youths with and without intellectual disabilities joining our movement and making positive comments on what we have done. It is all worthwhile!

We believe that unity is strength. As long as we do not give up on, no matter whether it is COVID or discrimination and isolation, they are going to be defeated at the end. Let us all stay strong and positive. Use our strong will and proactive actions to create a society that is for ALL!

Chia-Hsian Chen & Cheng-Hsien Chuang

Youth Leaders

Special Olympics Chinese Taipei

OLYMPICS

ASIA



SPECIAL OLYMPICS EAST ASIA



Participants gather at the Special Olympics Korea Program-level Youth Summit in November 2020

In the midst of COVID-19, Special Olympics East Asia (SOEA) launched a Youth Digital Engagement Committee in June to continue engaging youth with and without intellectual disabilities through digitized tools and platforms. The activation occurred to sustain the impact of the 2019 SOEA Youth Leadership Summit. The Committee successfully planned, organized, and participated in a series of online initiatives and events, including: I Hope, Ping Pong Trick Shot, and Shaping our Inclusive Future Together.

"I Hope" was a call for youth with and without ID to talk about what they hope to do when COVID is contained, which brought positivity across the Region.

Ping Pong Trick Shot was an innovative virtual sport initiative that attracted people with and without ID to make creative shots into target vessels and have fun. Shaping Our Inclusive Future Together followed UN75's Shaping Our Future Together initiative; youth with and without ID submitted photo collages and dueted videos with people from all industries to support UN Sustainable Development Goals and demonstrate Unified Leadership.

Not only did the SOEA Youth Digital Engagement Committee lead several online activities to encourage their peers to be active in the Special Olympics movement, but they were also offered an opportunity to represent SOEA at the Asia Pacific Youth Symposium organized by the Asian Development Bank.



"My vision of inclusion in 10 years is very simple. I just hope that people with and without intellectual disabilities do not even care about what each other can and cannot do. We just play naturally, learn, work and live together without extra constraints."

- Jack S.
Special Olympics Macau

During the three sessions they were part of, they spoke about their concerns and suggestions on youth roles in digital and informal economies, especially youth with and without ID.

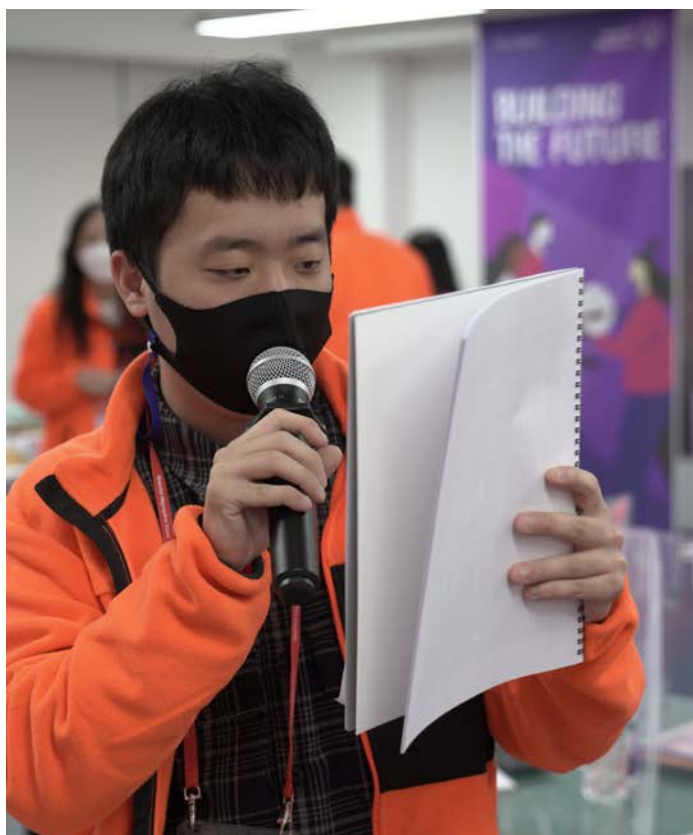
SOEA's Special Olympics Story Column - Our Time to Shine - published seven issues throughout 2020. These stories were collected and written by SOEA athletes and allowed them to share their own stories from different perspectives and about experiences they think are important for others to learn more about.

Inspired by SOEA Regional Youth Digital Engagement Committee and Regional Athlete Input Council, SO Korea officially launched National Athlete Input Council at their Program-level Youth Summit. The Council consists of six athletes, five Unified partners, six mentors and four digital committee members, to represent the voices of youths with and without I.D. and take the Special Olympics movement to the next level by creating a Unified Generation.



As a youth delegate of last year's SOEA Regional Youth Leadership Summit, I had a chance to exchange thoughts with friends from all over the world. I learned a lot from their advice and experiences. Series of training, workshops, unified activities, and other fun events deepened our friendship. How to change? How to lead to include? How to be an inclusive leader? I was able to find the answers at the Summit, and I am excited to practice them in Hong Kong. Action speaks louder than words!

