

Triumph



Special Olympics New York • DECEMBER 2002



Awards Banquet Inspires Laughter and Tears

Athletes, volunteers and sponsors were honored for their dedication to the mission.

At first, firefighter Eugene “K-9” Kananowicz didn’t have an answer for the athlete who was looking for the “colorful captain” – the name the athlete gave the highly decorated firefighter who usually escorted his delegation at Metro Tournament.

“You know, the one with all the ribbons,” Kananowicz recalled the athlete’s description. “I knew he was talking about Patty. So I told him, ‘Patty’s not going to be around anymore.’ ‘That’s OK,’ the athlete said. ‘I’ll teach another one of the guys how to be a good parade marshal.’”

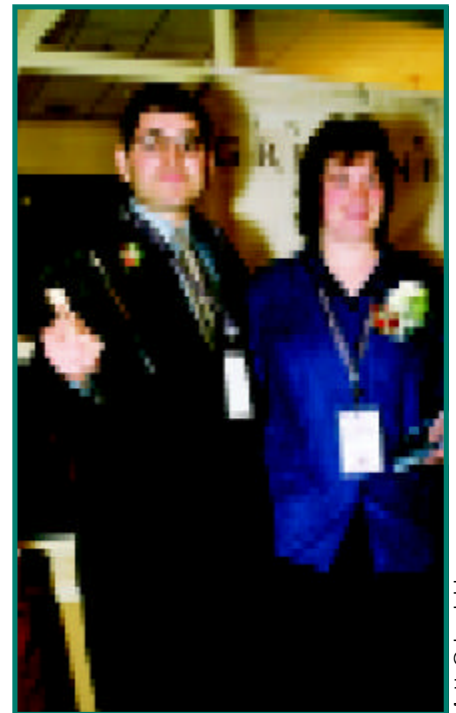
Kananowicz tearily told this story as he accepted the award for Outstanding Organization on behalf of the New York City Fire Department at the Board of

Directors Awards Banquet. The banquet was held Nov. 23, during the Fall Leadership Conference weekend in Saratoga Springs.

Patty, or Capt. Patrick Brown, was one of about 20 Metro Tournament volunteers who died in the World Trade Center collapse, and one of about 50 firefighters who regularly volunteer at the event.

The annual banquet brings together volunteers, sponsors, athletes and their families to celebrate the accomplishments of a few, while praising the thousands of people who they represent statewide.

When Male Athlete of the Year, Joe Pellecchia, walked up to the podium to accept his award, he was overwhelmed and nervous. But, sentence by sentence, he courageously thanked his coaches, parents



Matt Odendahl

Athletes of the Year Joe Pellecchia and Kim Richards share a moment in the spotlight.

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SONY Names New Vice President for Development

Rosemary Bruno will oversee all statewide fund-raising activities.

Rosemary A. Bruno, a professional fund-raiser with significant experience in event management, major gifts solicitation and corporate sponsor development, has been named vice president, Development, for Special Olympics New York.

Bruno, formerly of Silver Spring, Md., recently served as senior director of marketing at the national office of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in Maryland.

“We are very pleased to welcome a veteran fund-raiser like Rosemary Bruno to the Special Olympics New York team. She has a background of great sales and marketing success in the for-profit world, as



As the senior Development officer for Special Olympics New York, Bruno is respon-

well as a outstanding record of leadership in nonprofit organizations,” said Neal J. Johnson, president and chief executive officer. “Her experience as a manager, strategic planner and relationship builder fits perfectly with our organizational philosophy. We welcome her and wish her well.”

sible for creating, coordinating and monitoring the organization’s statewide, year-round fund-raising initiatives. Her duties include developing and managing major gifts, planned giving, corporate sponsorship and strategic planning programs.

“I am very honored to join the Special Olympics staff,” Bruno said. “I look forward to working with our athletes, volunteers and staff to achieve and advance the financial goals of the organization. We owe it to the athletes to find every means possible to improve the programs we offer to them. We can only reach our goals by making new friends and reminding our current friends how important they are to our athletes.” ■

What’s

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Find up-to-date information on our official Web site, www.specialolympicsnewyork.org.

