



SONA MEMO



October 11, 2011

Charity Navigator Awards Special Olympics Four Stars

We are excited to announce that Charity Navigator awarded Special Olympics its prestigious four star rating. Charity Navigator, the largest and most influential charity rater in the U.S., aims to “help people give to charity with confidence” by evaluating organizations’ financial health and their commitment to accountability and transparency. According to Ken Berger, President & CEO of Charity Navigator, “Receiving four out of a possible four stars indicates that your organization adheres to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chance of unethical activities and consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way.”



Only a quarter of the approximately 5,500 charities that are evaluated have received the highest rating, indicating that Special Olympics is a top performer in the non-profit sector! This “exceptional” designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Special Olympics from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust.

When Charity Navigator added measure of transparency and accountability to their evaluation criteria recently, the number of organizations receiving the four-star rating fell by 20 percent, yet Special Olympics’ rating actually improved. This is a true testament to the value we place on “doing right” by our fans and athletes, and to steward every dollar we receive from our generous donors responsibly.

Newsletter Links

[The Latest Score, News from Headquarters](#)

[Special Olympics Caribbean News, August 2, 2011](#)

Congratulations on celebrating EKS Day

Please find links to a video of appreciation from Special Olympics Chairman & CEO, Timothy Shriver, to share with athletes, families, coaches and fans. We look forward to celebrating Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day in 2012 on September 22nd.

The thank you video from Tim Shriver can be found on [our website](#) and [youtube](#).

New Chief Marketing & Development Officer

We are pleased to announce that Cynthia “Cyndi” Court has accepted our offer to become SOI’s next Chief Marketing and Development Officer (CMDO). Cyndi comes to SOI from the Boys

and Girls Clubs of America, headquartered in Atlanta, GA. As Executive Vice President of Resource Development and Marketing, Cyndi managed a staff of 100 consisting of both a centralized staff that raised \$65M on a national-level, and another team that worked in partnership with the field programs that specifically targeted corporate, foundation and individual gifts in support of a \$500M campaign. Cyndi's first day at Special Olympics will be October 11th. Please [click here](#) to read more.

Integrated Direct Marketing Program

The Integrated Direct Marketing Program (IDMP) pilot is well underway after launching with six U.S. Programs in April. Donor Development is hosting information sessions to share [learnings and plans](#) for Programs interested in the Phase II rollout. There are two scheduled web-based sessions; please select one:

Wednesday, October 26, 3:00 - 4:00 pm, EST
Tuesday, November 1, 1:30 - 3:00 pm, EST

To register and receive login info for one of the information sessions, please email Shannon McCracken (smccracken@specialolympics.org).

AAIDD Article by Steven Eidelman

For those of us who have been involved in the segregation-integration debate over the years, we wanted to share a powerful piece by Steven Eidelman. [His article](#) appeared in a peer reviewed journal (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Online Journal, Volume 49, Issue 5, October 2011) that leads the field and has broad reach. The article, The Times They Are a Changing: Special Olympics and the Movement Towards Valued Lives and Inclusion, may have value to Program leaders who still confront misunderstanding.

Coach Development

Annette Lynch, Sr. Manager for Sports Partnerships, recently distributed a Coach Development Newsletter. [Click here](#) to review that communication which included the following topics:

Furthering Coaching Excellence – Trainings in January 2012
New President's Council on Fitness Program
Sports Tip – Communication Skills
Available Soccer Grants
Volleyball – High Performance

College Scholarship Opportunity

The American Association on Health and Disability offers scholarships for enrolled college students with disabilities. The application deadline is November 15, 2011. More information on eligibility and the application process is available at www.aahd.us.

SONA North Carolina Office Move

As of March 1, 2011, all mail meant for Greg Epperson, Craig Pippert, Lynn Idaszak, Robyn Markey and Bob Gobrecht should be sent to the following address. Please update your records.

Special Olympics North America

3712 Benson Drive, Suite 102
Raleigh, NC 27609
Phone and Fax numbers stay the same

www.yourcompanyname.com