



NE AREA \diamond WATERTOWN

04.24.26



Opening Ceremony

Master of Ceremony..... Justin Hanson

Color Guard..... American Legion Post 17

National Anthem..... Becca Meland

Thank You!

We would like to recognize those responsible for the success of these Games... You're the best!

Laurie Meland
Area Competition Coordinator

Prairie Lakes Wellness Center

Parents, Coaches & Athletes



SPECIAL THANKS TO



FOR YOUR UNWAVERING
COMMITMENT TO THIS EVENT

A Note To Volunteers

Volunteers do everything there is to do for Special Olympics and more. You are fundraisers, cheerleaders, administrators, chauffeurs, chaperones, trainers, coaches, policy makers, trash collectors, referees, food servers, score keepers and everything in-between.

You serve without salary, without recognition, without honors or awards. Special Olympics could not do without you - your dedication, your work, and your love.

You represent the highest values of the human spirit and we are grateful for your service!

Thank You!

Without VOLUNTEERS, we would not exist as an organization.

They are not paid, they are just generous. We ask you to be respectful, and most of all, please be kind.

If you feel an error has been made, seek out staff so we can problem solve.

Remember, there are only four roles during a game: spectator, competitor, official and coach. Everyone involved in athletics would be wise to choose only one of those roles at a time.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE SUMMER GAMES
May 14-16, 2026 Spearfish



PARTICIPATING ATHLETES

Aberdeen Golden Eagles

Allen, Billy
 Bau, Zachary
 Bauer, Genna
 Berreth, Lucas
 Bostian, Olivia
 Castillo, Jayden
 Cordova- Ochoa, Eric
 Herman, Lotus
 Marcucci, Jordan
 Mills, Kierra
 Pearson, Emma
 Preszler, Max
 Weiss, Kevin

Aberdeen-SDSBVI

Baireddy, Shree
 Johnson, Henry
 Lopez-Garcia, Heidi
 Myers, Quinten
 Savick, Jaycee
 Spoonemore, Paul
 Thiessen, James

Brookings Area All Stars

Merriam, Joseph

Watertown Area

Beebe, Arianna
 Berglund, Theodore
 Beutler, Ellis
 Boehm, Jagger
 Bretsch, Knox
 Close, Andrew
 Finley, Jeremiah
 Gilmour, Payton
 Hunter, Casen
 Jensen, Anthony
 Kelliher, Chelsea
 LaFramboise, Buddy
 Lake, Jenni
 Loy, Ezra
 Maag, Emily
 Migge, Cassie
 Namken, Deidre
 Popham, Chelsea
 Prohl, Shawn
 Ramirez, Samuel
 Red Shirt, Anthony
 Soucy, Mariah

EVENT SCHEDULE Prairie Lakes Wellness Center

12:15 pm Delegation Check-in

12:45 pm Opening Ceremony

1:00 pm Competition Begins

Athlete # Event

3 15M Swim MATP
 3 15M Walk MATP
 5 15M Assisted Swim
 21 15M Walk
 13 15M Flotation
 8 15M Freestyle

~~25M MATP~~

14 25M Flotation
 4 25M Assisted Swim

~~4 X 25M Unified Relay~~

1 team 4 X 50M Relay
 4 teams 4 X 25M Relay

14 50M Freestyle
 19 25M Freestyle
 3 100M Freestyle

3 50M Backstroke
 5 25M Backstroke
 2 100M Backstroke

~~25 M Butterfly~~ ~~50M Butterfly~~

~~25M Breaststroke~~ ~~50M Breaststroke~~



Service animals
ONLY are
 allowed at
 S OSD events

This is a rolling schedule, i.e. times are estimates. As soon as one event is over the next will begin even if ahead of schedule. If an event is crossed through, there were no athletes registered and it will not be run.

Special Olympics South Dakota
Newsworthy:
timely. important. interesting.



STAY INFORMED!

Athletes, Coaches, Family Members, and anyone else with an interest in Special Olympics South Dakota, please sign-up to receive our weekly newsletter

NEWSWORTHY. This is your most efficient way to stay up to date on SOSD news, events, and information.

Newsworthy is published every Tuesday afternoon by Constant Contact.



**KEEP
CALM
AND
CHEER
ON**



WHAT:

SOSD invites you to participate in our Annual Step Challenge!

WHEN:

Annually. Our next Challenge will run from **May 11 - July 05, 2026.**

WHO:

Athletes, parents, unified partners, brothers, sisters... everyone is encouraged to participate.

How:

Registration will close **April 27, 2026.**



SCAN TO REGISTER 

2026

OUTSTANDING AWARDS

Please show your love for Special Olympics by nominating the deserving people in your life for an SOSD Outstanding Award!

