SOHlighlights: June 2020 Edition

As we explore safe ways to return to the playing field and new phases of re-opening continue throughout the state, we have expanded our newsletter to include more topics and information relevant to you -- our Special Olympics Hawaii ohana. Starting with this edition, our new and expanded “SOHlighlights” 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

Zoom Over to the NEW Aukake Fitness Classic on Aug 8!

This year our Aukake Classic playing field will look a little different as athletes take the competition online. To keep our Special Olympics Hawaii ohana safe and healthy we will replace the traditional Aukake Classic with a new, Aukake Fitness Classic! This new format of competition will consist of a virtual competition which includes classic fitness events for athletes and Unified teams of all abilities, and specific events for athletes that use wheelchairs.

Events include:
- Individual and Unified Team (one athlete and one partner) – Push-ups, Squats, and Jumping Jacks, including modified versions of each event.
- Wheelchair: Shoulder Press and Air Punching

Athletes must compete in their area competitions to qualify for the state competition on August 8. For more information on your area competition dates and times as well as details on how the virtual competition will be held, please visit www.sohawaii.org. We’re excited to launch this new event and we’re so excited to see you all compete – virtually!

School Relief Funding Helps Unify Our Schools

To keep our Unified Champion School athletes and partners engaged and supported through the COVID-19 pandemic, Special Olympics Hawaii was able to offer School Relief Funds, which aimed to help teachers provide access to alternative learning during this time. Special education classes were provided a small budget to help pay for supplies, materials and/or resources needed to make distance learning as smooth a transition as possible. Teachers were also encouraged to be creative and use the funds in any way that they felt would best benefit their students.

Waialua Elementary School chose to use their funds to start a Unified Fitness Club. The club models the Holoholo Club -- a walking program developed through the Special Olympics Hawaii SOFit program. The goal of the club is to help individuals stay in shape or get into better shape through a low impact and easy movement program. It is designed for the whole family to participate, not just Special Olympics athletes.

The belief is that if our families, friends and the community are involved and active, athletes are more motivated and likely to participate. We are excited for this creative use of relief funding and can’t wait to see the future of the new Unified Fitness Club -- way to go Waialua Elementary School!
Maui High School PE Teacher Receives HAHPERD Award!

Maui High School physical education teacher and Unified Champion Schools instructor, Jessica Adkins, was recently recognized as ‘Teacher of the Year’ by the Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (HAHPERD).

Jessica designs her physical education lessons to help students from all backgrounds and ability levels succeed. She is also an active Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program member as a Youth Ambassador Mentor and Head of Delegation. In this role she consults with educators within and beyond the state of Hawaii who are interested in bringing this program to their schools. [Click here for the full story.]

Wellness Corner: Don't Give Up!

This edition’s wellness tip comes from Special Olympics Neighbor Island Regional Director & Maui Area Director, Adrienne Laurion. While it may be difficult to stay motivated and keep up in your fitness journey during this time, Adrienne encourages everyone to try their best and to stay consistent with workouts.

To keep workouts fun and help with motivation Adrienne shares, “One of my favorite things to do on the weekend is to hike with my family. While hiking is a great way to get outside and exercise, don't forget to drink lots of water to stay hydrated.”

Special Acts of Aloha

Special Olympics Hawaii athlete Trevor Bierwert and his family sent us a thoughtful thank you card during the state lockdown to keep our spirits up. Trevor shared how much he enjoyed the Zoom session workouts and dance parties with his fellow athletes and even did all of the coloring on the card -- which makes it extra special!
Mahalo for your support!