

The Vision of the Athlete Input Council

Special Olympics
Arizona



The Vision of the Athlete Input Council

The Athlete Input Council is something that is brand new to Arizona so it may need some time to get off the ground. My vision for the Council is for it to grow into a group of people who make changes within the Special Olympics organization and help make Special Olympics better for the athletes that participate in the future with Special Olympics. We first need a good foundation of athletes to build upon to help the Council grow at a consistent rate. My job as Input Council Facilitator is to make sure that all members of the Input Council are doing their part within the group. Whether that means coming to the AIC meetings or recruiting more athletes to join the AIC. Once we have a solid State Level Input Council in place then we can begin to focus on implementing the Input Council in all areas of the state. Each area Council will have someone who is in charge of that area who will report to the leader of the State Input Council. The leaders of the area council will attend the State council meetings and together we will come up with ideas on how to better improve Special Olympics in that area.

An example of something that could be brought up at the state meetings is what is the major event that your area is focusing most of their time on. For another example, the Four Peaks area might have a golf tournament coming up in the next couple weeks. We would discuss how the planning of that is going and maybe how the leaders of the other Area Councils could help get the word out to their areas about the golf Tournament. We will also discuss what has been going on in each area since the last AIC meeting and maybe one area has been really struggling with some issue that has come up. The other areas could come up with solutions to try and help resolve the problem before it becomes a major issue.

Also we plan on having State Council meetings each of the major competitions throughout the year. For example we will have a meeting after winter games; this will be a time for each area leader to converse about what they enjoyed the most about the winter games and maybe what they would change for the next major event.

The Vision of the Athlete Input Council

Special Olympics
Arizona



Resources Needed:

The first resource needed for the Athlete Input Council is obviously the athletes. We are looking for athletes who could be leaders in this movement of athletes having a voice. We are looking for athletes who have a strong passion for Special Olympics and want to make the organization better as a whole. However it is equally important to have athletes who are willing to have an open mind to an idea that may conflict with their own ideas. We want the Input Council to be a team like atmosphere and that means athletes must be a team player and open to the ideas of others.

Another resource needed is an Input Council Facilitator who manages the group and makes sure that this is a positive experience for athletes both at the local and state level. Right now I am the Council Facilitator for the state Input Council but soon we will be choosing people to be leaders on the area councils.

Lastly, a great resource that is needed is the support of area directors and other staff members with Special Olympics. For example area Input Council leaders will be required to attend the State Input Council meetings. If these athletes have transportation issues that could cause them not to be able to attend than it will be the responsibility of the Area Director for that area to make sure that athlete makes it to the meeting. Also assistance from other staff members is requested in recruiting athletes to be on the Input Council. We will be looking for athletes who can be leaders in this movement of providing a voice to athletes. Staff members will recommend athletes to be on the Input Council who they think could work well with the other athletes on the Council to make Special Olympics even better than it already is.

How will the Input Council go from where it is now to something bigger in the future?

The first step is to lay a good foundation for the Input Council to grow upon. This means having the right athletes that will help that growth happen and having the right Facilitator to manage that growth. Also I believe that we need to find new ways to recruit athletes to be a part of the Input Council. If we do the same thing that we have been doing all our lives there is no chance for growth as an individual. I believe this is true for the Input Council as well. The most important thing needed to grow this Input Council is to realize that this organization as a whole is totally about the athletes and is dedicated to making certain that our athletes get the most out of our organization. The Input council is the perfect way to show our athletes that they are a large part of this organization and they do have opinions and that there opinion matters to us as an organization.