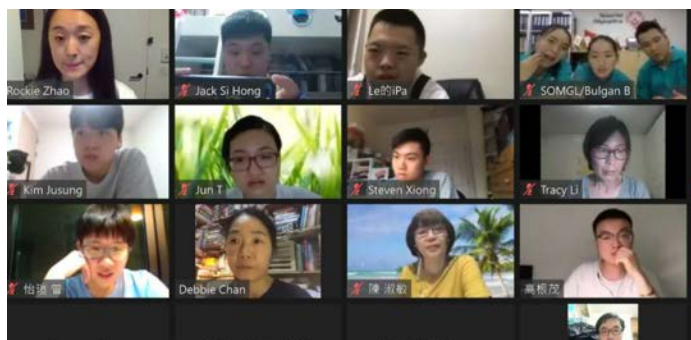
*- Kelvin Y.
Special Olympics Hong Kong*



A Youth Leader at the Special Olympics Korea Program-level Youth Summit shares reflections of the event with others



Participants at the conclusion of the Special Olympics Chinese Taipei Program-level Youth Summit



Individuals across the Special Olympics East Asia Region join a virtual Youth Leadership Training

SPECIAL C EUROPE

We became friends and Special Olympics Youth Leaders a few years ago. Together we learned and experienced many new things. We have inspired youth to become Game Changers in their schools and communities through workshops and presentations in schools.

As members of the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia (SOEE) Youth Leadership Council, we did many activities this year. In total, we reached more than 290 youth across the SOEE Region. We are most proud of the first-ever SOEE Online Youth Summit. Key topics were how youth can focus on digital engagement and activation. Despite the challenging times the whole world is facing, we have tried to do our best in supporting inclusion in every possible way in Special Olympics Montenegro as well as in SOEE. We can say that 2020 was pretty successful and inspirational for both of us. We participated in all four SOEE Online Youth Roundtables in the past three months. We also led some sessions there. Inspirational speakers shared their stories and helped to create a positive and comfortable atmosphere for discussions about the topics: Unified Sport and Inclusion.

Currently, we are engaged in developing a mobile app with Special Olympics Montenegro targeting youth with and without intellectual disabilities. The app should help them to stay active and healthy at home during the pandemic. It contains Fit 5 video trainings and other resources. We warmly recommend youth to use this time for their personal growth until they return to personal activities to which we all look forward.

Greetings from Montenegro,

Darija Raicevic and Mirko Cabarkapa

Youth Leaders

Special Olympics Europe Eurasia

OLYMPICS EURASIA



SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPE EURASIA



Youth Leaders from Germany and Lithuania at 2020 Special Olympics European Youth Leadership Summit

Across the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia (SOEE) Region, in response to COVID-19 and encouraged by Youth Leaders, SOEE created a variety of new resources. All of these are accessible to people of different abilities through the implementation of Easy-to-Read formatting.

A new initiative called the “Unified Fitness groups in schools” was started in September. Through this initiative, a toolkit was created to provide Programs, teachers, and Youth Leaders with resources to unite Unified Fitness groups virtually, in-person, or in a hybrid format.

Moreover, the first Regional SOEE Online

Youth Summit was organized in June 2020 as part of the Lead to Include Project. At this virtual event, 70 Youth Leaders, mentors, and Program staff gathered to discuss Inclusive Youth Leadership opportunities.

The concept was further developed into the SOEE Online Youth Roundtable series, supported by the Kerry Group. This series offered four engagement opportunities for inclusive Youth Leader teams, their mentors, and Program Leaders between September and December 2020. The topics focused on Social Inclusion, Unified Sports, Youth Leadership, Project Management, and Health and Fitness.



“I think Unified Sports coaching is about seeing all the players, not just the good ones but also those who aren't as good. You should be a coach for everyone, not just some of them.”

- Olle Ekman
Special Olympics Sweden

More than 200 Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities, Program staff and guests from 20 countries participated in the Roundtables. SOEE will continue to expand the format in 2021.

From the European Youth Leadership Summit to Roundtable discussions, Youth Leaders were able to share their inclusion experiences and continue conversations to engage more young people throughout the Region. These conversations offered additional opportunities for leadership development and connection.

Building on positive Unified Sports experiences, Youth Leaders from throughout Europe Eurasia are committed to expanding the Unified Generation.



"I wish everyone to have the same possibilities for sports, education, and possibilities for work. To have the same position in society. No matter what happens, everyone should have the same rights and possibilities"

*- Arijus Stankevičius
Special Olympics Lithuania*



Special Olympics Hungary Youth Leaders presenting their Youth Innovation Project at a school exhibition



Special Olympics Romania Youth Leaders preparing hygiene and sports kits for a Youth Innovation Project



Youth Leaders learning Unified Floorball coaching strategies at 2020 SOEE Youth Leadership Summit

SPECIAL C LATIN AM

During this challenging year as Youth Leaders, we have tried to continue working from home virtually, through different activities which allow us to continue leading and staying active.

At the end of the Special Olympics Latin America Regional Youth Leadership Summit, we had projects to carry out during the year, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they could not be completed. However, our encouragement helped us to motivate others, and ourselves, but above all to understand that stopping was not an option.

First, we have continued to represent Special Olympics in Virtual Summits, virtual forums, and working sessions of Athlete Leaders. In addition, we have been able to represent athletes and young people in activities from Special Olympics El Salvador, giving Health Messenger training, and participating in webinars.

Our communication channel has been social networks, which have helped us to be in contact with other young people and to learn about intellectual disability, as well as Special Olympics. We have also shared with our friends what we experienced at the Leadership Summit, and have shared links and documents about inclusion and leadership.

Soon, we will be leading new workshops and activities; this excites and motivates us to meet our goal of empowering our generation and helping them move closer to inclusion.

We encourage the youth from the Movement to continue leading by being inclusive in our homes, schools, and communities.