A Message from the President

Neal J. Johnson is President & CEO of Special Olympics New York, Inc.



As we close the books on 2002 and turn our focus to the coming year, we find ourselves reflecting on our successes over the past 12 months while refreshing our resolve

to reach even more athletes, volunteers and supporters in the year ahead.

The past year provided challenges like never before to nonprofit service organizations all across the country. The economy has reeled for many reasons, and the manner in which people give to charities has undergone a trend shift to more personal giving.

Special Olympics will always benefit from an outstanding reputation of helping people with mental retardation reach their

personal and athletic goals. But it's our job and our duty to make sure that our current and potential sponsors and supporters, along with our many other friends, know about our athletes' successes. Through our athletes and their stories of triumph, we must reach out and tell their courageous stories.

We must introduce the public to people like Joe Pellecchia and Kim Richards, our Athletes of the Year (Pages 1 and 4). Life has presented them with many barriers. But they've gone over them, around them or through them to reach their goals.

We need our friends to know about Paul Asaro from Westchester County, who has been cycling 10, 20, even 30 miles at a clip for his chance to compete at the World Games in June. He will compete in Ireland, along with 27 other athletes from across

the state, who also have stories to tell.

Our friends also must know about a group of brave and inspiring athletes who recently took part in the Global Messenger training and thus made a commitment to do for Special Olympics what most humans dread, speak in public. As our ambassadors, these athletes will look the public in the eye and, with their words and deeds, tell the world that they are able, capable and deserving of respect.

Wherever there is a Special Olympics program, there will be a story like Joe's and Kim's. There will be a Paul Asaro and there will be Global Messengers. The athletes do their part by inspiring us with their spirit. The rest of us have the easy part – to make sure that spirit spreads throughout every community.

From all of us at SONY, we wish you a joyous holiday season. ■

2003 Calendar of Events



In the Next Issue...

Special Olympics New York calendar of events for 2003 will be published in the next Triumph issue and on the Web, www.specialolympicsnewyork.org.

JANUARY

- 11 Sections 4 & 5 Floor Hockey, Seneca Falls
- 18 Section 1 Floor Hockey, Javits Center, Manhattan

FEBRUARY

- TBD Fishkill Polar Plunge, TBD
- TBD Sections 1, 2 & 3 Winter Games, Saratoga Spa State Park
- 1 Section 2 – Floor Hockey, Montrose
- 9 Rochester Polar Plunge, Ontario Beach, Rochester
- 21-23 2003 Winter Games, Nevele Grande Resort, Ellenville

Training Schools
– Scheduled as needed throughout the year

TBD: For more details, please contact your Director of Field Services or the Special Olympics New York office.

Triumph

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Inspire Greatness

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Meet the Global Messenger Class of 2003



Steve Marshall

Emily, Tim, Easley, Melissa, Brianne, trainer Glenn Harrison, Valerie, Alyssa, Beth, Kim, Andrew and Noreen.

The new class of Sargent Shriver Global Messengers wowed an audience of Fall Conference-goers as they delivered their first official speeches as ambassadors of the movement.

The athletes completed their weekend of training and delivered their personalized addresses as part of a friendly initiation into the world of public speaking.

Beth Sherwood, 19, a new Global Messenger from Olean, Cattaraugus County, said she felt proud as she went through the training. She said Global Messengers are important to Special Olympics.

"If there are Global Messengers around New York then everyone around the state will know how much Special Olympics means to everybody," Sherwood said.

Global Messengers are athletes who are trained to represent

their fellow athletes and local programs. Besides speeches, the athletes participate in interviews, attend meetings and, in general, represent the abilities of all Special Olympics athletes.

For the fourth straight year, the training has been conducted by Glenn Harrison of Ballston Spa, president of Glenn Harrison & Associates. Harrison is a corporate trainer who provides Global Messenger training free of charge.

