



DIVISION III
DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

Special Olympics & NCAA DIII

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Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**

Your Presenters

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Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools



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Special Olympics Mission

To provide **year-round sports training and athletic competition** in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them **continuing opportunities** to develop **physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy** and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes **and the community.**



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What we do

- Sports
 - Training, recreation, and competition
 - Special Olympics Unified Sports®
- Education
 - Unified Champion Schools®
- Health
 - Special Olympics Healthy Athletes
 - Special Olympics Young Athletes
- Leadership
 - Athlete Leadership
 - Unified Leadership
- Research



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Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®

- Goal = schools that welcome all people
- Kindergarten through college/university
- Currently over 9,000 Unified Champion Schools in the US
- This strategy promotes social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities, using sports as the foundation. These environments are accomplished by implementing:
 - Special Olympics Unified Sports®
 - Inclusive youth leadership
 - Whole school engagement



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Unified Champion Schools at the college level

Who is involved? Young adults with and without intellectual disabilities.

Unified partners	Special Olympics athletes
Individual without intellectual disability	Individual with intellectual disability
Student at the college/university	Student at the college/university, or an athlete from the community

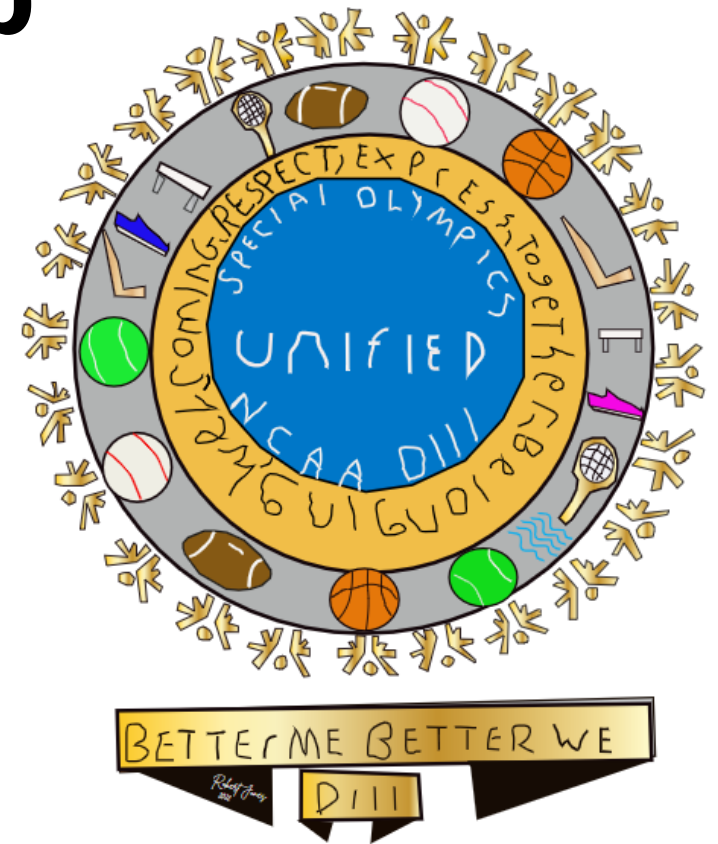
Why?

- “I am involved because of what the movement represents – the best in people. SO grounds itself in inclusion & positivity, which is a beautiful thing. That helps make my weeks as a college student much brighter, despite if I may have a big exam or project.”
- “Unified activities have been a large part of my life since I was in middle school. It shaped me into the person I am. Going into college, I wanted to share the lessons of inclusion I’ve learned with the rest of campus and provide inclusive opportunities beyond high school for my peers with ID.”



