

CONTENTS

Pg 2-3 About Us | Board and Staff Pg 4-5 2021 Year In Review

Pg 6-7 Be Inspired from our CEO Pg 8-9 Athlete Spotlight: Dorie Zipperle

Unified Champion Schools

Pg 10

Pg 11 Chris Akers | Impact Award

Pg 12 Team Indiana Summer Games

SOSO Awards 2021 Pg 13

Pg 14 Donor Spotlight Michael & Rebecca Furnish

Pg 15 Carl & Betty Erskine Planned Giving Society Pg 16-17 LETR Spotlight Michael Mack

Volunteer Spotlight: Kristin Schoonveld

Champion Sponsors

Pg 20-21 Plane Pull | Polar Plunge

Pq 22-23 Winner's Circle | Schools



FINANCIALS

TOTAL REVENUE \$5,514,035

TOTAL EXPENSES \$3,651,157

PROGRAM DETAILS \$2,613,676

NET SURPLUS \$1,862,878

Contributions & Grants \$3,480,645

Special Events \$1.115.309

Investment Income 16% \$879.225

Other \$38.856

Programs \$2,613,676

Management & General \$414.305

Fundraising \$623.176

Games 34% \$903,849

Training & Volunteer 28% \$732.511

Program Initatives \$977.316

Future Use 46% \$849,653

Investment Income 47% \$879.225

Operating Surplus 7% \$134.000

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Director of Programs

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Director of Sports & Competition

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Associate Director of Development

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Director of Donor Engagement

Maureen Rumer

Accounting Coordinator

Francie Smith Regional Manager South



<u>01</u>

January

The year began with Winter Games at Lawrenceburg's Perfect North Slopes, where **36 athletes** from across the state competed in alpine skiing, snowshoeing and snowboarding.

The New Year Fitness Virtual Challenge kicked off with 536 participants committing to start the year off with healthy habits.

02

February

Our signature fundraiser, the Polar Plunge started as **1,254 participants** go "Freezin' for a Reason" at 12 in-person events around the state.

The Polar Plunge events **raised over \$550,000** to benefit Special Olympics Indiana athletes and support year-round programs and events.

An Earn Your Wings program facilitated virtual participation with 228 people either running a 5K or making snow angels to add over \$30,000 to support our Polar Plunge fundraiser.

As campus facilities were not available to host plunges, we had three plunges at drive-in theatres. Over **140 plungers** got to see the movie classic, "Jaws" and raised over \$48,000.

03

March

This month started our Virtual Spring into Fitness Challenge with 416 participants maintaining healthy behaviors with fitness activities.

The Champions Together Unified Bowling Tournament took place at Woodland Bowl with 241 athletes and 248 Unified Partners hitting the lanes for inclusion fun! Valparaiso High School took home top honors.



LOOK 2021

04

April

The Pacers Athletic Center at Grand Park in Westfield was the new location for the 2021 Men's, Women's and Youth State Basketball Championships.

We had **32 teams vying for medals**, and thanks to our **friends at JD/Finish Line athletes, were surprised with new shoes.**

Athlete Leadership University spring session was a virtual program and offered athletes the opportunity to continue their educational journey to learn new skills.

05

May

The Sizzlin' Summer Fitness Challenge afforded **345 athletes** the opportunity to keep moving and stay fit with a virtual program.

06

June

The Special Olympics Indiana community was thrilled to be back in action at Summer Games.

Although modified to ensure the safety of our athletes with virtual opening and closing ceremonies, over **2,000** athletes were able to compete in six sports representing **45** delegations.



Thirty-five foursomes joined us at the Brickyard Crossing at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for the Charity Golf Classic. Golfers had the opportunity to interact with Special Olympics athletes on themed golf holes while raising vital funds to support programming for Special Olympics Indiana athletes.

08

August

The State Softball Tournament was at a new location in Greenwood and had 14 county programs well represented with **31 teams** competing for top honors.

Seventy-one golfers from nine delegations traveled to the State Golf Championship at Hickory Stick Golf Club.

Fall into Fitness Challenge offered virtual fitness programming for 608 athletes around the state.

The Young Professionals Board hosted the Polo Event at Hickory Hall in Whitestown and implemented the popular Hobby Horse race in addition to raising \$25,000.

September

The Plane Pull Challenge raised over \$130,000 and had 58 teams pulling a Boeing 747 at the Indianapolis International Airport Postal Hub.

A highlight of the event included a parade of Team Indiana athletes representing our state at the USA Games in Orlando in June of 2022. Champions Together Unified Bocce State Championship was held at Carmel High School.

The second annual Bocce Bash took place at Colonel's Field

October

Athlete Leadership University was back on the Butler University campus and had 41 athletes actively involved in getting degrees in visual arts, global messaging, event planning, governance, and technology.

IHSAA hosts its Fourth Annual Flag Football State Tournament, with schools and students with and without disabilities competing together.

The State Corn Toss Tournament had 280 teams competing for the top honors at Carmel High School.

The annual State Conference was held to foster staff, volunteer, and athlete collaboration as everyone came to take part in leadership, team building, and training sessions. The Spirit of Special Olympics Award Winners were recognized at the luncheon program.

November

Taylor hosted the Unified Robotics Tournament for 20 elementary schools from around the state competing in the FIRST LEGO League Challenge.

Yorktown was the location for the Unified Volleyball Tournament with 17 teams competing for medals.

