



Special Olympics Hawai'i Newsletter: March 2026

Support Our Athletes

Mission Partners



Year-Round Partners



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A Global Medical Response Solution



Year-Round Supporters



What's Going On at Special Olympics Hawai'i?

Time to Pull Together for Something Big at This Year's Truck Pull & Spring Fest



There are only 15 spots remaining to participate in this year's Special Olympics Hawai'i Truck Pull and Spring Fest, Presented by Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawai'i. The event will take place on Saturday, April 18, 2026, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., at Ka Makana Ali'i where teams of eight will compete to see who can pull a 40,000-pound Coca-Cola semi-truck 30 feet in the fastest time. Registration is now open at bit.ly/SOH12026truckpullspringfest.

The Spring Fest will feature food and retail vendors, live entertainment, a first responder vehicle display, family-friendly activities and more. Admission to the event is free and spectators are

welcome.

Mahalo to Presenting Sponsor, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawai'i – The Odom Corporation, Silver Medal Sponsor, Phoenix Pacific Inc., Bronze Medal Sponsor, Aloha Roadway Services, Venue Sponsor, Ka Makana Ali'i, Media Partners, KHON2 and KSSK 92.3, and the Law Enforcement Torch Run for making this event possible.

Area Competitions Kick Off Across the Islands

Join us as athletes from across Hawai'i compete in Area Competitions, building skills, confidence, and community on the road to State Games:



April 11:
Big Island Powerlifting (IMUA Iron)
Maui Powerlifting (Hoomana)
Kauai Powerlifting (Keala Cross Fit)

April 18:
Big Island Track & Field (Keeau High School)
Kauai Track & Field (Island School)
Maui Track & Field (Kamehameha School)
Molokai Track & Field (Molokai High School)

April 19:
Oahu Powerlifting, Swimming and Track & Field (Punahou School)

April 25:
Big Island Softball (Old Airport)
Kauai Swimming (Kapaa Pool)

Volunteers Needed for Upcoming Preschool Play Days

Community members are invited to support our upcoming Preschool Play Days, fun-filled events which are designed to bring joy, movement, and connection to young children across Oahu.

We are currently seeking just a few additional volunteers to help support the Central Play Day, which is nearly fully staffed. However, there is still a significant need for volunteers for both our Nanakuli and Waipahu Play Days, where many positions remain open.

These events rely heavily on volunteers to help run activity stations, assist with setup and cleanup, and ensure a safe and welcoming environment for keiki and their families.

Email Dallas at volunteer@sohawaii.org to sign up.



Sponsor Feature: Nordic PCL Construction Inc.



We are proud to recognize Nordic PCL Construction Inc. as one of our newest Year-Round Supporters. In the past year, they contributed over \$26,800 and thanks to their generous support helped to make a meaningful impact on our athletes and programs statewide.

Nordic PCL Construction Inc. has been an active partner at many of our signature events, from serving as a Bronze Medal Sponsor of the Summer Games, and volunteering at the track finish line to cheer on athletes to supporting Cheer for Champions as an MVP Table Sponsor.

Their team spirit was also on full display at the inaugural Special Olympics Hawai'i Truck Pull and Spring Fest, Presented by Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawai'i, where they fielded three teams. They'll be returning in 2026 with three teams once again—Nordic PCL Field, Nordic PCL Office and Nordic PCL Wahine, the first and only all-women's truck pull team.

Mahalo to Vice President and District Manager, Mike Betz, for his leadership as chair of Special Olympics Hawai'i's Board of Directors and his continued commitment to our athletes.

Athlete Voices Help Shape Future Physicians at JABSOM

For the second consecutive year, athlete leaders from Special Olympics Hawai'i returned to the University of Hawai'i's John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) to help share their experience with the next generation of physicians. The collaboration, held during the medical school's "Disability Week" in February, focused on breaking down barriers to quality healthcare for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID).