Andrea García & Wendy Henríquez

Unified Pair

Special Olympics El Salvador

OLYMPICS AMERICA



SPECIAL OLYMPICS LATIN AMERICA



Youth Leaders and members of the World Scout Organization engage in team building activities during the SOLA Youth Leadership Summit

2020 was a year of a meaningful impact in the life of youth across the Special Olympics Latin America (SOLA) Region. In March, SOLA held its first Regional Youth Leadership Summit, an event that promoted the growth of youth from 10 Programs across the Region. Through this event, youth from Latin America gained the tools and a platform to be game changers in their communities and spread the message of a Unified Generation across their countries.

Once in-person programming was halted by COVID-19, youth worked with

their Programs to strengthen their leadership skills through virtual programming. In October SOLA hosted its first Digital Youth Summit, where more than 240 people joined in conversations about inclusive employment. Participants included Youth and Athlete Leaders, staff, and volunteers.

The activation of Youth Leaders at the local and community levels was constantly on the rise during the year. More activities and initiatives are being led by Youth Leaders that are gaining space and importance within their Programs. One example of an activity is the "Hands that speak" initiative, a series of workshops planned and executed by Special



"Inclusion for me means that all people, with and without disabilities, can live together, respect each other and have the same rights."

- Rodrigo S.
Special Olympics Argentina

Olympics Dominican Republic where participants were taught basic sign language during four sessions.

During 2020, youth from the Latin America Region engaged in initiatives with external partners including the Organization of the American States and UNESCO. Special Olympics youth were able to represent the SOLA Region in leadership positions in webinars, round table discussions, and digital ceremonies.

Through the Youth Innovation Project initiative, Special Olympics Youth Leaders hosted digital projects due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Three projects occurred during 2020 that connected youth during a time of distance to discuss Special Olympics and the future of inclusion.



"I have learned a lot from other Youth Leaders, their amazing projects, and their experience as great leaders. We need each other now more than ever. Youth Leaders are committing to inclusion and hope during a time of challenges and inspiration."

*- Carolina P.
Special Olympics Paraguay*



A Youth Leader from Special Olympics Venezuela prepares for a Youth Innovation Project focused on nutrition



A participant reflects on their Youth Leadership journey at the SOLA Regional Youth Leadership Summit



Participants of the SOLA Regional Summit discussed inclusive employment during a Digital Youth Summit

SPECIAL C MIDDLE NORTH

After returning from the Special Olympics Middle East North Africa Regional Youth Summit in Egypt, we faced hardships due to the imposed lockdown and the absence of face-to-face communication. Consequently, Special Olympics Lebanon started online meetings.

The first online meeting we attended was with the Healthy Communities meeting about COVID-19 and how to protect ourselves adequately from the virus. We then participated in awareness campaigns on social media about how to tackle the outbreak. But the most educational event I enjoyed was the Special Olympics Lebanon Lead to Include Virtual Youth Summit in September. After attending the virtual Summit, we had a goal to inspire others and bring them along on the journey of inclusion.

The outbreak was devastating and shattered most dreams on future projects, which led us to try and improvise on a new and safer means of inclusion. Mohammed started creating wooden pieces with the process of inclusion in mind. These pieces were shared on social media to inspire others to come together to create change and promote inclusion in Lebanon and across the MENA Region.

Ahmad Antar

Athlete Leader Input Council President
Special Olympics Lebanon

Mohammed Hashisho

Youth Leader
Special Olympics Lebanon

OLYMPICS E EAST AFRICA



SPECIAL OLYMPICS MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA



Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Palestine reflect on what they learned during the second day at the MENA Regional Youth Leadership Summit

At the start of 2020, Youth Leaders across the Special Olympics Middle East North Africa (MENA) Region joined together for the first-ever MENA Regional Youth Leadership Summit. Shortly after participants returned to their Special Olympics Programs, the world was put on lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Special Olympics Egypt and Special Olympics Lebanon hosted Digital Youth Leadership Summits to engage with Youth Leaders who attended the in-person Regional Youth Summit. Conversations at the digital Summits focused on leadership, communication, innovation, volunteerism,

and social and emotional well-being. Through these discussions, participants were able to learn more about their peers and ways to spark engagement during times of physical distance.

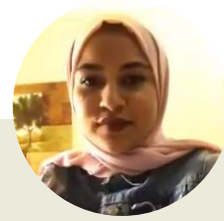
Throughout the year, the Special Olympics Egypt Youth Input Council discussed plans for the future. Special Olympics Youth Leaders worked to form partnerships with educational institutions to host future events.

Special Olympics Middle East North Africa partnered with the UNFPA Arab States Regional Office to discuss inclusion of youth and inclusive health



"The idea of having many countries in one place is very, very fruitful and makes our minds open to different cultures, different thinking, and different ways of handling things."

- Heidi H.
Special Olympics Egypt



programs. Through the partnership of both regional offices, in collaboration with Special Olympics Egypt and UNFPA Egypt, the importance of equality in healthcare with youth was shared via Y-Peer podcasts. Yasmine A., a Special Olympics Egypt Youth Leader and Health Messenger, was the first Youth Leader to join in the [podcast series](#).

In Special Olympics United Arab Emirates, Youth Leaders participated in conversations throughout the year to prepare for activities in 2021. For example, Youth and Sibling Leaders started creating a "Working with People of Determination" protocol to be launched at tourism entities across Abu Dhabi throughout 2021. Youth Leaders also developed plans for upcoming online forums for the Unified Youth Council and general public.

"With all my pleasure, I am grateful to be one of the Special Olympics Lebanon Youth Leaders. I have developed a passion to help people. I encourage all people, especially youth, to take a little bit of time out of the lives to at least look into what volunteering might be able to do. For inclusion, it means building communities that are accessible to everyone."