December

Bowling continued to be the most popular sport with over 1, 200 athletes competing at the State Bowling Championship held the first weekend in December at both Woodland and Western Bowl.



BE INSPIRED FROM OUR CEO JEFF MOHLER

Growing up, Major League Baseball determined most of our family vacations. My dad, Jim. My mom, Judy. And my sister, Stephanie.

It all began with Dad. He's a big Dodgers fan. When he was a young boy, the Dodgers were still in Brooklyn. We traveled to Wrigley Field in Chicago whenever the Los Angeles Dodgers came to visit. Later to Cincinnati, when the Dodgers played there. Those early trips eventually became a quest — to see a Major League game at each team's home field. We didn't quite make it then.

But I'm close now! My wife and kids, Lisa, Lydia and Owen, have joined me as baseball continues to map out our vacations. Twenty-nine ballparks down.

One to go. (New York Mets, soon, very soon).

A few years into my career at Special Olympics Indiana, I told Dad about this former Dodger who I met at Summer Games. I recalled as much about him as I could. Dad knew who it was even before I said his name. Carl Erskine, one of Dad's beloved, "Boys of Summer".

Carl's attendance at that Summer Games wasn't as a VIP. At those Games, he wasn't there as a former World Series champion Dodger. He wasn't there as a professional pitcher who threw two no-hitters.

He was there as a father. Jimmy Erskine was competing that day. In his youth growing up in Anderson, Carl became friends with Johnny Wilson. Johnny is African American. And in the 1930s and 1940s, they would attend movies together, sitting in the balcony. Johnny was not allowed to sit on the main floor. Only in the balcony. And Carl joined him there.

Carl's friendship with Johnny prepared him for his career as a Brooklyn Dodger. Johnny didn't teach Carl how to become a great pitcher. Johnny prepared Carl to be a teammate and later a friend, to Jackie Robinson. Jackie, who in 1947, broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball. April 15 marked the 75th anniversary of this important event in American sports history... better yet, in American history.

And because of Jackie Robinson, Carl was ready to break down more social barriers when his youngest child, Jimmy, was born in 1960. Jimmy, born with Down syndrome. Carl and his wife, Betty, were offered legal papers and a clipboard. Sign the papers and the State of Indiana will take care of Jimmy for the rest of his life. In other words, Jimmy would be institutionalized. Segregated. Quarantined from society. Betty immediate response, "He's coming home with us."

Special Olympics founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver heard about Carl, Betty and Jimmy, and invited Carl on a speaking tour to help this fledgling movement gain credibility in the early 1970s. Special Olympics was only a few years old at that time.

Carl would show those early audiences his 1955 World Series ring. And he would show them Jimmy's Special Olympics gold medal. **Then he challenged the audience with a question: Which is a greater accomplishment?**

Carl always responded — Jimmy's medal.

That comparison gave Special Olympics credibility, just what this young organization desperately needed the most in those early days. Credibility.

And Special Olympics strives to gain credibility with new audiences each day. Through our work, the community sees an individual with an intellectual disability in new ways. As a person with value and importance. As a person who can contribute to society. As a person worthy to have the title of friend, teammate employee

Special Olympics Indiana is loving parents, like Carl and Betty. We are volunteers who devote countless hours coaching our athletes to become better on and off the field. We are athletes competing at their highest on the playing field and empowered athlete leaders providing direction off the playing field.

Before reading this article, did you know about Carl Erskine? Whether yes or no, learn more about Carl and invite others to learn about him too. This fall, awardwinning filmmaker Ted Green will debut his newest documentary, "The Best We've Got: The Carl Erskine Story." Join us as Special Olympics Indiana and Ted bring the film to a screen near you.



The impact is more because of WHO we are, rather than WHAT we do.

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT DORIE ZIPPERLE

Hello, my name is **Dorie Zipperle** and I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about how **Special Olympics has positively affected me** and millions of others like me, in Indiana and around the world.

Special Olympics participants are called athletes. Some of us are more athletic than others, but we all compete in at least one sport throughout the year. That competition is what brings us all together and binds us to one another. My sports have included 3-on-3 basketball, bowling, corn toss, track & field, snowshoe racing, volleyball and most recently golf. I'm better at some of those sports than others.

Sometimes I win medals...sometimes I don't.

The Special Olympics Athlete Oath, recited before every competition, says: "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

It's an important reminder that, as much as we all love to win, the opportunity to compete and learn and try our best at something should not be taken for granted. And Special Olympics athletes must be brave in everything they attempt, because instead of opportunities, people with intellectual disabilities often find obstacles wherever we go.

When I was in elementary school, the counselors said that I would never learn to do math or to read beyond a fifth-grade level. I also suffered from severe seizures until I was in middle school, and like a lot of kids with differences, was bullied and

humiliated at times. It was very difficult to even hold my head up at times. But sadly, my story is not unique. Nearly every one of them has experienced some form of discrimination or another challenge in their life.

But I am one of the lucky ones, because I have a family that has supported me and helped me work to overcome those obstacles. My parents, Robin and Brian, have always believed in my abilities and challenged me the same way they challenged my older siblings — Nicholaus, Katie, and Chris. They understood that sometimes my learning process takes a little longer: if it takes you an hour to learn something, it might take me all night. Special education was recommended but my parents didn't think I really needed it.