"I feel honored to partner with Special Olympics New York to provide Global Messenger training to these great athletes and outstanding people," said Harrison, "When you consider that public speaking is one of the most feared activities, then you can begin to appreciate the courage of a Special Olympics athlete." ■



High fives are given after each speech. Here Glenn Harrison congratulates Brianne Nobis.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS NEW YORK GLOBAL MESSENGERS CLASS OF 2003

Easley Bowens
Area 30, Brooklyn

Noreen Cox
Area 7, Dutchess County

Andrew Marshall
Area 19, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne and Yates Counties

Melissa McDonald
Area 26, Clinton and Essex Counties

Brienne Nobis
Area 8, Saratoga County

Tim Rabideau
Area 26, Clinton and Essex Counties

Kim Richards
Area 14, Broome and Tioga Counties

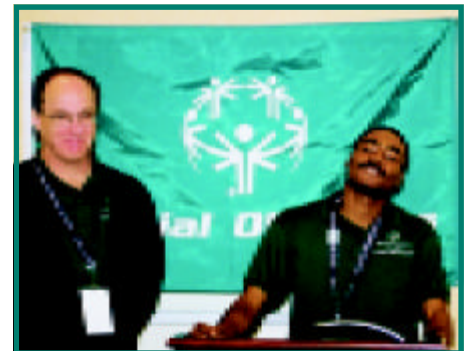
Valerie Romero
Area 1, Bronx

Alyssa Scroope
Long Island Region

Beth Sherwood
Area 25, Allegany and Cattaraugus Counties

Trudy Springer
Area 8, Saratoga County

Emily Stephen
Area 8, Saratoga County



Easley Bowens delivers his speech with his trademark charm.

Board of Directors Awards Announced



Dave Burgess, Ann McCarthy, the Willard family, Joe Pellecchia, Terry Stenzel, Jeff Blatnick, Kim Richards, Joe Tastrom, Linda Lovejoy and Eugene Kananowicz.

Male Athlete of the Year Giuseppe Pellecchia - Staten Island

Giuseppe "Joe" Pellecchia is everything a Special Olympics athlete strives to be. He is a walking, talking monument to the mission.

Until 10 years ago, a severe seizure disorder kept Joe on the sidelines, but he demonstrated an uncommon courage and joined Special Olympics anyway. Today, despite his medical condition, Joe trains year-round in Bowling, Floor Hockey, Softball, Swimming and Volleyball. His courage has led to confidence and his confidence has allowed him to, as the mission urges, experience joy.

"Joe has learned through his Special Olympics experiences that anything is possible as long as you are willing to work at it," said Beth Fromkin of Staten Island. "He has shown that he can be a leader, by example, for his fellow Special Olympics athletes."

Many things have become possible for Joe. He has competed at the local,

sectional, state and international levels. He has impressed his coaches and fellow athletes with his desire and resiliency. Now he is Athlete of the Year.

Female Athlete of the Year Kim Richards - Broome/Tioga Counties

Coaches always encourage athletes to remain focused and upbeat during times of challenge. However, that's one aspect of Special Olympics coaching that Kim Richards doesn't really need.

Kim, a Floor Hockey and Softball player from Area 14, joined Special Olympics eight years ago. Her career as an athlete has included many highlights, the brightest of which was her role as

pitcher on the 1999 Softball team that represented New York at the World Games in North Carolina.

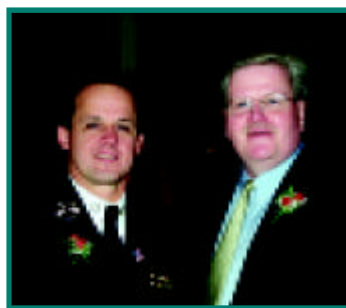
But it's her character and resilience on and off the field that distinguishes Kim. Two years ago, family circumstances resulted in Kim's inability to compete with her team, only train. Many times she waved good-bye to the bus that carried her teammates off to a competition. When it was OK to cry, she kept smiling.