*- Tamara K.
Special Olympics Lebanon*



Special Olympics Morocco Youth Leaders celebrate what they learned at the MENA Regional Youth Leadership Summit



Artwork created by Mohammed H. during quarantine for the Lead to Include Project



Members of the Special Olympics United Arab Emirates Input Council share ideas for upcoming events on a virtual call

SPECIAL C NORTH A

This year has been unlike any other. Quarantine made us feel sad and anxious. We really missed seeing our friends in-person. We felt disconnected. But we did our best to continue leading during this difficult time! Our club hosted virtual dance parties. This created a space for us to visit with our friends outside of class. We also let everyone know that it was okay if they felt the need to unplug and not join the virtual meetings.

Our school only had a one week break before we began virtual learning. We did not realize that some of us would be overwhelmed and have screen fatigue. We gave each other permission to take care of ourselves before any other responsibility. Self-advocating was taken to a new level. We had to use our voices to make sure our needs were met!

Since we are both U.S. Youth Ambassadors, we also made sure to continue meeting virtually with our fellow U.S. Youth Ambassadors to keep our projects going and keep showing up at the national level. One thing we loved doing was creating fun and interactive activities for SONA social media, since that is a great way to stay connected, even with social distancing.

We have had people from around the world participate in these super fun social media activations. Even though this year was unlike any before, we still showed up to support our friends in every way we could.

Jackson Escamilla & James Ramirez

U.S. Youth Ambassadors
Special Olympics Texas

OLYMPICS MERICA



SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTH AMERICA



Youth Leaders at Yorktown High School discuss the school's commitment to inclusion during a Spread the Word: Inclusion event

The past year, despite COVID-19 posing many difficulties, 2020 truly showed how innovative, resilient, and full of positivity Special Olympics Youth Leaders are. Throughout this year, the Special Olympics North America (SONA) Region pivoted from in-person Summits and meetings to fully digital activations with the help of these Youth Leaders. In June, the U.S. Unified Champion Schools team released a new digital training resource covering foundational concepts that are critical to Inclusive Youth Leadership. This pilot was released on a targeted basis for its first trial and led to the first #UnifiedGeneration Digital Summit. This Summit differed in structure and content from a typical in-person Summit, but provided an exciting opportunity that was

available to Youth Leaders all over the country due to its digital nature. The two-hour event was filled with messages from celebrity ambassadors, lessons from U.S. Youth Ambassadors, and activities to help identify leadership skills.

Following this event, the Foundational Inclusive Youth Leadership digital trainings were officially released on the [Generation Unified website](#) distance-learning page for students. The next Digital Summit kicked off the 2020-2021 school year in September and digital events will continue through the winter and spring. In addition to National digital events, SO Programs across SONA hosted digital trainings and Summits of their own, bringing their Youth Leaders



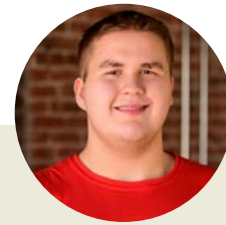
"Inclusion to me means that no one is left alone on the sideline. Whether it be in sports or in school, inclusion means that all people are participating and feel accepted."

*- Elizabeth P.
Special Olympics Indiana*

together virtually to learn, hear from guest speakers and continue to spread social inclusion in their virtual school communities.

Outside of Summits, digital engagement became a priority during 2020. U.S. Youth Ambassadors led the charge to create new challenges and activities to continue engagement on SONA social media channels while in-person activities were on hold and social distancing continued. This led to the creation of exciting new content, monthly social media activities, social hours to help Youth Leaders stay connected and became main features in SONA Unified Classroom resources.

Despite the challenges of 2020, the Youth Leaders of the SONA Region continued to bravely forge forward and shine as leaders of inclusion.



"Inclusion to me would be me talking about my personal story with a lot of other people (which I have with my friends and not just schools), I get to participate in sports (whether or not they're Unified or typical), and I feel like I am being treated just as if I was a person without a disability!"

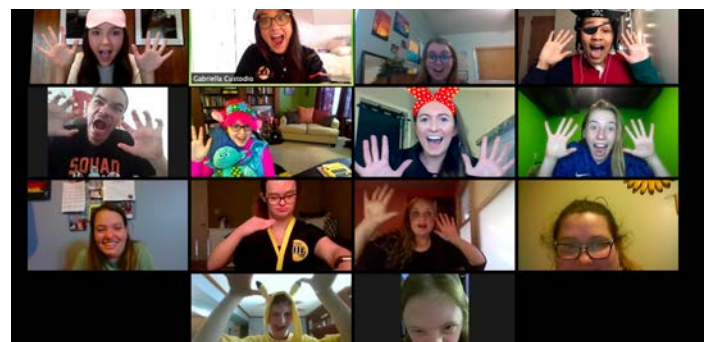
*- Liam P.
Special Olympics Indiana*



Aniya and Ashton, Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Illinois, were hosts of a virtual Q&A about Youth Leadership



Students at Miami Southbridge High School celebrate at their National Banner Presentation



Special Olympics U.S. Youth Ambassadors participate in a Halloween-themed social hour via Zoom



DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

NT



DIGITAL YOUTH SUMMITS

Throughout the year, Special Olympics Youth Leaders were seeking connection during a time of social distance forced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Digital Youth Summits created a virtual platform for youth to discuss topics and issues impacting particular Special Olympics

Regions or Programs. Some topics that discussed include: Youth Leadership trainings, Special Olympics Unified Leadership, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advocacy, inclusion in employment, and health and reproductive rights.