The initiative kicked off on February 11 with a powerful presentation led by athlete leader Ian Kahalewai. Alongside health messengers Alice Webb and Reyse Sakima — and their mothers, Denise and Lynette — the group addressed the significant health disparities faced by the ID community. The group gave medical students a firsthand look at the challenges patients with ID encounter in clinical settings and offered practical guidance on how to provide respectful, inclusive, and effective care.



The partnership culminated on February 17 with a high-impact "simulated patient encounter." During this session, 15 athlete leaders worked directly with 78 medical students from across Oahu and Kauai. By acting as patients in simulated clinical scenarios, the athletes gave students a valuable opportunity to practice communication and interpersonal skills in a controlled, educational environment. These interactions help ensure that future doctors are better equipped to treat all patients with dignity and clinical excellence. This ongoing partnership highlights the vital role of health messengers — athletes trained to serve as health advocates and educators within their communities.

The Guardian: Law Enforcement Torch Run Kicks Off



On Friday, March 13, federal, state, and county law enforcement agencies gathered at the Honolulu Police Training Academy to kick off planning for this year's First Hawaiian Bank Troy Barboza Law Enforcement Torch Run.

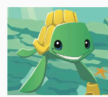
Mahalo to Chief Rade Vanic and the Honolulu Police Department for hosting this year's celebration, which was highlighted by a moving message from Special Olympics Hawai'i athlete Peter Gumataotao and his father, Pete.

The 2026 commemorative Torch Run shirt features a ti leaf (lā'ī) design, inspired by the plant's symbolism of protection, strength, and the sacred responsibility of carrying the Flame of Hope. Worn statewide, it serves as a visible symbol of inclusion and community support.

As the Flame of Hope travels across the state, our Guardians are lighting the way, showing every athlete they are celebrated and supported. For more

information on the Law Enforcement Torch Run or to purchase a shirt, contact Loren at development@sohawaii.org.

Join the Fun: Special Olympics Hawai'i Annual Young Athletes Event



young athletes™

2 through 7 year old children **with and without Intellectual Disabilities** are invited to the Special Olympics Hawai'i Young Athletes event. Activities for the day will focus on development of motor skills along with socialization through Play. We also promise tons of fun.

When: June 6, 2026
Where: University of Hawai'i Gymnasium 2
Time: 9:30a – 11:00a, check in at 9:00a

Young Athletes t-shirts will be provided for all youth participants along with a meal from our hospitality crew for the full family. Register early to guarantee your child's shirt size.

There is no cost to participate.

To register your child, **if you are new** please fill out the attached registration form or you can find it on our website at <https://sohawaii.org/initiatives/young-athletes/> and scan and e-mail the form to program@sohawaii.org **and if you are a returning participant**, just e-mail program@sohawaii.org on or before **May 10th**.

Health & Wellness Corner: Upcoming Events



SOHI FITNESS PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

"Achieving greatness is meeting one goal at a time"



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 *Balance, Flexibility, Strength & Training 3:30-4:30pm *Halehale walk 4:30pm	3 *POET Workout 3:30-4:30pm	4	5 *POET Workout 3:30-4:30pm	6	7
8	9 *Balance, Flexibility, Strength & Training 3:30-4:30pm *Halehale walk 4:30pm	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 *Balance, Flexibility, Strength & Training 3:30-4:30pm *Halehale walk 4:30pm	17	18	19 *POET Workout 3:30-4:30pm	20	21 *Tennis Clinic w/Jimmy Lange 10:00 - 11:30am
22	23 *Balance, Flexibility, Strength & Training 3:30-4:30pm *Halehale walk 4:30pm	24 *POET Workout 3:30-4:30pm	25 Garden Club 4:30-5:30pm	26 *POET Workout 3:30-4:30pm	27	28 *Yoga w/Sarah Sheppard 10:00 - 11:00am Young Athletes Lihala Elementary
29	30 *Balance, Flexibility, Strength & Training 3:30-4:30pm *Halehale walk 4:30pm	31 *POET Workout 3:30-4:30pm	*Balance, Flexibility, Strength & Training led by Nip Ho *Poet Workout - A Muscle Endurance & Agility workout *Sarah is the founder of Kakou Club *Jimmy Lange is with the USTA Hawaii Pacific Region			