She returned to competition in 2002, representing her Area on the Floor Hockey team at the Winter Games in Syracuse and earning a gold medal in Power Lifting at the Summer Games in Buffalo.

Next June Kim will travel with Team New York to the World Summer Games in Ireland. Congratulations, Kim, and welcome back.

Bryner Family of the Year Willard Family - Broome/Tioga Counties

The Willard family of Berkshire has been active in Special Olympics for nearly a quarter century. One could say the family eats, sleeps and preaches Special Olympics: They invite athletes to sleep over if there's an early morning departure for a competition; Jim, an ordained minister, plays chef at the annual Special Olympics picnic and always incorporates the values of the Special Olympics mission into his weekly sermons; Karen, a special education teacher, takes leadership in



Capt. "K-9" Kananowicz of FDNY, with Special Olympics New York President and Chief Executive Officer Neal J. Johnson.

Awards Banquet

Continued from P.1

and fellow athletes in Staten Island, where he trains.

For Kim Richards, 2003 promises to be even better than 2002. She will reign as Female Athlete of the Year, compete in Power Lifting at the World Summer Games in Ireland and she just completed training as a Global Messenger (Page 3).

I want to thank my coaches, Beth (Van Osten) and Jeanne (Finn), because they are the biggest part of what I have," Richards said as she accepted. "And I want to thank

all the Special Olympics people because if you don't have them you don't have anything."

Spotlights also shined on others that evening, including Wegmans Food Markets and Cingular Wireless, whose employees were honored. Olympic gold medalist Jeff Blatnick received the organization's highest honor for years of providing inspiration to the athletes. The Willard family of Area 14 earned the Family of the Year honors for their 25 years of devotion. David Burgess

and Joe Tastrom received the top awards for a volunteer and a coach, respectively, for their service to the athletes.

"It was a wonderful night all around," said Neal J. Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York. "Those who were honored truly care about our athletes and our organization. And the Athletes of the Year are a fine example of how important it is to keep doing what we're doing because it can have some amazing results." ■

transporting athletes to competitions and special events.

Jim even delivers the invocation at local, sectional and state competitions, and preaches the need for acceptance of people with disabilities.

Mark trains and competes in eight sports and is a mainstay on the Volleyball team.

Outstanding Organization FDNY

There were at least 343 reasons why the New York City Fire Department could have backed away from its commitment to the Metro Tournament. That's how many of their brothers and sisters died on Sept. 11, 2001, many of them volunteers at the annual competition in Harlem. But before

company has advertised aggressively on behalf of the athletes and created a work environment that encourages employee volunteerism and acceptance of all people with disabilities.

Dorothy Buehring Phillips Award Jeff Blatnick

For more than a decade, Olympic champion Jeff Blatnick has offered encouragement and inspiration to the athletes of Special Olympics New York, all while insisting there is little difference between the gold medal

he earned on a wrestling mat in Los Angeles in 1984 and the ones earned by Special Olympics athletes.

Jeff, the honorary coach for 40,000 athletes, not only understands the mission of Special Olympics and the effort put forth by each athlete, but over the years he has worked hard to make the public understands it, too.

"Jeff Blatnick personifies the goals that Dorothy Buehring Phillips envisioned for Special Olympics New York," said Board

Chairman Anthony J. Bifaro.

Herb Rosenblatt Award David Burgess

To understand the commitment of David Burgess and his team of medical volunteers is to understand a typical week in the command center at a statewide competition.

David arrives two to three days ahead of the athletes and never leaves until the last bus is gone. A normal weekend will include monitoring the weather, managing the EMS volunteers, dispensing medicines and coordinating the



Board member Lynn McCann, right, presented Wegmans with the award for Outstanding Corporation. Accepting were Ann McCarthy, left, and Linda Lovejoy.

communications between police, fire and medical personnel.