DIGITAL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



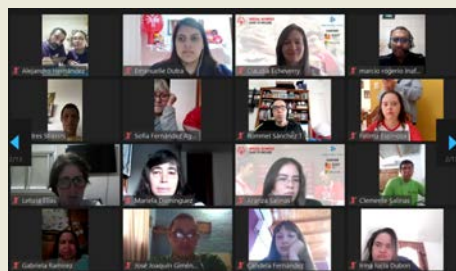
Special Olympics North America Youth Leaders close out their Digital Summit with a dance party featuring Digital Summit host and Special Olympics Multi-Time Gold Medalist, Daina Shilts



Participants at a Special Olympics Europe Eurasia Roundtable discussed Unified Sports and how to create or join a team



Young people had the opportunity to share their unique perspective about topics like volunteering and social integration at the Special Olympics Egypt Digital Youth Summit



Participants engaged in a Youth Leadership Workshop at a Special Olympics Latin America Regional Digital Youth Summit

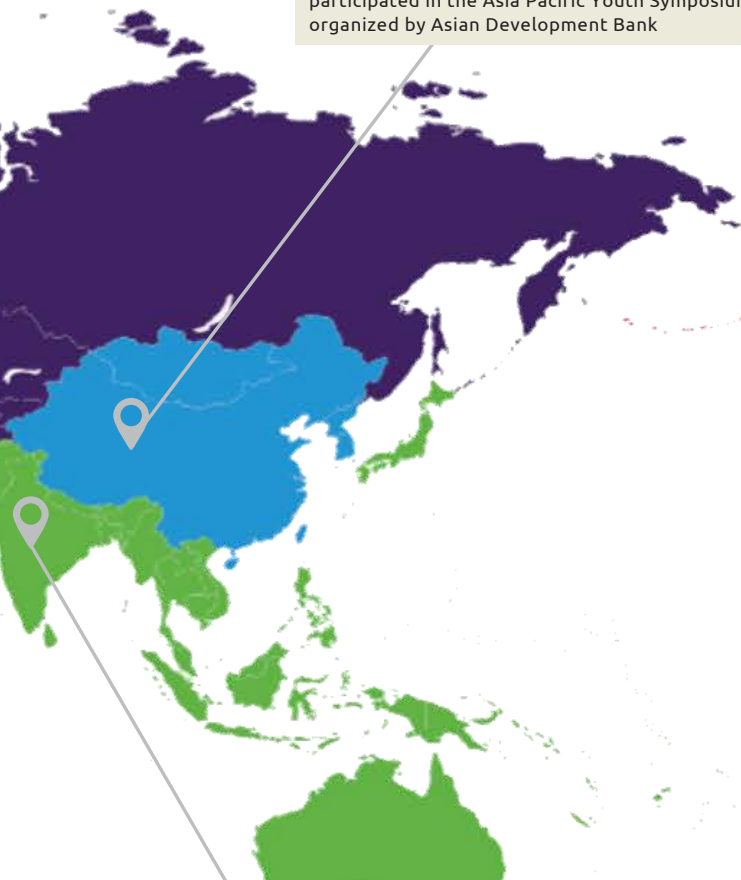


A Digital Youth Summit hosted by Special Olympics Zimbabwe educated participants about sexual health and reproductive rights

In 2021, Special Olympics Youth Leaders will have the ability to continue conversations during Digital Youth Summits. These events will occur within Special Olympics Regions and Programs and carry to schools and communities for youth to educate their peers about inclusion.



Youth from Special Olympics East Asia participated in the Asia Pacific Youth Symposium organized by Asian Development Bank



Youth from Special Olympics Bharat discussed mental health and wellness at a Digital Youth Leadership Summit

BY THE NUMBERS

42

Total number of digital events hosted worldwide

128

Youth Leaders held leadership roles when planning digital events

903

Youth Leaders participated in digital events

650

Athlete Leaders participated in digital events

255

Adult mentors attended digital events

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

FACEBOOK GROUP



At the start of 2020, a Facebook group was created to unite Youth Leaders around the world. In the Facebook group, youth discussed their experiences with Special Olympics, completed social media

challenges, and shared messages of inspiration and hope with others. With over 500 Youth Leaders in the group, members have been able to connect and expand on their Youth Leadership knowledge.

PHOTO CHALLENGES



The first challenge of 2020 asked youth to create a photo collage for the sentence: *We are Special Olympics Youth Leaders committing to inclusion and hope during a time of challenge and inspiration*



In one challenge, youth were asked to find a creative way to spell out "Unified Generation." In response, they created images with fruits, flowers, rocks, household supplies, people, and other items

E-LEARNING

To accommodate for a growing digital world due to the COVID-19 pandemic, two e-learning courses were designed to specifically support Special Olympics Youth Leaders and development of their leadership skills.

The course "Youth Leadership 101" is a tool for Special Olympics Youth Leaders to enhance their understanding of leadership skills. Through the course, young people with and without intellectual disabilities will gain the knowledge and skills needed to lead initiatives in their Special Olympics Region, Program, or local school or community. This course will transform the way Youth Leaders learn digitally.

The course "Project Management for Youth Leaders" provides Special Olympics Youth Leaders the project management knowledge and skills needed to successfully lead projects for inclusion in their community. Through the course, created in partnership with the Project Management Institute Educational Foundation (PMIEF), Special Olympics Youth Leaders will develop their own project plan and learn where to go for additional support.