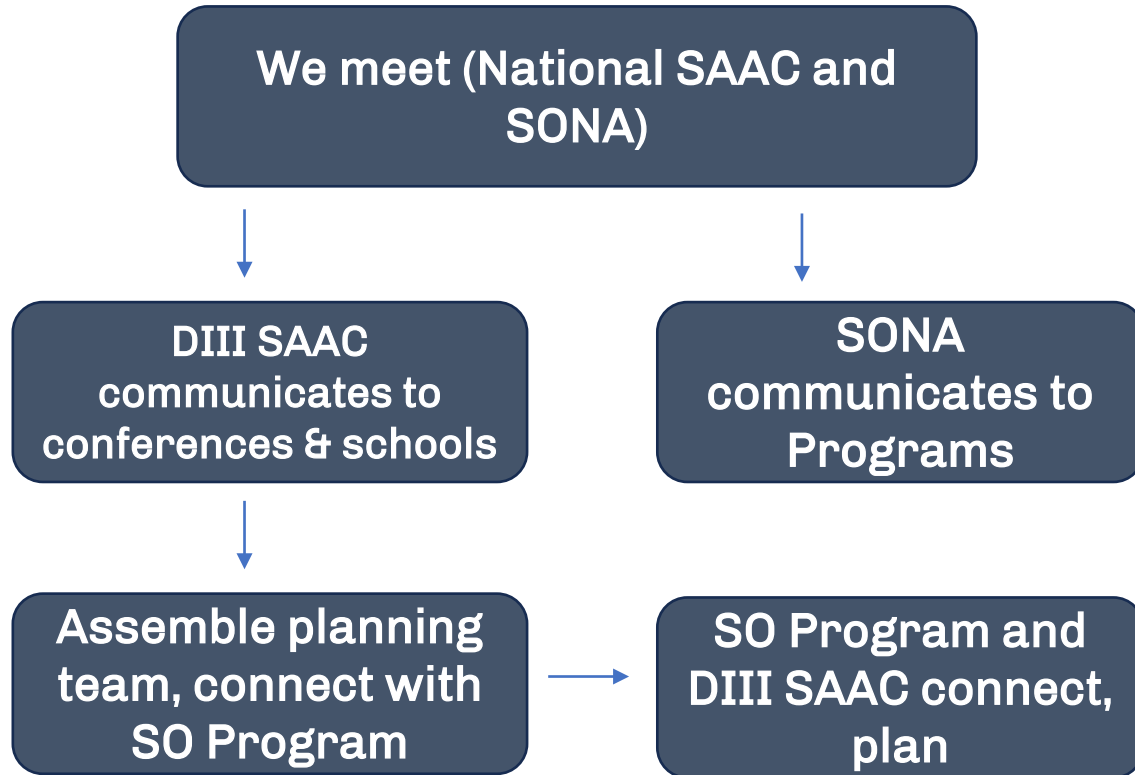
Our Partnership

- Partners since 2011, initiated by SAAC, still driven by SAAC
- Ways to engage
 - **Unified Sports** (leagues & seasons, clinics & training recreation, Young Athletes, etc.)
 - **Inclusive leadership** (Unified leadership teams, involving athletes meaningfully in leadership roles, speaking opportunities, etc.)
 - **Whole school engagement** (fundraisers, half-time Unified Sports exhibition games, Inclusion campaign etc.)



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How we work together



Best practices

- Start with 1 thing!
- Gather a team
- Connect with your Special Olympics Program
- Plan, be present, repeat
- Report your engagement!!!!
 - Form is located on the DIII/SO partnership website



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Connecting with your Program

- [Program finder](#)
- [Interest form](#)



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Examples

- Unified College Championship Week
- Connecting with a local SO delegation (team), coach or play Unified Sports for a season
- HCAC Unified Bowling Championships, Unified Trivia
- Catholic Athletics raising over \$30,000 for SODC through Polar Plunge
- UNE SAAC hosts Unified basketball exhibition
- Suffolk Women's hockey skates with Special Olympics
- [Bethel University Student-Athlete Ambassador for Special Olympics Minnesota](#)
- [Decade of Inclusion](#) – interview series celebrating the 10th year of partnership



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Resources

- [Special Olympics college programming page](#) - resources & interest form are here)
- [Find your Special Olympics State Program](#)
- [How to Speak with People with Intellectual Disabilities](#)
- [Special Olympics page on NCAA website](#)
- [NCAA step by step “Get involved” flyer](#) - share this with your conference & school!



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Contact

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