So, when I was young, they were my tutors. They used homemade games, flashcards, silly songs, poems or whatever it took to help me learn and retain and relate schoolwork to real-world issues. I remember sitting for many hours at our kitchen table. And it worked!

By the time I reached high school as a 16-year-old freshman, my life was fairly normal. I played sports, I got good grades and I had some friends. My best friend was my brother, Chris, who was two years older. Chris always looked out for me and made sure that I was involved in social activities. And as much as I appreciated it at the time, it wasn't until he passed away tragically in 2014 that I really understood how important that social interaction was to my life.

I was an adult by then. I had graduated from Our Lady of Providence High School and was working on the first of two associate degrees at Ivy Tech in Sellersburg. But losing Chris left a hole in my life that will never be filled. I was devastated, of course, but I was also lonely. **And eventually, I started to feel like I wanted to meet some new people.**



So in the fall of 2017, when I was 28 years old and finishing my second college associate degree, I became a Special Olympics athlete for the first time. And immediately, I found what I was looking for.

As a member of Special Olympics Indiana's Clark- Floyd Counties program, I have met a lot of fantastic people in the last four years, including athletes, coaches, volunteers and families. Many of these people are already life-long friends.

I started with bowling, a sport that I was fairly good at;

but honestly, I never thought I would be selected to go to the state tournament or to do anything much beyond my local Special Olympics program. Well. I was wrong about that! As I got more involved. I discovered that **Special Olympics** sports are not just

Special Olympics is about inclusion. And through sports, Special Olympics provides opportunities for everyone to do their best and to compete against others of similar abilities.

- Dorie Zipperle

about rewarding those who are best at something.

So I did get to go to state, where I met even more great people. And in 2019, I had the honor of representing my county program at the annual Special Olympics National Unified Bowling Tournament, held in conjunction with the United States Bowling Conference (USBC) Open Championship in Las Vegas. My mom was my Unified Partner, and I'm proud to tell you that we brought home the gold for our division!

That was a great experience, and the opportunity to compete at the national level really meant a lot to me. But some of my favorite experiences with Special Olympics have come during practices or smaller events, where I get to meet new people and help new athletes find their place.

Helping people really makes my day, and I often think made his day to be involved as a volunteer.

I also enjoy being a part of Special Olympics Indiana's Athlete Leadership University, which empowers athletes and provides opportunities for us to learn and grow **outside of sports.** As a technology major, I'm learning some new skills and will be starting a podcast soon so I can help even more people feel connected.

Outside of Special Olympics, I lead an active, busy life. I work for Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana, and I have a lot of fun giving fashion advice to customers. I've made plenty of friends there and frequently get to see several people I know from our community. In the last 11

> months, I've gone from part-time to full-time, helped in training new associates, and have been selected as employee of the month twice!

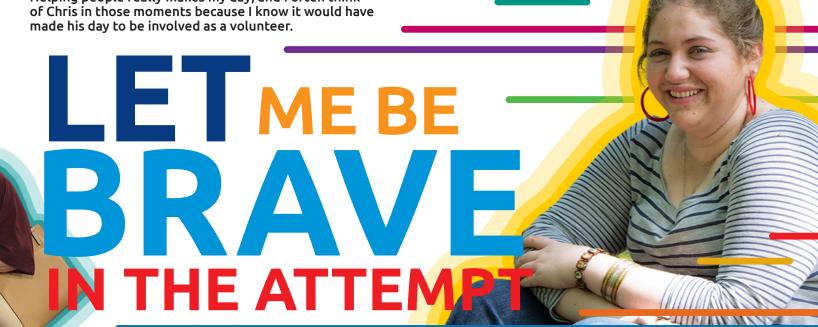
> > I've alwavs loved photography and art (in fact, I have my own company called

DMZ Lasting Impressions) and I

would eventually love to work with animals. But Goodwill is a great place for me to be right now and provides the flexibility to work around all my Special Olympics practices, competitions and conferences.

And thanks to the support of my family and the Special Olympics community in helping me to find the bravery in myself, I see a future filled with possibilities, including living in my own house and launching my own business.

And thanks to people like you, I know the future is bright for thousands of other Special Olympics athletes across the state.



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS

Special Olympics Indiana's Unified Robotics State Competition for elementary students took place at Taylor University's Kesler Student Activities Center, with 15 teams from across central Indiana competing for top honors.

The event was a collaboration with the School of Engineering and the School of Special Education, with two divisions each naming a champion. The student athletes spent eight weeks together, with their coach and partners to learn about robotics, build a moving robot, and design it to perform various tasks.

The competition required them to evaluate their creations and compete against other robotics programs, which led to

a wonderful experience for all participants.

Lisa Graham a Unified Champion Schools consultant for Special Olympics Indiana, said, "This Unified Sports experience provides a non-traditional sporting event that reaches student athletes that are not interested in running, kicking, or throwing a ball."

An all-inclusive competition like this one promotes awareness for our students, their parents, and other community members and businesses about unified sports and activities.

- Megan McAdams

These are the kids who love sitting for hours putting LEGOS together to create an original masterpiece.

Unified Robotics gives them an opportunity to participate in something they are enthusiastic about, with a social and friendship element, while competing to be the best!" We have just reached an entirely new group of athletes!"

Marion Community Schools communications director Patricia Gibson expressed her excitement for the inclusion of the local programs to be part of the event.