Unified Pairs from six Regions piloted the Youth Leadership 101 course in 2020 and a new group of youth will pilot the Project Management for Youth Leaders in 2021. Both courses will be launched to the general public in early 2021.



MICROSOFT TEAMS

anilijasevic19 (Guest) 8/22 3:52 PM



Our first competition! Greetings from Bosnia and Herzegovina!

As a way to connect Youth Innovation Project recipients and transfer knowledge, Microsoft Teams was used as a communication platform. Special Olympics Youth Leaders shared photos and videos from activities they led in their schools and communities, asked for advice and insight on project challenges, and posted updates on events happening in their Special Olympics Programs.

With approximately 500 users, there are new posts and conversations around inclusion happening weekly.



INNOVATION GRANTS

ON



YOUTH INNOVATION PROJECTS



Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Finland prepare for a series of Unified Sports activities

Across more than 190 countries and jurisdictions, the Special Olympics movement creates opportunity in sports, leadership, health, and education for over 5 million people with intellectual disabilities. Beyond its 100,000+ athletic competitions per year, Special Olympics has grown into the world's leading force for inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. At the forefront of this movement, Special Olympics Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities are bringing the vision of an inclusive world to life in their schools and communities.

Special Olympics was founded on a spirit of innovation, a restless drive to disrupt the conditions that divide people with and without intellectual disabilities and replace them with the power of inclusion. Today, Special Olympics embraces this as its legacy and mission and has called youth from around the world to become the next generation of leaders for inclusion: a global Unified Generation. To empower these Youth Leaders, Special Olympics launched the **Youth Innovation Project initiative**.

Through this initiative, Special Olympics Youth Leaders design, plan, and implement their own visions for inclusion in their schools and communities, leveraging the tools of Special Olympics and the mentorship of adult allies. In 2020, Special Olympics funded 69 youth-led projects for inclusion, spanning 43 Special Olympics Programs around the globe.

Due to the circumstances of COVID-19, the vast majority of the projects implemented in 2020 were digitally focused projects with no in-person programming. These projects were able to unite Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities in a digital space during a time when many were faced with feelings of isolation and disconnection.

The Special Olympics Youth Innovation Project initiative would not be possible without invaluable thought partnership and financial partnership from a global set of philanthropic leaders. On behalf of its global movement, Special Olympics extends its gratitude to the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, the US Office of Special Education Programs at the US Department of Education, the Samuel Family Foundation, Hasbro, Microsoft, the Project Management Institute Educational Foundation (PMIEF), Kantar and Lions Club International Foundation. The initiative's impact and future potential is a testament to the vision and leadership shared by these partners and the leaders of the Special Olympics movement.



A Special Olympics Venezuela Youth Leader leading a Youth Innovation Project focused on nutrition and wellness



Participants listen to a Special Olympics Nigeria Youth Leader present at "Stronger Together" as part of his Youth Innovation Project



Youth from Special Olympics Korea participate in a Unified Sports International Games Competition hosted by Youth Innovation Project recipients

YOUTH INNOVATION PROJECTS

SPECIAL OLYMPICS AFRICA



Fatou Kiné and **Khadidiatou** are Special Olympics Youth Leaders from Senegal who led a Youth Innovation Project to improve the nutritional health of Special Olympics athletes through the new Special Olympics Senegal [YouTube channel](#).

These Youth Leaders wanted to raise awareness about nutrition and educate their peers about making healthy choices. Fatou Kiné and Khadidiatou hosted live shows for viewers and invited other Youth Leaders to the show to be 'culinary critics' for the day. Fatou Kiné and Khadidiatou hope this project will reduce the overall stigma against youth with ID by showcasing their capabilities in doing something as essential as cooking.

Read more about this project from Special Olympics Senegal [here](#)

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ASIA PACIFIC



John and **Kane** are Special Olympics Youth Leaders from Guam who started "We Are Ready to Work," a campaign to educate individuals with ID about employment opportunities in their area.

Through a series of virtual interviews, John and Kane were able to connect with local employers to current employment landscape and the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on unemployment. Videos of interviews and campaign materials are all available on the [Special Olympics Guam Facebook](#) page. John and Kane's Youth Innovation Project will not only empower individuals with ID by providing them employment opportunities, but it will also provide employers with information on creating inclusive workplaces.

Read more about this project from Special Olympics Guam [here](#)

SPECIAL OLYMPICS EAST ASIA



Chi Hong and **Sio Hong** are Special Olympics Youth Leaders from Macau who led a Youth Innovation Project to create an online learning program for young people with intellectual disabilities. They were motivated to conduct this type of project because of closures of special education schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The online learning program will mainly be used for the following categories: dancing, fitness, hand-made crafts, and other art.

By creating videos in these areas, Chi Hong and Sio Hong hope youth will engage with learning opportunities even during interruptions to in-person schooling.

Read more about the project from Special Olympics Macau [here](#)

SPECIAL OLYMPICS EUROPE EURASIA



Rizvan and **Joel** are Special Olympics Youth Leaders from Albania who led a Youth Innovation Project focused on digitalizing the Special Olympics movement during the COVID-19 pandemic to keep athletes engaged and active from home. Through this project, Rizvan and Joel made a video gallery of guides for football and basketball. They filmed multiple videos for each sport that showcase various skills and elements to engage Special Olympics athletes.

Rizvan and Joel are empowering the Unified Generation to not give up on inclusion even in the midst of a pandemic.

