

Athlete Leadership Overview



Purpose:

The Athlete Leadership Program empowers Special Olympics athletes to take on meaningful leadership roles, influence organizational change, and promote inclusion in their communities and beyond. Through tailored training and hands-on experiences, athletes develop leadership skills that extend their influence both within and outside Special Olympics.

Requirements to Become an Athlete Leader:

- Must have been involved with SOSOC for at least one year.
- Must have a current and up-to-date medical record on file.
- Must be active as an athlete, volunteer, coach, or official.

Core Opportunities for Athlete Leaders:

1. Public Speaking: Athletes share stories and advocate as Global Messengers.
2. Governance: Serve as Athlete Representatives influencing policies.
3. Health Leadership: Promote healthy lifestyles as Health Messengers.
4. Coaching: Transition from athlete to certified coach to inspire others.



Training Pathways:

Athlete Leadership courses are available both virtually and in person, beginning with the foundational course, "Introduction to Understanding Athlete Leadership." This course explores essential topics such as public speaking, leadership skills, and personal development. Additional courses build on this foundation, equipping athletes for advanced leadership roles and offering opportunities tailored to their unique interests and aspirations.

Community Engagement:

Athlete Leaders also serve as local advocates as well as participating in Athlete Leadership Councils, to share valuable feedback and drive organizational improvements.

Roles for Athlete Leaders

**Special
Olympics**
Southern California



Athlete as Global Messengers

Special Olympics trains athletes to become inspiring public speakers who engage communities and promote the movement.

Athletes as Volunteers

Athletes can support events, cheer on teammates, or assist coaches, making a meaningful impact in their community.

Athletes as Fundraisers

From selling raffle tickets to helping at Tip-A-Cop events, athletes can raise funds that directly support programs.

Athlete Leadership Council Member

ALC members share ideas, discuss issues, and help improve Special Olympics while building leadership skills.

Athletes on Resource Leadership Councils, Committees, or Board of Directors

Athletes represent their peers and influence key decisions with training and support from Special Olympics.

Athletes as Coaches

Athletes can become certified coaches or assistants, inspiring others and staying involved in sports they love.

Athlete Leadership Trainers

Leadership trainers empower fellow athletes by sharing knowledge and supporting their success.

Athletes as Officials

Athletes can become certified officials, contributing their skills at local, national, and global events.

Athletes as Health Messengers

Health Messengers teach wellness programs and promote healthy living through community outreach.

Fitness Captains

Athletes plan with their coaches to lead warm up and cool down exercises at practice and competition for their teams.

Unified Leadership Ambassadors

Ambassadors foster inclusion and inspire positive change by promoting collaboration and understanding.

Tip-A-Cop Ambassadors

Athletes support law enforcement fundraisers, building community ties while raising awareness and funds.

Taskforce Committee Members

Committee members represent athletes' perspectives to shape programs and ensure inclusivity.

Athlete Volunteer in Special Olympics Offices

Athlete volunteers assist with administrative tasks, event planning, and outreach to support the mission.