"Marion Community Schools is proud to be a part of the Unified Champion Schools program," said Gibson. "We wish our students the best of luck this weekend in the competition!"

Justice Team coach Megan McAdams said, "I could not stop smiling, moving and just having a wonderful time.

The students were so full of energy and excitement, and you could not help absorbing their energy and taking it home with you."

"It encourages all students, of all abilities levels, to get involved in sports and activities for the fun of the experience." said McAdams.

> The Justice Team won the Amazing Movement award for programming a unique movement, lights and audio-voiceover into the programming design.

The also tied for second place in their division.

Riverview Elementary's Robotic team consisted of students from multiple Marion Elementary Schools. The team placed first in their division, as well as winning the spirit Award for having

the best decorated table, cheering for all the teams and having team spirit.

The Unified Robotics program was initially introduced in the fall of 2020 after Special Olympics Indiana partnered with Marion Community Schools to further involve students in math and science outside of school.

"It has been our pleasure to watch our athletes and helpers' bond, join forces and work together to complete the common goal. We cannot wait for next year. We feel like we did an excellent job of dividing up our team into partners early on and each partner

> building the robot first and the mission second. That way we can focus more on coding the robot and practicing with our code."

> > The event was a success for both the coaches and the teams that competed, and the schools are already looking to see what can be improved upon for next year.



Chris has been a Unified Partner with Special Olympics Indiana for over 20 years. Some of his roles have been participating in Unified basketball, volleyball, softball, football, as well as a player, coach and pitching for coaches pitch softball. Chris thrives in multiple settings as he is an affable, lifelong learner.

He provides humor as well as a calming presence throughout many situations and environments. Chris has also worked with the sports department volunteering for EKS and Sumer Games as a venue manager. As well as volunteering Chris is now a part of the Special Olympics team as a consultant promoting Unified Champion Schools (UCS) Initiative.

Chris said "his answer is always YES when it comes to Special Olympics", which comes to show as The Akers Group(TAG) is now partnered with Special Olympics as a part of a targeted effort to expand the Unified Champion Schools program in urban areas and underserved communities beginning with Indianapolis.

The Akers Group is rooted in helping children and families through difficult situations by providing positive choices and fostering positive attitudes.

They do this by serving families in a full range of services. Chris' goal for this partnership is to get more schools and communities involved with the UCS program as it's a total enhancement of leadership, sports, community and just opportunities in general as TAG is helping children and families make pro social decisions.

This experience has not only changed my life professionally but as well as personally. It has shown me how Unified Sports and community gives athletes a positive opportunity in an inclusive manner.



DENNIS SCHMIDT

IMPACT AWARD



TEAM INDIANA



BASKETBALL

Athlete Thomas Beatty **Athlete** John Buckel Athlete Sam Gambrel Athlete Calvin Hanna Athlete Brenden Harris Athlete Shane Hill **Athlete** Billy Mehl Athlete Willard Sapp Athlete Chris Vanarsdall Athlete John Wheeler Gambrel Coach Hal Coach Joe Land Coach Joe Pugh

BOCCE

Athlete Lindsay Hanna Athlete Wilson Amanda Partner Mary Albanese Partner Kristin Schoonveld Coach Mark Norris

BOWLING

Athlete Alise Hazelett Athlete Alexander Kieffer Partner Donna Hazelett Partner Abigale Kieffer Kieffer Coach Vince

GOLF

Athlete Mark Schweiterman Athlete Todd Manion Partner John Mercer Partner Gibson Caroline **Buckley Noble** Coach Lynne

SOFTBALL

Partner Brock Когеу **Athlete** Colley Matt Athlete Davis Johnny Athlete Flack Allen **Athlete** Hale Ryan Athlete Devin New Athlete Jeffery **Phillips** Weidler Athlete Brent Athlete Justin Wilson John Davis Partner Shane Hitch Partner Amber Lancia Partner McNeal Jessica Partner Partner Robyn New Partner Brian White Hazelett Coach Kirk Coach Laura Lancia Coach New Jeanne

SWIMMING

Athlete Katie Baumgartle Athlete Shelly Blattner Athlete Dagan Everman **Athlete** Sam Fawley Athlete Franklin Kendra Athlete I iam Price Reinking **Athlete** Iosh Williams Athlete Kathleen Swif Coach Victoria Coach Alexis Jackson Coach Jon Price

TRACK & FIELD

Athlete Shelby Baker **Athlete** Тогі Butler **Athlete** Fletcher Josh Athlete Ashlvn Heller **Athlete** Isaac Kramer **Athlete** Dakota Мооге Athlete Andrew Peterson Ritenour **Athlete** Romano Braiden Athlete Roval **Athlete** Melony Salla Shannon Wagner **Athlete** Athlete Heather Zwinaelbera Coach Andy Hunnicutt Garten Eacret Coach Juanita Nagel Coach Nicole Peterson Coach Craig

VOLLEYBALL

Athlete Blackburn John Athlete Cooper Madison Athlete Holder Brody Athlete Kemper Payton Athlete Webster Austin Athlete Zack Wilber Partner Corv Cooper Cooper Partner Gary Cooper Partner Теггі Darlene Dietrich Partner Webster Partner Breanna Wilber Partner Russell Cox Coach Barb Coach Ashlev Russell

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Athlete Bailey Hughes Partner Mya Mcnew Mentor Brenda Strimple

