Athlete Leadership

PURPOSE

Athlete Leadership trains athletes to serve in meaningful leadership roles in addition to that of "competitor." The primary mission of the Athlete Leadership Program is to provide Special Olympics athletes a variety of choices in how they participate in the program.

ATHLETES SERVE IN MANY MEANINGFUL ROLES

GLOBAL MESSENGERS:
Athletes trained in presentation skills are speakers, giving presentations to schools, community groups, parents, etc.

ATHLETE INPUT COUNCILS:
Athletes make suggestions and discuss ideas and problems through Area and County input councils. Athletes who attend ALPs University serve as the State Athlete Input Council, making recommendations to the State Office and responding to program proposals.

ATHLETES AS COMMITTEE AND BOARD MEMBERS:
Athletes serve on National, State, Area and County Management Teams and the SO Indiana Board of Directors.

ATHLETES AS COACHES:
Athletes become coaches or assistant coaches after attending certification training. Many Special Olympics athletes in Indiana are certified coaches.

ATHLETES AS OFFICIALS:
Athletes learn the officials' code of ethics, athlete-centered officiating, general officiating principles, and safety guidelines.

ATHLETES AS BOARD MEMBERS:
Athletes serve on Area and County Management Teams and the SO Indiana Board of Directors. The current athlete on the SO Indiana Board of Directors is Heather Himes of Marion County - East

ATHLETES AS TECHNOLOGY SPECIALISTS:
Athletes produce PowerPoint presentations, take photographs and video, support websites, and fill other technology-related roles.

OTHER ROLES FOR ATHLETES:
Athletes also serve as employees of Special Olympics, fundraisers, volunteers in the program, class instructors, and donate money to programs.

PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

Area and County Programs that seek to involve athletes in leadership roles (coaches, volunteers, management team members, speakers, etc.) are required to attend a two-hour certification session. During this training, the program's ALPs Coordinator will learn of the various roles available for Athlete Leaders and the expectations of volunteers (mentors) in successfully meeting these requirements.

The Athlete Leadership Certification will be offered to programs in their home communities when the need arises and occasionally at the State Conference.

CURRENT CERTIFIED ATHLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS:

Bartholomew-Brown-Jennings	Hamilton	Madison	Posey	Wabash
Benton	Hancock	Marion - East	Pulaski	Warren-Fountain
Boone	Hendricks	Marion - Northeast	Putnam	Warrick
Carroll	Howard	Marion - West	Ripley-Ohio-Dearborn	Washington Township
Cass	Huntington	Marshall-Starke	Shelby	Wayne
Clark	Jackson	Monroe	St. Joseph	White
Dubois	Johnson	Montgomery-Parke	Spencer	
Franklin	Kosciusko	Morgan	Tippecanoe	
Grant	Lake	Perry	Vanderburgh	
Greene	LaPorte	Porter	Vigo	

ATHLETE INPUT COUNCIL

The State Athlete Input Council, originated in April 2004, gives input to the State Office on a variety of subjects. Members develop recommendations for SO Indiana and respond to proposals from other parts of the organization. The council is composed of athletes in attendance at ALPs University sessions.

HANDBOOK FOR ATHLETE LEADERS

For complete details on Athlete Leadership and ALPs University procedures and policies, see the *Handbook for Athlete Leaders* that can be found on the Special Olympics website.

ALPs University

ALPS UNIVERSITY
Indiana has been providing training in athlete leadership since 1997. The program was formalized and expanded in 2003 with the introduction of ALPs University, which provides education for Special Olympics athletes in a variety of leadership topics.

Using a university model where athletes receive credit for attending classes and completing practical experience, participants can earn degrees in Communication, Governance, and Sports.

ELIGIBILITY
Athletes who sign up for ALPs University must be at least 16 years old.

Each athlete must be accompanied by a volunteer (mentor) who works with the athlete during each class and locally during the required practical experience.

- Parents are allowed to be mentors for their son or daughter on a trial basis. Other relatives of the athlete can be mentors.
- Unless otherwise designated, each athlete attending ALPs University must have a mentor (one-on-one).
- Exceptions to these rules are subject to the approval of the ALPs Management Team.

ALPS UNIVERSITY PREREQUISITES, CURRICULUM AND CREDIT
The course curriculum chart below outlines the plan of study for ALPs University. The first class for all ALPs University students is *Introduction to Athlete Leadership*. During completion of this class, athletes can choose a major and take classes as outlined in the chart.

PRACTICUM WORK FOR CREDIT IN A CLASS
Each class requires a practicum be completed in order to get credit for the class. The practicum certification needs to be sent to the State Office within six months of taking the class. Some leeway is given for the *Athletes as Coaches* or the *Athletes as Officials* class if the sport the athlete is interested in does not happen within six (6) months. Note: The practicum for the Technology classes is monitored and tracked by the Technology instructors. They will inform SO Indiana when an athlete completes the practicum, so nothing is required from the ALPs Coordinator for these classes.

PREREQUISITES FOR ADVANCED-LEVEL CLASSES
Only a few classes have prerequisites. Note: An athlete cannot take any second class unless he/she first takes the *Introduction to Athlete Leadership* class and receives credit.

Other prerequisites:

- *Global Messenger I* plus practicum – before *Global Messenger II*.
- Three (3) classes in a student's major plus practicums – before *Leadership*.
- Governance classes may be taken in any order.
- Technology classes may be taken in any order.

ORDER OF TAKING CLASSES
Classes may be taken in any order from the curriculum chart (with the exception of those with prerequisites above.) Students may take classes outside their major.

EARNING ADDITIONAL DEGREES
Once an athlete leader completes his/her first degree, he/she may wish to earn additional degrees. He/she does not have to retake a class from the new degree curriculum if he/she already has credit for that class from a prior degree. Neither does he or she have to retake the final "Leadership" class. Simply completing and receiving credit for the additional classes unique to the additional degree are required.

CONTINUING EDUCATION
Athlete leaders are encouraged to repeat classes on a periodic basis to update their leadership knowledge and skills. Class content changes over the years as new concepts are introduced.

SPRING SEMESTER
- Friday, April 21 and Saturday, April 22
- Butler University - Indianapolis
- Entry deadline is Friday, March 31.
- COST - $15 per athlete and per mentor
- Lunch provided.
- Courses and registration form on Page 140.

FALL SEMESTER
- Dates TBD
- Butler University - Indianapolis
- Entry deadline is Friday, October 27.
- COST - $15 per athlete and per mentor.
- Lunch provided.
- Courses and registration form on Page 141.

COURSE CURRICULUM FOR ALPs UNIVERSITY

Introduction to Athlete Leadership

COMMUNICATION MAJOR	SPORTS MAJOR	GOVERNANCE MAJOR
Global Messenger I	Athletes as Coaches	Governance: Athlete Input Councils
PowerPoint® OR One Technology Class	Level 2 Coaches Certification**	PowerPoint® OR One Technology Class
Global Messenger II	Athletes as Officials* OR Sports Skills Course	Governance: Boards & Committees

Leadership Capstone

Each class is a 7-hour course. *Introduction to Athlete Leadership* is the required first course and *Leadership* is the final course. Courses in the athlete's area of concentration require participation in the class and completion of a practicum within six (6) months. Exceptions to the six-month rule will be granted if an athlete chooses to coach or officiate a sport that does not take place within that timeframe.

*Information on Athletes as Officials can be found in the Handbook for Athlete Leadership.
** This includes four (4) online Coaches Education Courses.