

Dear IAJHSC Member Schools,

The time is fast approaching when we will meet in Springfield for our 50th Anniversary State Convention and it looks to be one of the best conventions ever!

It is at that time that a check will be presented to our state charity, Special Olympics of Illinois. If you have already sent a donation, I would like to thank you again for your support. If you have not yet sent a donation, I would like to encourage your council to do so.

Special Olympics reach children in every town in Illinois. If you have not yet shown the CD about the Olympics, it's a good starting point to give your students background about the organization. The CD has been placed on our web and each District Adult Director was mailed a copy to share.

Special Olympics of Illinois offers children the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sports, not just at the local Area level, but at a regional and state level. Basketball, soccer, track and field, and softball to aquatics, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing are just a few of the sports you'll see available. If you check the Special Olympics of Illinois website, you will see area Torch Events as well as local games. Just type in your area code and find out what's going on in your district. See where your Council can help, not just financially, but as Student Ambassadors who attend events or help at a practice. Maybe your school can sponsor a Partners Club or part of a Unified Sport team.

Special Olympics give children the opportunity to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendships with families, other athletes and the community. The benefit to these youth, their families, and those who get involved can not be measured.

I believe that IAJHSC's message is like that of the Special Olympics: *that every person is a person of dignity and every person deserves a chance to contribute.*

Please do not miss this chance for your council to give a chance to others to grow not only physically, but as people.

Joey Stehlin
Mrs. Geri DeFalco
State Service Project