To register for any of these classes, scan the QR Code below:



LOCATION: 91-610 MAUNAKAPU STREET, EWA BEACH, HAWAII 96706



Our Health & Wellness programs continue to offer opportunities for individuals and families to stay active, connected and engaged. Upcoming events will focus on promoting physical activity, well-being and community connection through fun, accessible experiences.

Click on the upcoming events below for a link to the online flyer:

[Kakou Club Yoga Class](#) - March 28

[Hawai'i Pacific University Softball/Baseball Clinic](#) - April 4

[USTA/SOHI Tennis Lessons](#) - April 15

[Pickleball Clinic](#) - April 18 and May 16

We encourage everyone to participate, whether you're looking to build healthy habits or spend time with others.



Help Hui 'O Hawai'i Get to the USA Games

Team Hui 'O Hawai'i is heading to the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games in Minneapolis! Our incredible delegation of athletes, Unified Partners, and coaches are ready to represent the islands from June 20-26, 2026—and you can help them on their journey.

Your support will help with travel, training, and competition expenses, making this once-in-a-lifetime experience possible. If you would like to make a donation, please visit bit.ly/hiuohawaii to support any of our athletes, coaches, sports, or the entire Hui 'O Hawai'i team.

Spread the Word: Seeing Inclusion in Action!

We are so excited to celebrate the amazing efforts of Liholiho Elementary, Hahaione Elementary, and Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School for hosting incredible Spread the Word events.

Traditionally held on the first Wednesday of March, Spread the Word is a student-led movement that encourages people to choose inclusion by using respectful language and creating welcoming environments for everyone, especially individuals with intellectual disabilities. It's all about taking the pledge, raising awareness, and turning kindness into action every day.



This year these three schools brought their respective campus together to promote inclusion, kindness, and acceptance for all. From a vibrant color run, where students celebrated unity through movement and school spirit, to fun-filled active play days featuring games and inclusive activities, it was inspiring to see these communities stand united and make a difference.



Cheer for Champions

Special Olympics Hawai'i's annual Cheer for Champions fundraiser will return on Friday, June 5, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the University of Hawai'i's Les Murakami Stadium. Sponsor a table or donate to the auction to be part of this inspiring evening. Contact Tracey at traceyb@sohawaii.org for more information.



Sub-port Jersey Mike's Subs Month of Giving

There is still time to support Jersey Mike's Subs Month of Giving! Make a sub-stantial difference in the month of March — when you order a sub and make a donation to help send Hui 'O Hawai'i to the USA Games!



Special Olympics Hawai'i in the News

Check out the latest headlines featuring Special Olympics Hawai'i!

- "Special Olympics Hawai'i, Jersey Mike's team up for trip to USA Games" on KHON2
- "Special Olympics Hawai'i's Truck Pull to return for second year" on Hawai'i News Now
- Truck Pull & Spring Fest in Midweek West Oahu Voice



Create a legacy of giving:
empower future athletes

DOWNLOAD ESTATE PLANNING TOOLS

Planned Giving

One of the most important gifts you can give to your family, friends and community is a future where each person is accepted and appreciated for their unique strengths. Learn more about how you can leave a lasting impact when you include Special Olympics Hawai'i in your will, by visiting bit.ly/plannedgivinghawaii.

Forward to a Friend

Connect With Us!

Share your Special Story

If you have a story about your involvement with Special Olympics Hawai'i – such as a volunteer, coach, official or family member – we would love to hear from you! Please email your story to our PR team at crystalclearcomms@gmail.com. We can't wait to see what kind of stories you'll share!

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