



## Join the Special Olympics Movement: A Call to Ontario Universities and Colleges

### Who We Are

Special Olympics is a global movement dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities through sports, health, leadership and inclusive programming. Founded in 1968, Special Olympics now serves over 6 million athletes in more than 190 countries, providing year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports.

Special Olympics Ontario Unified Champion Schools (UCS) is a youth-led initiative transforming school cultures through inclusion. We empower students of all abilities by promoting inclusive sports, health, leadership, and school-wide engagement, fostering acceptance and respect for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

### Our Three Pillars

1. Inclusive Sports and Health:  
UCS integrates students with and without intellectual disabilities on sports teams, promoting social engagement and healthy lifestyles. Our programs improve physical fitness, reduce health risks, and boost self-confidence.
2. Youth Leadership:  
UCS empowers students to lead in promoting acceptance and human dignity. Through leadership initiatives, students develop essential skills like communication and teamwork, preparing them for academic and career success.
3. Whole-School Engagement:  
UCS initiatives create inclusive environments, reducing bullying and fostering positive interactions. These programs build a strong sense of community and significantly improve how students with disabilities are perceived and treated.

### Why Join Us?

- Transform School Culture: Create inclusive environments where all students thrive, reducing bullying and improving school climate.
- Promote Health and Well-Being: Enhance physical and mental health, reducing the risk of obesity, diabetes, and depression.

#### Special Olympics Ontario

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*Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities.*



- Develop Future Leaders: Prepare students for academic and career success through leadership opportunities.
- Join a Global Movement: Be part of a worldwide network dedicated to promoting inclusion and positive change.

## Call to Action

Join Special Olympics Ontario Unified Champion Schools and make a difference. Together, we can create a more inclusive, compassionate, and connected school community. Let's build a future where every student can thrive.

Live Unified, Play Unified.

## [Being a Champion College](#)



## What We Can do Together

1. Change Lives
  - Life-long impacts, memories friendships and connections
  - Community integration & impact
  - Empowering people to learn, grow and succussed
2. Create More Inclusive Campuses
  - Generating awareness changing attitudes providing learning opportunities we can create new school environments
  - More opportunities to bring students together
  - Changing perspectives, changing perceptions, adding knowledge through training and experience
3. Practical Experience



*SOO can offer practical experience to the following programs: Sport/Recreation Management, Human Kinetics, Child & Youth Studies, Nursing, Education, Co-Operative Education ect.*

- Hosting a Special Olympics Events (elementary, secondary, post-secondary)
- In school EA & teaching experiences (provide staffing support for events for schools in-need)
- Running a transition program
- Research Opportunities
- Community Council Positions/Volunteers
- Internship opportunities
- Youth Employment opportunities

#### 4. Leadership Opportunities

- SOO Clubs/Program Development
- Mentorship programming
- Student Council Engagement
- Youth leadership workshops/events

#### 5. Sport & Recreation Growth

- Intermural program expansion
- Increased competitions, tournaments events

#### 6. Community Engagement

- Community SOO Events
- Partnerships with local Community Councils
- Engage a new part of your community
- Fundraising events

#### 7. Health & Wellness

- Increased mental health, support structures



- Hosting a Healthy athlete's screenings
- More physical activity, extracurricular opportunities for people of all abilities

#### 8. Curriculum Implementation

- Training and Workshops for university students
- Professional Development Opportunities for staff
- Built in sustainable practical course work & experience for students

#### 9. Promotion & Awareness

- Increased student body, community awareness & engagement with University/College & SOO
- Cross promotional opportunities
- Positive publicity

#### 10. Major Events

- Opportunity to host SOO Provincial School Championships
- Opportunity to host SOO Spring, Summer, Winter Games
- Opportunity to Host SOO College & University Championships & regional conference battles
- Youth Leadership Summit
- Inclusive Schools Ontario Educator Conference