Outstanding Corporation Wegmans Food Markets

Over the years, Danny Wegman and the Wegmans family of employees have made Special Olympics a part of its family by donating food products locally and for statewide competitions, and volunteering to serve on organizing committees.

Consider what Wegman and Wegmans employees did for the Summer Games in Buffalo: Following a substantial leadership gift that inspired donations from across Western New York, employees either chaired or served on the Public Awareness, Development and Local Organizing committees, secured printers and other vendors to provide goods and services, ensured that more than 300 employees attended Opening Ceremonies and provided an array of in-store signage to promote the Games.

Outstanding Coach Joseph Tastrom - Ontario/Wayne/Seneca/Yates Counties

When the Ontario County ARC sports program was experiencing lean times, Joe Tastrom volunteered to coach the Softball team. His involvement in Special Olympics snowballed after that. Soon he found himself helping to revitalize the entire ARC sports program, which involved recruiting and training new coaches and reaching out to civic groups for donations of funds and equipment.

Since then, Joe has become the competition director for Area 19 and has helped to create training programs for Bocce, Golf, Roller-skating and Tennis. In addition, Joe has become a Global Messenger mentor to athlete and coach Joe Iaconis, who has delivered many inspiring speeches over the past two years. ■



Athletes of Special Olympics New York applaud Jeff Blatnick, Dorothy Buehring Phillips Award recipient.

2001 had ended, a call came from a long-time volunteer, offering himself and 50 firefighters for the 2002 Metro Tournament.

For the past five years, firefighters have volunteered at the Metro Tournament. They set up and tear down, serve as Parade Marshalls, provide the color guard and pipe and drum corps and their fireboat puts on water displays in the Hudson River.

Outstanding Statewide Corporate Sponsor Cingular Wireless

Three years ago, Cingular Wireless made a nationwide commitment to raise \$10 million annually through 2003 for Special Olympics. In the first two years alone, more than \$20 million was raised, including more than \$1 million in New York.

But the support of Cingular Wireless has gone beyond merely asking its customers to donate to Special Olympics. The



Board Chairman Tony Bifaro congratulates Dave Burgess for receiving the Herb Rosenblatt Award.

Around the State

Area 4 - Rockland County



Members of Rockland's Special Olympics Soccer league celebrated their 20th season last month at a dinner at the Italian American Club. Plaques were presented to Frank Russo, president of the Italian American Club, and Frank Mennuti, the club's house chairman, for their work with Special Olympics. The Soccer league is compiled of teams for the Hudson Valley DDSO, St. Agatha's, Clarkstown Public Schools, St. Dominick's and Westchester's DDSO. More than 100 athletes compete in an eight-week competition. The league is sponsored by the Italian American Club and the North Rockland Soccer Association.

Long Island Region

Half Hollow Hills High School in Commack played host to a Special Olympics Skills Tournament recently. The non-competitive event is an example of Long Island's youth outreach programs. The event is designed to help the children develop skills and athletic abilities while learning to compete in team and individual sports. Athlete and Global Messenger Craig Ludin addressed the crowd of athletes, parents, friends and community leaders during the Opening Ceremonies.

Please call, fax or e-mail your Area information to Doreen Hand, 212-661-3963, Fax: 212-661-4658, dhand@nyso.org

Melts In Your Heart

Special Olympics and M&M's will launch new promotion in early 2003.

In case you needed another reason to eat M&M's®, the candy maker and Special Olympics will soon partner on a promotion to raise awareness and funds for Special Olympics programs across the country.

During the months of February and March, the M&M's brand is launching the Find All Gold sweepstakes. Customers can win \$50,000 for themselves and another \$50,000 for their state's Special Olympics program by purchasing specially marked bags of M&M's Chocolate Candies. If you find a bag of all-gold M&M's, you win.

Ten bags filled with all-gold M&M's will be secretly placed wherever M&M's products are sold in the United States.