Spirit of a Champion Award (Outstanding Athlete)

The nominated athlete must have attended at least one competition during the year.

Don Baker Award

The "Don Baker Award" is the highest honor presented by Special Olympics South Dakota. The award is given annually to an individual, organization, business, or agency that has given outstanding support to Special Olympics South Dakota.

Family Of The Year

Presented to family members – including parents; brothers; sisters; other relatives.

Outstanding Coach (Ron Stewart Award)

Presented to a Special Olympics Coach who best demonstrates a high degree of technical skill and personal commitment to their program.

Volunteer Of The Year (Lyle Farrand Award)

Presented to the person who has exhibited the best example of voluntary action to improve the quality of Special Olympics.

Champion Award (DJ Mertens Award)

Presented to any business, organization, or media outlet which has made a major contribution to Special Olympics South Dakota.

Unity Award

Presented to a Unified Partner, individual, or entity that promotes inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities.

All award recipients will be recognized at our State Bowling Tournament banquet held in November.

Only electronic nominations will be accepted and are due no later than May 21, 2026.

Contact Us

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Board of Directors

David Herbster - Sioux Falls (Chair)

Eric Tillman - Spearfish (Vice Chair)

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Peggy Heermann - Aberdeen

Chris Lather - Castlewood

Nancy Lehner - Jefferson

Jill Maliske - Rapid City

Amy Pipke - Rapid City

Duane Popham - Watertown

Paul Schmig - South Shore

Jeff Sheehan - Hayti

David Tanner - Rapid City

Jessica Weitschat - Pierre

Thank you for your service!

Schedule of Events 2026

April 24	BH Area Track & Field	Rapid City
April 24	NE Area Swimming	Watertown
April 24	SE Area Swimming	Sioux Falls
April 25	SE Area Track & Field	Brandon
May 1	NE Area Track & Field	Milbank
May 2	BH Area Swimming	Spearfish
May 14-16	State Summer Games	Spearfish
July 11	West River Equestrian	Rapid City
July 18	East River Equestrian	Watertown
August 15	SE Area Softball	Sioux Falls
August 15	BH Area Softball	Rapid City
August 16	SE Area Bocce	Sioux Falls
August 22	BH Area Bocce	Rapid City
August 23	NE Area Bocce	Lake Norden
September 18	Fall Classic (Bocce)	Rapid City
September 19 & 20	Fall Classic (Softball)	Rapid City
October 8	NE Area Unified Doubles	Brookings
October 9	NE Area Singles	Aberdeen
October 9	BH Area Singles	Rapid City
October 10	BH Area Unified Doubles	Rapid City
October 10	SE Area Singles	Sioux Falls
October 11	SE Area Unified Doubles	Sioux Falls
November 6-8	Traditional Bowling	Aberdeen
November 14 & 15	Unified Bowling	Sioux Falls

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ATTENTION ATHLETES!
 Your State Summer Games dance
 theme is Sports Teams



ATHLETE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

What is an Athlete Leadership Council?



We are a group of athletes who meet using a well-thought-out agenda to discuss Special Olympics topics important to us. We then make recommendations to program leadership. We have been organized and meeting since 2013. Three members of the ALC also serve on the SOSD Board of Directors.

Fellow athletes, if you have an idea or concern, talk to one of us... let's work together!

Meet your ALC members. We are here to serve YOU!



Zach Bevers
Brookings Area



Ashley Clark
Sioux Falls



Jamie Davey
Rapid City Flame



Trevor Hayes
Aberdeen Area HCE



Melissa Heckel
Spearfish Peaks



Grady Heffner
Huron Heartland
Hunters



Kyle Hegge
SESDAC Vermillion



Chris Hilla
Sioux Falls
Fireworks



Mari Ibis
Sioux Falls Lancers



Jaren Keiser
Sioux Falls Lancers



Natalia McCauley
Sturgis-BHSSC



Cody Menzel
Madison Area



Nick Mills
Sioux Falls
Fireworks



Derek Smith
Sioux Falls
Fireworks



David Tanner
Rapid City Storm



Correna Templar
Rapid City Patriots



Trevor Tridle
Sturgis-BHSSC



Jessica Weitschat
Pierre Wildcats



Lorraine Whiteman
Spearfish Peaks

THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS!

—— May others be as kind to you as you have been to us ——



**Let me win. But if I cannot win,
let me be brave in the attempt.**

Athlete Oath

SPECIAL THANKS TO THESE STATEWIDE PARTNERS



VFW Ladies Auxiliary



VFW



High School Coaches Association



American Legion Auxiliary



American Legion