STAFF

HOD Scott Furnish PR & Media Elizabeth Price **Families** Julie Burkholder Equipment Brad Ehrlich Health Graber Itzel Health Ben Gregory Health Hartwell Wes Health Elesia Yoon **Head Coach** Jackie Maier Athletic Trainer Stef Morgan Terwiske Laundry Rose **Team Security** Thaddeus Thomas



A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR **TEAM INDIANA SPONSORS:**















WINNERS







Lilly 1,000 Mile Challenge Winners

TOP FUNDRAISERS

Charlotte Husted Dustin Mergott Ellie Parker Kim Melnick Elizabeth Bearby 1,125 Miles 675 Miles 645 Miles 520 Miles 500 Miles Justin Holley Andrew Peterson Lynne Buckley-Noble Shelbyb Baker Eric Thorstad 805 Miles 601 Miles 477 Miles 452 Miles 397 Miles

20



21

Top Fundraising Team Award

Elizabeth Bearby

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

MICHAEL AND REBECCA FURNISH

For decades young people have idolized professional athletes. Michael and Rebecca Furnish grew up in an era when those athletes became heroes. Unlike today, they weren't multi-millionaire celebrities, but they nevertheless stood a little taller and shone a little brighter. Michael was certain of a future as a major league pitcher — he idolized the Yankees and Mickey Mantle. Rebecca spent precious hours on the porch with her dad and their transistor radio listening to the St. Louis Cardinals, hearing players with names like

Stan Musial and Bob Gibson.

Their allegiances shifted, however, when Michael and Rebecca got to know the person who struck out Mickey Mantle four times in a single World Series game.

Carl Erskine had a remarkable 12-year baseball career with the Brooklyn Dodgers — highlighted by setting the World Series strike out record (14) in 1953 and winning the World Series in 1955. When Michael and Rebecca were blessed by getting to know this man inside the myth, they realized they were standing in the shadow of an unshakable idol.

They learned about the Carl Erskine, who became the teammate of the great Jackie Robinson— and who embraced him as an equal and as a friend, regardless of the color barrier prevalent then. Carl refused to play that game. Carl walked on higher ground.

They learned that once Carl's baseball career came to an end, he and his beloved wife, Betty, moved back to their

hometown of Anderson— to a way of life they both held so dear. And it was there that their fourth child was born, a son named Jimmy who had Down syndrome.

In 1960, babies like Jimmy were often given up to the state for lifelong institutionalization —growing up without family, without education, without affection or comfort.

In fact, this was recommended to Carl and Betty, but Betty rose up with courage and love and said, "I carried him for the past nine months. He's going home with us."

They raised Jimmy out in the open, not in the shadows. As Jimmy's parents, they became champions of people with

intellectual disabilities. They, along with a generation of families with children like Jimmy, performed one of the greatest acts of humanity of all time.



If an idol should pull you forward with ambition, give your imagination wings and inspire you to be better, always better – then Carl is a perfect fit.

For more information about donating to Special Olympics Indiana or joining the Carl and Betty Erskine Planned Giving Society, contact:

Vice President of Development & COO
Scott Furnish
(317) 328-2000
sfurnish@soindiana.org

Bringing their children into the community gave rise to Special Olympics and several other service organizations.

Jimmy participated in Special Olympics Indiana for many years, and Carl and Betty were always there, high-fiving the parade of athletes, cheering at the finish line, attending every game.

These lessons and activities are meant to benefit Indiana's schools by teaching the life story of Carl Erskine — the man, not the myth — his values, his integrity, his commitment to equality and inclusion, his love for the people of this world we share.

Today, Michael and Rebecca applaud and are pleased to support award-winning Hoosier documentary filmmaker Ted Green's upcoming film "The Best We've Got, The Carl Erskine Story."

Now fans everywhere can hear

the story of Carl watching

Jimmy was living a life out loud, because Carl and Betty walked on higher ground.

Michael and Rebecca are proud founding members in the Carl and Betty Erskine Planned Giving Society. Their planned gift (a bequest) is meant to inspire and support future parents, volunteers and Special Olympics athletes.

It's their hope that the stories of Carl, Betty, Jimmy, Johnny and

Jackie are never forgotten. It's their encouragement to you to look beyond the myth and into the heart, to always walk on higher ground.

cowboy movies from the Paramount Theatre's balcony, because his best friend Johnny Wilson was prohibited from sitting on the main floor; the story of traveling with Jackie Robinson, who was prohibited from staying with the team at most hotels or eating dinner with the team at most restaurants; the story of Mrs. Lamey's poodles; the story of Jimmy getting on the school bus for the first time and being cheered by the entire neighborhood.

Thanks to Carl, Special Olympics Indiana is a partner in this film project, and is also implementing an education project known as EPIC (Erskine Personal Impact Curriculum).

