



## SOHlghlights: August 2020 Edition

As we explore safe ways to return to the playing field we have expanded our newsletter to include more topics and information relevant to you - our Special Olympics ohana. Our new and expanded "SOHlghlights" newsletter will continue to provide information on health, fitness, and wellness, as well as upcoming events, fundraisers, and more. Thank you for your continued support of Special Olympics Hawaii!

[Visit our Website](#)

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### Athletes Compete in First-Ever, Virtual Aukake Fitness Classic

This year Special Olympics Hawai'i's Aukake Classic playing field looked a little different as athletes and coaches took the state competition online. On August 8, 50 athletes from across the state competed in the Aukake Fitness Classic virtually. The new format of training and competition consisted of eight weeks of online fitness training and virtual, Area and State competitions over Zoom! The fitness events included athletes and Unified teams of all abilities competing in push-ups, squats, and jumping jacks – including modified versions of each event – as well as shoulder press and air punching events for athletes that use wheelchairs.

Following the competition on August 8, law enforcement officers from around the state helped create a unique experience for participants by surprising athletes at their homes to award them with their medals and ribbons. Officers from the Hawaii Police Department, Maui Police Department, Kauai Police Department and Honolulu Police Department presented a total of 131 awards outside of athletes' homes – while wearing face masks and social distancing whenever possible.

Mahalo to all of the officers who participated and continue to positively impact the community during these challenging times!

[Click here](#) to watch some highlights from the Aukake Fitness Classic.

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### Help Keep the Flame of Hope Burning



Every year, thousands of off-duty, volunteer law enforcement officers from federal, state and county agencies commit to the role of "Guardian of the Flame" for thousands of Special Olympics athletes around the world. We are very proud of the law enforcement community who support our athletes in the annual First Hawaiian Bank Troy Barboza Law Enforcement Torch Run. This year, we are continuing the mission of the Torch Run online with our First Hawaiian Bank Virtual Torch Run. This now allows the entire Special Olympics Hawai'i ohana to help keep the Flame of Hope burning bright for our Special Olympics Hawai'i athletes.

Visit <https://give.classy.org/2020TorchRun> to make a donation to receive this year's 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Torch Run shirt. Supporters of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Hawai'i traditionally wear their commemorative shirts to show their commitment to our mission of serving individuals with intellectual disabilities in the community. In that sense, our Torch Run shirts serve as the same symbol as the Flame of Hope itself – unifying people by raising awareness for Special Olympics Hawai'i athletes. In addition, you can proudly represent

Hawaii in the Global Virtual Torch Run by taking a photo or video in your Torch Run shirt and visiting [LETR.org](http://LETR.org) for more information. Or you can send us your photo or video on [WeTransfer.com](http://WeTransfer.com) by emailing [torchrun@sohawaii.org](mailto:torchrun@sohawaii.org).

Special Olympics Hawaii has been able to bank on the loyal support of our friends at First Hawaiian Bank for over 27 years. In 1998, the company became the title sponsor of our First Hawaiian Bank Troy Barboza Law Enforcement Torch Run and, in 2007, they joined the elite ranks of our very top sponsors when they became a Mission Partner with our organization. Their generous support helps provide year-round opportunities for our athletes and families.

All proceeds that we receive from shirt sales will help to provide virtual and online programs to both serve our athletes and keep them safe during the pandemic. Funds will also help to ensure over 3,400 children and adults with intellectual disabilities can safely return to in-person training and competition by providing the necessary equipment and PPE for our athletes and coaches.

*\*please note this photo was taken prior to COVID-19\*.*

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## Get Pumped for the Return of Par Hawaii's Fueling Dreams!

The next time you need to fill up your car or grab a delicious bento at a nomnom store, you can help support the hopes and dreams of thousands of Hawaii's most talented athletes. From September 1 through November 30, Par Hawaii's annual Fueling Dreams fundraising campaign returns for its 15<sup>th</sup> year! Island drivers can make monetary, in-store donations to Special Olympics Hawaii at any participating nomnom store on Oahu, Hawaii Island and Maui.



"It is incredible to see Special Olympics Hawaii's steadfast commitment to safely provide life-changing opportunities for athletes throughout our islands especially during this challenging time," said Eric Lee, Par Hawaii's Vice President – Retail. "Our entire team has been very passionate about the organization and their work for decades. We appreciate the generosity of our customers to help fuel the dreams of these athletes by supporting creative ways for them to maintain strong connections with each other until it is safe to resume in-person competition."

Par Hawaii, marketer of Hele and 76 Hawaii, has been a strong supporter of Special Olympics Hawaii for nearly 30 years. To date, the Fueling Dreams campaign has raised more than \$867,758 for Special Olympics Hawaii athletes and programs.

*\*please note this photo was taken prior to COVID-19\**

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## Shop with Aloha During Your Next Foodland Grocery Run!



Calling all Maika'i Card holders! Foodland will run their "Give Aloha" campaign during the entire month of September, and your donation can have double the impact! This year, Foodland and the Western Union Foundation will match each donation up to a total of at least \$250,000 for all organizations combined. All you have to do is give your friendly Foodland, Foodland Farms or Sack N Save cashier your donation and our five-digit code, which is different depending on your area. The codes are: **Oahu: 77129, Maui: 78571, Kauai: 78566**. Customers are invited to make donations of up to a cumulative total of \$249 per person, per organization. On your next grocery run consider supporting our Special Olympics Hawaii athletes at checkout!

Give Aloha is an annual program through which Foodland directs its charitable giving to the organizations that are important to its customers. The program honors Maurice J. "Sully" Sullivan, founder of Foodland Super Market, Ltd., and continues his legacy of giving back to the community.

## Mahalo and Aloha to Jen!

The entire Special Olympics Hawaii ohana would like to send a heartfelt aloha to Jen Ernst. After nine years as the Healthy Community Manager and Area Director for Special Olympics Hawaii, she retired earlier this year. Jen's hard work and dedication greatly advanced our Healthy Athletes and MedFest programs, as well as established many fitness club partnerships. And we can't forget her favorite program — the Special Olympics Hawaii Tooth Brushing Program. The health of our athletes was her passion and what fueled that was her absolute love of our Special Olympics Hawaii athletes. She will greatly be missed!



## Welcome Walker and Nikki



We are excited to welcome two new members to our Special Olympics Hawaii ohana!

**Walker Rowsey** joins us as our new Healthy Community Manager. Walker is originally from Texas and received his bachelor's degree in Applied Science in Exercise and Sports Science from the University of Sydney. Walker's passion is in the study of obesity in individuals with intellectual disabilities. His energy is the perfect fit for our fitness programs in effect during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Nikki Antenucci** joined our team as the Oahu Regional Director this month. Nikki's previous work experience includes serving as a special education teacher at Waianae Elementary School. She is originally from Evergreen, Colorado and made her way to Walla Walla, Washington where she received a degree from Whitman College. Nikki's diverse background makes her the perfect fit for the Oahu Regional Director position.

Please join us in extending a welcome to our newest team members and we look forward to seeing their impact on our organization and programs.

## Special Acts of Aloha

### A BIG MAHALO to All of our Coaches, Volunteer Officials and Local Law Enforcement!

We'd like to thank all of our amazing coaches and volunteer officials that participated in our first-ever, virtual Aukake Fitness Classic. We're so thankful for everyone who helped to make this year's Aukake Fitness Classic a success. A special thank you to our local police officers from the Hawaii Police Department, Honolulu Police Department, Kauai Police Department and Maui Police Department for surprising our athletes after the competition and delivering their hard-earned medals.



**Mahalo for your support!**