Read more about this project from Special Olympics Albania [here](#)

SPECIAL OLYMPICS LATIN AMERICA



Marco and **Giancarlo** are Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Venezuela who led a Youth Innovation Project aimed at building an inclusive community by empowering youth with intellectual disabilities through sports and nutrition. Marco and Giancarlo will encourage university football clubs to join them in their mission and participate in their culminating event, a Unified Football tournament and nutrition workshop for participants and their families.

Marco and Giancarlo believe in providing all members of society with equal access to sports opportunities and health education.

Read more about this project from Special Olympics Venezuela [here](#)

SPECIAL OLYMPICS MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA



Soukaina and **Mohcine** are Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Morocco who led a project aimed at connecting youth through several online activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. They wanted to give Youth Leaders the opportunity to exchange and interact through different activities such as cooking workshops, painting or e-gaming.

Soukaina and Mohcine hope that Youth Leaders will repeat the same activities with other groups to maintain the sustainability and continuity of the project after it continues.

Read more about this project from Special Olympics Morocco [here](#)

SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTH AMERICA



Chassity and **Granville** are Special Olympics Youth Leaders from Virginia, USA who are led a Youth Innovation Project aimed at expanding the Special Olympics mission to middle schools and getting students excited about inclusion at an early age.

Through this project, Chassity and Granville will organize a community Unified Basketball tournament to gather excitement and raise awareness. Chassity and Granville plan to then establish a bocce and bowling team combining middle school and high school club members to increase interest and create friendships before students enter high school.

Read more about this project from Special Olympics Virginia [here](#)



Youth Leaders from Special Olympics Canada at a Spread the Word: Inclusion campaign

LOOKING FORWARD

Going into 2021, Special Olympics Regions, Programs, and Youth Leaders are eager to build back better and build back more inclusive from the challenges and impact of COVID-19. Youth Leadership work will be carried out globally for youth to continue to develop their leadership skills and promote initiatives to support inclusion in their schools and communities.

Regional Youth Leadership Summits will occur in the Special Olympics Africa, Asia Pacific and East Asia Regions. Over 10 Program-level, 20 local Youth Summits, and countless digital events are projected to occur in all seven Regions to unite the global **Unified Generation**.



Youth celebrate a day of inclusion during a Unified Football event in Special Olympics Egypt



Participants at the SOLA Regional Youth Leadership Summit share their Youth Innovation Project plans



Youth Leaders at the European Youth Leadership Summit compete in Unified Basketball



Participants at the Special Olympics Korea Program-level Youth Summit engage in a session about Unified Leadership

FUNDING PARTNERS

Special Olympics gratefully acknowledges the generous support received from the partners of its Global Youth and Education Programming. With this support, Special Olympics is able to deliver exceptional programming and provide increased opportunities for inclusion to individuals and communities around the world.



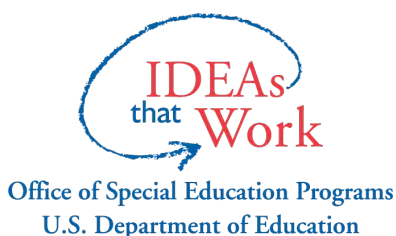
As a clear proclamation on the enduring legacy of the Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019, under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates' Armed Forces, the gift will support the global expansion of the Special Olympics inclusion in education initiative, Unified Champion Schools (UCS). Youth with and without ID will be equipped with the skills to cultivate inclusive mindsets, overcome fear of difference, and create cultures where everyone is accepted, valued, and welcomed.



As part of a three-year grant and landmark collaboration, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and Special Olympics International have partnered to amplify the global impact of Special Olympics programmatic work in Unified Sports and Unified Schools. The 14 national Special Olympics Program partners engaged in the second year of this partnership include (Special Olympics): Bharat (India), Brazil, Chile, China, Chinese Taipei, Egypt, Hellas (Greece), Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Russia, Serbia and Tanzania. This project aims to support social inclusion around the world by forging stronger youth engagement worldwide and transforming educational systems through Unified Sports.

p.png
[Click here to visit the page.](#)

Ray Lane, Special Olympics Board Member, and the Lane family have been proud and long-term supporters and champions of Special Olympics, leaving an indelible impact on the lives of athletes around the world. To accomplish this, in 2018, the Lane family continued their support of the Special Olympics movement through a generous commitment to establish the Lane Global Youth Leadership Project. The Lane Global Youth Leadership project will pioneer Lead to Include, a cascading series of Special Olympics Youth Leadership Summits over a 5-year cycle. This worldwide network of youth leaders with and without intellectual disabilities will be change makers within their schools and, with ongoing engagement, lifelong agents for inclusion.



The Office of Special Education Programs at the US Department of Education has supported Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools in creating communities of inclusion and shaping attitudes on school campuses across the United States. Through the generous grant support of the US Office of Special Education Programs, schools across the United States have been activated as communities of inclusion. With a focus on inclusive youth leadership, whole school engagement activities and Unified Sports, students with and without ID become the agents of change.

FUNDING PARTNERS



**Samuel Family
Foundation**

Kim Samuel and the Samuel Family Foundation have provided long-term strategic support to many Special Olympics key initiatives, including early investment in Unified Sports, Young Athletes, family programming, and the Youth Innovation Grants initiative. As pioneers in the fields of inclusion and social connectedness, Kim Samuel and the Foundation remain important partners in Special Olympics' work to ensure people with intellectual disabilities feel a sense of belonging and inclusion in their communities. In 2018, the Foundation helped Special Olympics launch its first-ever Sibling Engagement initiative, creating targeted opportunities specifically designed for siblings of Special Olympics athletes as well as the Youth Innovation Grant initiative, providing financial support to youth-led projects globally.