Carl & Betty Erskine Planned Giving Society

Marjorie Ashby
Sherry & Bill Benner
Mary Bibler
Judi & Phil Bounsall
Carole Caselli
Danny & Debra Dean
Tom & Deb Easterday
Cathy & John Elzinga
Carl & Betty Erskine
Gerald Francis
Rebecca & Michael Furnish
Stanford Goldberg
Julie Hauck Goodrich

Catherine L. Harris
Richard Edward Hay
Mary Ellen Hission
Victoria Johnson
Phyllis Kingery
Genevieve Kubelius
Larkin (Buzz) Lail
John F. McGinty
Lisa & Jeff Mohler
Bob & Sue Pensec
D. Craig Peterson & Family
Barbara Reed
Paul G. Reis & Mo Merhoff

Kelly A. Ries
William Saler
James K. Searles
Mark C. Sherman
Karen S. Sostack
Ron & Catherine Stiver
James E. Teall
John Vanderbilt
Joan E. Wheatley
Kathy Wyman
Jackie Lee York

Dodger

LETR SPOTLIGHT

Speical Olympics events are a time when

I show up and I have all these friends that

I've never met before. Some recognize me,

they know me byname. It's one of the most

positive things related to my job that

I've ever done.

-MICHAEL MACK

The Olympic flame is among the most recognizable and enduring symbols of competition the world over. Ignited in Greece before each edition of the Olympic Games, the flame is carried by torch relay to the host country in the months leading up to the Summer or Winter Olympics, where it then lights the cauldron during Opening Ceremonies. This flame represents continuity between the ancient and modern Olympics and is said to symbolize the indomitable will of Olympic athletes as they compete for their respective countries.

In the world of Special Olympics, a similar torch is carried by athletes into the Opening Ceremonies of local, state, national and world competitions each year.

For the millions of athletes, volunteers, family members and supporters who make up the global Special Olympics community, our version of the

Olympic flame symbolizes inclusion, courage, unity and most of all, hope. But Special Olympics athletes do not carry this Flame of Hope alone.

Known as Guardians of the Flame, more than 100,000 dedicated and compassionate law enforcement members around the world help to carry the flame each year as part of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics (LETR). But like Special Olympics itself, the Torch Run is much bigger than any single event: as the largest public awareness vehicle and grass-roots fundraiser for our programs, the LETR is a year-round partnership encompassing volunteerism and fundraising through events including the Polar Plunge, Plane Pull, Tip-A-Cops and more. Since its inception in 1981, this partnership has raised over \$900 million for Special Olympics worldwide.

16 | SPECIAL OLYMPICS INDIANA

In June 1981, as six police officers from Wichita, Kansas carried a torch into a high school and started a movement that continues to grow each year, a young Michael Mack celebrated his graduation from Horace Mann High School in Gary and prepared to move to Indianapolis to pursue an education at IUPUI. Originally an engineering major (before later switching to criminal justice), Michael had little idea that he would one day become one of Indiana's longest tenured and most reliable Guardians of the Flame.

Now approaching retirement after a 37-year career as an officer with the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) and Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD), Michael looks back fondly on his nearly 25 years as a volunteer and advocate for Special Olympics Indiana.

Growing up as the only boy in a family of 11,
Michael credits his mother for instilling
in him and his eight sisters the importance
of volunteering and staying active in their

community. Those values helped lead him to become involved in staffing a booth at the Indiana Black Expo as a young IPD officer and later joining a variety of causes, including Big Brothers of Greater Indianapolis, which named him volunteer of the year in 1991.

In the line of duty, Michael has been assigned to a wide variety of units, including vice, narcotics, property recovery and arson but has similarly found his opportunities to give something back to his colleagues to be most fulfilling. As a training officer for the past 25 years, he finds motivation in the fact that he can be a positive influence for those who are just getting started in law enforcement while also learning from younger officers about new technologies and evolving police standards.

"I try to be a good sounding board, not be too critical," he said. "One of the things I've learned working with Special Olympics athletes is that you've got to treat everybody equally and that is a really helpful mindset to have during training."

But interacting with the public has become increasingly difficult for police officers in recent years amid growing animosity toward law enforcement, helping to further amplify the importance of being involved in efforts to make a positive impact on the community.

It's exciting, but it will definitely be a challenge and I seem to get more motivated from the athletes than they do from me. I can be your cheerleader, but you motivate me more than you'll ever know.

- Michael Mack

"When people call the police, usually something very bad has happened, they see us on the worst days of their lives. Whereas, when I am involved in a Special Olympics event, it's just completely different. It's one of the few times outside of work where I don't mind wearing my uniform because that's how the athletes recognize me, and I know they will be happy to see me."

After first joining the LETR when his commanding officer gave him an opportunity to earn a Saturday off by participating in the Torch Run leading up to the 1997 Indiana Summer Games, Michael has fully embraced his duty as a Guardian of the Flame and has volunteered for countless events and fundraisers for Special Olympics Indiana over the years. He has taken the Polar Plunge more than a dozen times, brought a team to the Plane Pull Challenge each summer, participated in numerous LETR International Conferences, and been involved in special events including the 2015 Unified Relay Across America (URAA), where he captained two teams.

"Initially, I thought, 'oh, this will be good for me I'll get some exercise, interact with some new people.' But meeting the athletes and seeing what they are capable of helped me to realize that Special Olympics is so much more than I thought. One athlete in particular, Katie Crawford (Washington Township), made a huge impression on me because she was so focused and dedicated. I couldn't keep up with her — she was like the Energizer Bunny, she just kept going and going."

In the years since, Special Olympics has become ingrained in the lives of Michael and his family. His children Morgan, Carsen and Garrett have been active as volunteers and Unified partners. And his wife, Holle, is nearly as involved as he is, even going so far as to plan her vacations from work around the annual LETR conference.

"It's always been a nice family event for me, but they keep coming back because they see the value in Special Olympics, too. It's hugs and handshakes and high fives and tears of joy. The first time I took my wife to Opening Ceremonies (at the Indiana Summer Games), she was in tears. It was just such a good experience."