"On behalf of the M&M's Brand, Masterfoods USA is very excited about the partnership with Special Olympics," said Mark Mattia, vice president of marketing for the chocolate business development team. "Special Olympics and its athletes have inspired 'Red' and 'Yellow' to join them on the playing field to help make a difference."

The promotion will feature several public awareness initiatives, including a special online promotion and a primetime television advertisement featuring athletes and M&M's characters. Nearly all bags of



M&M's sold during this time period – roughly 200 million – will feature the Special Olympics USA logo and a description of the sweepstakes.

More information will be available on specialolympicsnewyork.org in January.

Special Olympics welcomes M&M'S Chocolate Candies, a Masterfoods USA Brand, as an Official Partner of Special Olympics USA and an Official Sponsor of Special Olympics Team USA, beginning in 2003 and continuing through 2004. ■

Niagara Mohawk Receives Honor from Area 10



Stacey Gioeli, a volunteer from Area 10, recently presented Mike Hynes of Niagara Mohawk Power Corp. (NiMo) a plaque in recognition of the support the company has provided to the Capital District's program throughout the year and for their promised support for the year to come. NiMo has supported Special Olympics New York throughout the state with in-kind donations of communication equipment for state and regional events, as well as program books and other printed materials. NiMo employees also have served on Games organizing committees. ■

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12.5 percent of each paid subscription is donated to Special Olympics New York.

Long Island Region Comes Together

New staff is hired, as the first Region prepares to flip the switch.

The pieces are coming together for the new Long Island Region. Long Island's Regional Director, Jeff McCausland,

has announced his new staff that will take the Region into 2003.

Joe Angelon has been hired as program director. Angelon, who will complete his Masters in Physical Education at Adelphi University this month, will oversee training and competition in Long Island. He previously worked at the Developmental Disabilities Institute in Smithtown as a fitness specialist.

Anne Monsees who has been working with Special Olympics — Suffolk County for three



years, will continue as a director of development for the region. Joining her in the department as a director is Joann Flick, who has worked in development for previous nonprofits, including Cancer Care of Long Island.

Completing the team is Lynn Rymer, also a veteran of the Suffolk County program. As administrative assistant, Rymer will support the entire regional staff.

The staff of the Long Island Region will also rely heavily on the volunteer input of the Regional Leadership Committee.

"I'm looking forward to working with this great team of people," said McCausland. "We're confident that we along with our volunteers can provide the athletes of Long Island with the high quality program that they deserve." ■



Matt Odendahl

The Regional Leadership Committee provides a strong foundation for the success of the region. The Long Island committee includes, from left, Regional Director Jeff McCausland and volunteers Nick Mort, Terry Uellendahl and Rich Zerach.

Letters

Editor's Note: The following is a letter from Special Olympics founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver in memory of Roone Arledge, who died December 5th.

Remembering Roone Arledge

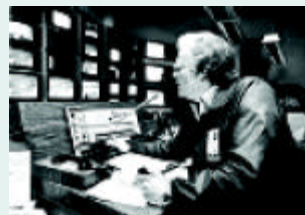
I wanted to let each of you know what a great friend the late Roone Arledge was to Special Olympics!

In 1972, Roone Arledge, then President of ABC Sports, aired a 15 minute segment of the 1972 Special Olympics World Games, which took place in Los Angeles, on the widely recognized and watched ABC Wide World of Sports. This was a first time a Special Olympics event was aired on a nationwide television



program and the first time in America that people with mental handicaps were highlighted in a positive way through sports.

Following this historic and landmark television airing, Special Olympics events were then aired on numerous other ABC Wide World of Sports programs, including a 45 minute segment on ABC which showcased the



1983 Special Olympics World Summer Games from Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Roone was a good friend and he will be missed. I hope that each of you will remember him for the contributions he brought to the Special Olympics movement.

— Eunice Kennedy Shriver

Submit letters to Doreen Hand, Special Olympics New York, 211 East 43rd Street, 12th Floor New York, NY 10017, e-mail: dhand@nyso.org.



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Mission: To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-style sports for children and adults with mental retardation, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.