

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

May 23, 2011

Special Olympics Oklahoma Names 2011 Award Winners

Tulsa, Okla. Special Olympics Oklahoma proudly presented awards at the Special Olympics Oklahoma Summer Games Opening Ceremonies, May 11, 2011 at OSU's Gallagher Iba Arena in Stillwater.



HEATHER HANCOCK
2011 Athlete of the Year Award
(left to right) Heather Hancock and Barry Switzer,
Head Coach Special Olympics Oklahoma.

Athlete of the Year: The 2011 Athlete of the Year is Heather Hancock from the Capitol Area of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The award was presented by Barry Switzer, Head Coach, Special Olympics Oklahoma. Heather has been a Special Olympics Oklahoma athlete for 19 years. She has competed in basketball, golf, bocce, bowling and aquatics. She is employed by the Special Education Section of Oklahoma State Department of Education.



THE SMITH FAMILY
2011 Family of the Year
(Back row, left to right) James, Natalie, Samantha, and Lindsay Smith;
Linda McKown, Cox Communications.
(Front row, left to right) Billy, Emily and Quinton Smith.

Family of the Year: The 2011 Family of the Year is the Smith Family from the Great Plains Area in Geronimo, Oklahoma. The award was presented by Linda McKown, Cox Communications and Board Member of Special Olympics Oklahoma.

The Family of the Year shows outstanding dedication and family commitment to Special Olympics and their athlete. The Smith family--James and Natalie and their children Lindsay, Quinton, Billy, Samantha and Emily—have been involved with Special Olympics for eight years, with the entire family participating in Special Olympics. This year Samantha and her sister Emily were part of the entertainment at Opening Ceremonies. Samantha Rose is a singer/songwriter and sang a song that she wrote for Emily, her sister who competes in Special Olympics. Samantha sang while Emily danced.



TAYLOR BROWN
2011 Spirit Award
(left to right) Shawna, Taylor and Alan Brown;
Linda McKown, Cox Communications.

Spirit Award: The 2011 Spirit Award winner is Taylor Brown of the Boomer Sooner Area in Norman, Oklahoma. The Spirit Award was presented by Linda McKown, Cox Communications and Board Member of Special Olympics Oklahoma.

The Spirit Award recognizes a Special Olympics athlete who, despite serious challenges, has aspired to overcome and meet those challenges with grace and dignity, courage and determination. Taylor competes in Bowling and Track and Field. Lolietta Miller, Taylor's coach says, "No matter what Taylor faces, he is always smiling."



LOLIETA MILLER
2011 Coach of the Year Award
(left to right) Lolieta Miller and
Stan Clark, Eskimo Joe's Clothes.

Coach of the Year: The 2011 Coach of the Year is Lolieta Miller of the Boomer Sooner Area in Norman, Oklahoma. The Coach of the Year Award was presented by Stan Clark, Eskimo Joe's Clothes.

Special Olympics coaches spend countless hours training to make themselves better coaches and we acknowledge their hard work and sacrifice. Lolieta has coached for 15 years. She constantly puts the needs of her athletes in front of her own, from early morning departures to late night competitions.



KIANDRE GLASGOW
2011 Volunteer of the Year Award
(left to right) Stan Clark, Eskimo Joe's Clothes and
Kiandre Glasgow.

Fankhauser Volunteer of the Year: The 2011 Volunteer of the Year is Kiandre Glasgow of the Cherokee Strip Area in Enid, Oklahoma. The award was presented by Stan Clark, Eskimo Joe's Clothes. Kiandre is 19 years old and has been volunteering for 8 years. He has already established himself as an exceptional volunteer with Special Olympics athletes. He is a shining example of what a Special Olympics volunteer is all about.

Thousands of volunteers in Oklahoma work year-round to ensure the success of Special Olympics Oklahoma. With more than 120 events planned every year, the volunteer is extremely valued by Special Olympics Oklahoma.



WALMART
Synar Award for Excellence
(left to right) Carol Moralez, Walmart Marketing Manager
and Scott Moore, Ascent Healthcare Solutions and
board member of Special Olympics Oklahoma.

Synar Award for Excellence: This award is presented annually to a company that has dedicated itself in all aspects to Special Olympics Oklahoma. This year's recipient is Walmart, a Premier Sponsor of Special Olympics Oklahoma and Young Athletes "Stars of the Future" program. Carol Moralez, Marketing Manager, accepted the award on behalf of Walmart. Scott Moore, Ascent Healthcare Solutions and Board Member of Special Olympics Oklahoma made the award presentation.