In addition to building relationships with athletes like Katie and personally raising thousands of dollars to support Special Olympics Indiana's yearround programs and events, Michael has been a part of the Indiana LETR Leadership Team and has served for many years as the official LETR liaison to the Indiana State Fraternal Order of Police and FOP No. 86 in Indianapolis. In this role, he works to recruit new officers to join the movement and become Guardians of the Flame in their own communities. And he plans to continue these efforts even after his retirement from the IMPD in 2022.

But before then, he'll have the honor of representing Indiana alongside athletes and officers from across the nation in the "Final Leg" of the Law Enforcement Torch Run through the state of Florida in the weeks leading up to the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games in Orlando. This prestigious special event will help to usher in the start of national competition, where the 100 members of Team Indiana will join some 5,500 athletes, coaches, and Unified partners from all 50 states and the District of Columbia in vying for medals.

It also will be a fitting end to a long and distinguished career for our 2016



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17 | SPECIAL OLYMPICS INDIANA

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT KRISTIN SCHOONVELD

If athletes are the lifeblood of the Special Olympics movement, then volunteers surely are its backbone. With a small paid staff headquartered in Indianapolis, Special Olympics Indiana relies on the selflessness and generosity of more than 10,000 volunteers each year to help make possible our continued efforts to engage people with intellectual disabilities across the state in a wide variety of year-round programs and events.

That volunteer force includes people of all ages and backgrounds; some are involved for just a single event while others live and breathe Special Olympics every single day of their lives. County coordinators, area directors, coaches, officials all are unpaid volunteers. These incredible people choose to give their time and talent to this organization over and over again because they believe in the ability of Special Olympics to create a better, more inclusive world for people of all abilities.

Kristin Schoonveld is one such individual, honored as our 2021 Spirit of Special Olympics Volunteer of the Year for her outstanding efforts to help keep our athletes active and engaged throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

After discovering a passion for working with people with intellectual disabilities while she was a student at North Central High School in the 1980s, Kristin first became involved as a volunteer with Special Olympics Indiana by assisting at local competitions and even attending Summer Games as a chaperone.

That passion soon became a career but it wasn't until she met Washington
Township athlete Kelley Schreiner through her work and agreed to join the Washington Township Special Olympics Unified basketball team in 2011 that she said her volunteer journey truly began.

"Playing on that team was an exhilarating experience. I was definitely hooked immediately on the unique and upbeat energy everyone in that gym was giving off."

Over the course of the past 11 years, Kristin has regularly served her local program in a variety of roles including Unified Partner, coach, mentor, fundraiser, driver and chaperone. She has helped to organize special events, to design and distribute flyers and athletic apparel, to transport and set up equipment and supplies for Summer Games, and to oversee the program's Athlete Leadership Council. She has been an active participant in local and state fundraisers including an annual holiday wreath sale and Polar Plunge events at Butler University and Eagle Creek Park.

Kristin is also a tremendous advocate for inclusion and empowerment, volunteering at the state level as an instructor for Athlete Leadership University and spearheading the development of the program's Leadership Through Visual Arts curriculum.

"Volunteering is a wonderful way to connect and give back to our communities," she said. "That's why we are motivated in the first place to volunteer, right? The added bonus here is the truly unmatched level of jubilation and inspiration that you will see and feel each and every time you set foot at a Special Olympics event. It is intense and life changing."

Kristin's lifelong passion for making a difference in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities is evident to all who meet her, but like many of our most dedicated volunteers, her connection to Special Olympics Indiana is also personal: in 2018, she married Brian Schoonveld and adopted his son, Nick a Washington Township athlete and longtime friend who she first met nearly 30 years earlier while volunteering in his second-grade classroom at Nora Elementary School.

I continue to volunteer for Special Olympics because the deep, lifelong bonds with athletes, caretakers and other volunteers that I have formed these past 11 years keep me invested. As long as I am able, this is where you will find me!

- Kristin Schoonveld

The incredible journey that brought Kristin, Brian, and Nick together after the passing of Brian's wife, Grace, and included Kristin discovering the existence of a biological son conceived from eggs that she had donated in 1994 — recently the subject of a pair of stories published by The Indianapolis Star and People Magazine.

But for Nick, Kelley and their fellow athletes, Kristin is much more than a human-interest story. She is a friend, and someone who they can count on to make each day fun no matter the circumstances.

When health and safety concerns related to COVID-19 forced the suspension of Special Olympics Indiana's in-person events and other activities in March 2020, Kristin quickly stepped up and helped to organize and lead a wide variety of virtual activities over Zoom, many of which continued throughout 2021.

She has hosted everything from walking and exercise events to book clubs, movie and game nights, and even birthday parties, providing meaningful opportunities for athletes and volunteers to stay connected during an extremely difficult time.

And last March, she held an adapted Polar Plunge event at her home, inviting athletes to take a dip into a wading pool in the driveway while maintaining social distancing protocols.

For all these reasons and more, **Kristin was nominated in 2021** by the Washington Township management team for our annual Spirit of Special Olympics Volunteer of the Year Award, which she was officially presented by our Board of Directors at the 2021 State Conference. And she has no plans of slowing down any time soon.