**Educational
Foundation**

Project
Management
Institute.

PMI Educational Foundation (PMIEF) is a 501(c)(3) supporting organization of the Project Management Institute (PMI), the world's leading not-for-profit professional membership association for those who consider project, program, or portfolio management their profession. Founded in 1990, PMIEF cultivates long-term relationships with nonprofits across the globe to help them integrate project management in their youth programs and to build their own project management capacity. The foundation achieves its mission to "enable youth to realize their potential and transform lives through project management" and its vision for "inspiring youth to achieve their goals, making dreams a reality" by investing in high-quality organizations that exemplify a commitment to preparing young people for 21st century success and an appreciation for both the societal application and value of project management. Visit PMIEF.org for more information.

p.jpeg
[Click here to visit the page.](#)

With support from FWD Insurance Group, Special Olympics will engage Unified Schools and local communities in countries throughout Asia, reaching 12,000 young people through workshops that address negative perceptions of people with ID. Efforts in this initiative will also allow 90 schools and communities to celebrate inclusion and acceptance through 240 sports and non-sports events. To date, this partnership has yielded great success and acceptance among youth with and without ID, mentors, teachers, school administrators and community leaders. Set targets for 2019 have also been surpassed by many of the participating countries and efforts have been reflected in the changes of behaviors and attitudes among those engaged and the impact brought to schools' learning environments and beyond.



IDB

Inter-American
Development Bank

To support Unified Schools and Young Athletes programming, the Inter-American Development Bank sponsored a 3-year funding partnership with Special Olympics in Latin America. This support brings inclusive programming to 60 mainstream schools and communities -- positively impacting 18,000 youth with and without intellectual disabilities in the country. Through implementing Unified Schools in Panama, the aim is to increase awareness of inclusive sports programming and students with disabilities, create youth leaders who serve as catalysts for more positive and inclusive school environments.



**Lions Clubs International
FOUNDATION**

Under the partnership banner "Mission: Inclusion", Lions Clubs International and the Lions Clubs International Foundation have provided significant financial and volunteer support in the movement's most critical areas: global health, inclusive sports, leadership development, family education, and more. As part of a shared commitment to provide inclusive service opportunities worldwide, the Lions Clubs International Foundation and Lions Clubs International have been instrumental in empowering the Special Olympics movement to enrich the lives of individuals of all abilities through community service and action- both on and off the field of play.



Kantar partners with Special Olympics on their Global Youth Leadership work, which brings together Youth Leaders with and without intellectual disabilities at nearly 200 global, regional, national and local summits. Each Special Olympics Youth Leadership Summit provides a platform for Youth Leaders to discuss and implement inclusion-based projects in their own communities creating a generational shift towards inclusion in schools and communities around the world.



ESPN is the Global Presenting Sponsor of Unified Sports and Official Broadcaster for the Special Olympics USA and World Games. ESPN is proud of its relationship with Special Olympics, which spans nearly 35 years. The alliance between ESPN and Special Olympics uses the power of sports to promote social inclusion and acceptance through two pillars of the relationship: ESPN's Global Presenting Sponsorship of Special Olympics Unified Sports® and a multi-year global programming agreement. Since 2013, ESPN has invested over \$7 million in cash and in-kind to support Special Olympics' goal of building Unified Sports programming and resources in 10,000 schools and reaching 100,000 new or re-certified coaches. Through the multi-year global programming agreement, ESPN has served as the Official Broadcaster for the 2015 Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles, 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria, 2018 Special Olympics USA Games in Seattle, and were the Official Media Partner of the 2019 Special Olympics World Summer Games, hosted in Abu Dhabi.



Since 2014, Microsoft and Special Olympics have had a global partnership with the goal of empowering athletes and Programs through technology. Through this partnership, Microsoft technology has helped modernize the Special Olympics movement and supported the 2015 and 2017 Special Olympics World Games and 2018 USA Games. Most recently, Microsoft supported Special Olympics Youth Leadership development, helping deploy Microsoft Teams as the official collaboration platform for Global Youth Leaders and offered funding and technical support for local projects. Additionally, in the face of the social isolation brought by COVID-19 and with athletic training postponed, Microsoft and Special Olympics teamed up for the 2020 Special Olympics Xbox Virtual Gaming Event featuring Forza Motorsport. A world-class assembly of partners, supporters, and platforms was brought together to connect 35 athletes from eleven states with more than 118,000 in a virtual gaming event that created ways for athletes to connect, compete, and just have fun.



Over the past four years, Hasbro has been a supporter of Special Olympics Unified Schools in the United States and several other countries around the world. A key element of Hasbro's philanthropic initiative is to "instill empathy in children around the world" and their signature philanthropic initiative, *Be Fearless, Be Kind* aims "to nurture empathy and compassion in youth and help put kindness into action." Hasbro also supports the Special Olympics Youth Innovation Project initiative, creating opportunities for youth leaders with and without intellectual disabilities to lead projects to make their schools and home communities more inclusive.



Special Olympics and UNICEF have shared a growing global partnership since 2011 designed to integrate children with and without intellectual disabilities into all international development programs, strategies and services. This focus on inclusive development has brought critical support, capacity-building, advocacy and awareness to 30+ National Special Olympics Programs around the world, and has helped strengthen key Special Olympics programs in the areas of inclusive health, inclusive sports, early childhood development programming, family health education, leadership development and much more.