HAM PION



Indiana law enforcement officers look forward to returning to more in-person fellowship with our athletes in 2022 as we have more events! I look forward to rejuvenating Indiana police officers and adding more Indiana police officers and agencies to the ranks of the Guardians of the Flame of Hope!

> Master Trooper Tommy Walker Jr. Indiana State Police



For many Duke Energy employees, including me, volunteering with Special Olympics is one of our favorite opportunities to serve. The athletes and the committed staff of Special Olympics Indiana inspire us, which is why we have supported and volunteered with the organization for more than 40 years. The athletes show us how to be champions and exhibit great sportsmanship whether they win or lose. They work hard training for their events, enjoy their opportunity to compete, and eagerly try again if they fall short — all life lessons that transcend sports

> Stan Pinegar President Duke Energy Indiana



On behalf of 32,600 Knights of Columbus, we are honored and humbled to be major sponsors of Special Olympics Indiana, knowing the importance and value of all the activities that are conducted year-round. With the Polar Plunge just being completed, we now focus on the Summer Games in Terre Haute. Again, the Knights of Columbus will be volunteering at the Bocce Ball event, and we look forward to welcoming all the athletes back, watching them excel at what they love!

> Craig Hanusin, State Deputy Indiana State Council



We are thrilled to have celebrated our 10 year partnership with Special Olympics in 2021. Whether it's athletes getting fitted for shoes by our store associates or our employees witnessing the delight athletes display in competition, Special Olympics brings immense joy to our company.

> **Marty Posch Executive Director** JD Finish Line Youth Foundation

PLANE **PULL**

2021 PLANE PULL

PLANE PULL TEAMS

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Line Drive Sports Productions LLC Lules Diversions Fuductions LEC Logansport Savings Bank Lukes Country Inn LLC Macallister Machinery Company Madison Correctional Facility Madison County Community Foundation, Inc. Marian Inc Marian III.. Masingo Law Office, PC McDonald's of Terre Haute Mechanical Contractors Association Of Indiana, Inc. Melvin Family Trucking LLC Midwest Design Group Milestone Contractors South, LLC Mister Quik Home Services Monticello Christian Church, Inc. Mondeello Christian Chid (1, inc Moore Restoration, Inc. New Castle Correctional Facility New Point Volunteer Fire Dept. New Form Volunteer in Edge.
OmniSource
Pay It Forward Johnson County, Inc.
Personall Financial Services, LLC
PFS Community Foundation
PlainField Correctional Facility Polar Leasing Co. Portland Lions Club Putnam Co. Comprehensive Services Ragle, Inc. Ray's Trash Service, Inc. Ray's ITasin set vice, Inc. RDC Activity Committee Residential Clinical Services, Inc. Rhino Hospitality Lodging & Consulting Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated

Ryan Fire Protection Inc. Schuetter Family Foundation Schwab Charitable Fund SCI Membership Community Fund

Select Commercial Services

Southeastern Indiana REMC St. Elizabeth Healthcare Star Financial Bank Steve & Tanya Alford Family Foundation Sweetwater Sound, Inc. Terre Haute Police Department Titan Light Shows Inc. Tree City Classics Car Club Turner Construction Valiant Foundation Village of Merici Inc. W.R. Hall Insurance Group Wabash Valley Correctional Facility Walmart The Wanderers Inc. West Side Nut Club Wetzel Honda WFIE-TV Zoeller Company Zotec Partners

Unified Champion Schools Banner Winners: High Schools

Beech Grove High School Blackford High School Bloomfield High School Bloomington High School North Carmel High School Carroll High School (Ft. Wayne) Fast Noble High School Edinburgh High School Elkhart High School Evansville North High School Fishers High School Floyd Central High School Fort Wayne North Side High School Goshen High School Hamilton Southeastern Harrison High School (West Lafavette) Indian Creek High School Kankakee Valley High School Lafavette Central Catholic LaPorte High School Lewis Cass High School Madison Consolidated High School Madison-Grant Jr/Sr High School McCutcheon High School Missinewa High School Morristown High School Mount Vernon High School (Posey) Muncie Central High School North Knox Junior/Senior High School Perry Meridian High School Shelbyville High School South Bend Riley High School South Bend Washington High School South Ripley High School Tippecanoe Valley High School Tri-West High School Valparaiso High School Vincennes Lincoln High School West Lafayette High School Yorktown High School

Unified Champion Schools Banner Winners: Middle Schools

Brownsburg West Middle School Dennis Intermediate School Edinburgh Middle School Hibberd Intermediate School Lowell Middle School Mt. Vernon Middle School South Ripley Jr. High School Test Intermediate School Tippecanoe Valley Middle School Tr-West Middle School

Unified Champion Schools Banner Winners: Elementary Schools

Akron Elementary School Arlington Elementary School Boone Meadow Elementary School Bridgepoint Elementary Center Grove Elementary School Charles Elementary School Crestdale Elementary School Eagle Elementary School Fairview Elementary School Franklin Square Elementary School Fred J. Hums Elementary School Manchester Flementary School Manchester Intermediate School Milroy Northview Parkwood Elementary School Pleasant View Elementary-Zionsville Plesant Ridge Elementary Riverside Elementary School Rushville Elementary School East Rushville Elementary School West Stonegate Elementary School Union Elementary School Vaile Elementary School Westview -Jonesboro Westview

2020-21 NATIONAL Banner Winner:

North Knox High School

SPECIAL OLYMPICS OATH

