

# EXECUTIVE POSITION PROFILE

## Chief Executive Officer

***Special  
Olympics  
Arizona***



This search is being conducted by:

**VettedSolutions**

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# I. Position Description

## The Opportunity

The **Chief Executive Officer** position with Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ) is an exciting opportunity to lead a well-established, successful nonprofit organization with an excellent brand and reputation. Building on a successful foundation, SOAZ is poised for continued growth both in program development and funding. SOAZ is known as a cutting-edge, innovative organization that frequently is the trend-setter and creator of programs that spread throughout Special Olympics International.

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Founded in 1975, Special Olympics Arizona believes that individuals with intellectual disabilities are far more capable in sports and physical activities than many medical experts think. Furthermore, SOAZ developed the first Healthy Athletes program which looks holistically at Special Olympics athletes and provides initiatives to ensure healthy minds, hearing, eyesight, and fitness.

Today, Special Olympics Arizona is a \$10 million organization that provides more than 25,000 athletes with training and competition 365 days a year, in 20 sports and more than 170 competitions. SOAZ was among the first organizations to adopt the Unified Sports® program which gives opportunities for

athletes from many sports to compete side by side with Special Olympic athletes. SOAZ's Unified Sports® Program won an award from Special Olympics International.

SOAZ has expanded programs throughout the state with high sensitivity and planning toward the geography, demographics, and culture of Arizona's various regions. Donors and volunteers are highly engaged with more than \$4 million being contributed in in-kind donations each year.

With a staff of nearly 30, a dedicated Board of Directors, and thousands of volunteers, SOAZ serves thousands of individuals with intellectual disabilities and helps them to have healthier and happier lives.



## Scope of Position

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for the organization's consistent achievement of its mission, revenue generation, financial objectives, and programs. Through effective relationship-building and volunteer development, the CEO will ensure Special Olympics Arizona maintains strong, positive relationships with private industry, community leaders, healthcare leaders, and sports organizations to further Special Olympics.

## Key Accountabilities

### In Overarching Strategy and Planning, the CEO will:

- Collaborate with the Board of Directors to develop, plan, and implement the strategic direction of the organization ensuring an outcome-based strategic plan is in place with appropriate annual metrics.
- Develop a dashboard or regular process to review the strategic plan, reporting progress to ensure priorities and resources align. With the Board's agreement, course correct as needed based on external environmental factors.
- Enhance SOAZ's already strong reputation and national positioning as the go-to source for innovative programs related to healthy athletes with intellectual disabilities.

### In Fundraising, the CEO will:

- Ensure an annual development plan with appropriate goals and performance metrics is in place. The CEO is actively engaged in fundraising and partners with the statewide development staff to implement the annual plan. The CEO is the strategic lead and active participant in all major gifts asks over \$100,000.
- Work to maintain and grow the in-kind donation support for SOAZ events and program activities.
- Ensure the optimal volunteer and staff structure to achieve the annual development goals.
- Work with the volunteer leadership of the Law



Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) to achieve its continued growth and rich heritage in the chapter. Ensure LETR continues to be the largest fundraising program year over year.

- Partner with the Board of Directors on fundraising for the new facility that SOAZ is planning and developing.
- Align key partners (LETR, Knights of Columbus, Education entities) with corporate partners.

### In Communications, Public Relations & Partnerships, the CEO will:

- Serve as a key internal and external spokesperson for SOAZ, in conjunction with the Board Chair, speaking for the organization to the media and public. Strengthen the relationships and funding with advocacy communities, healthcare communities, and funding communities.
- Lead efforts to enhance organizational positioning, image, and awareness, including further developing relationships with relevant partner organizations and corporations.
- Ensure regular and ongoing communications with SOAZ donors and constituent groups.



- Establish sound working relationships and collaborative agreements with community groups, related organizations, key influencers, donors, and corporate partners.
- Lead public relations efforts, in conjunction with the senior team, as it relates to mission-related activities and SOAZ events.
- Ensure communication plans are in place for SOAZ collateral material, website, electronic communication, and social media.

**In Governance, Talent Management, and Compliance, the CEO will:**

- Ensure the Board is kept fully informed on the condition of the organization and all relevant factors influencing it.
- Foster good communication up, down, and laterally within the governance and staff of the organization.
- Practice good talent management, adhering to best practices in human resource management, including leadership succession planning, employee engagement, staff development, organizational design, and talent acquisition. Ensure accountability across the organization through robust performance management.
- Cultivate an effective staff team with appropriate provisions for success within the framework of the strategic plan. Create individual staff development plans to allow a career path within SOAZ.

- Lead staff from a strategic level, mentoring and encouraging innovation and accountability. Provide vision and be naturally idea-provoking.
- Encourage active volunteer development and participation related to the mission, program, and fundraising goals of the organization.
- Work with staff to propose an annual organization budget for the Board of Directors' approval based on the SOAZ strategic plan. Accountable for financial stability, as well as regular reporting to the Board.
- Work with the Officers and Board of Directors on the planning of the new SOAZ facility as needed.
- Develop and implement enhanced technology and data security, risk management plan, policy, and controls.

**In Program Development and Advocacy, the CEO will:**

- Collaborate with the staff, Board, and volunteers, overseeing and managing the development and execution of program goals and tactics aligned with the strategic plan.
- Monitor state agencies and policy issues to ensure a proactive role in influencing policy or legislation that could affect SOAZ constituents.
- Encourage and leverage, with appropriate resources, constituent engagement in advocacy efforts aligned with SOAZ goals.
- Oversee development of SOAZ communications strategies related to programs.
- Engage volunteers and staff to oversee the development of learning resources, tools, and activities to enhance the information available for the Healthy Athletes program. Collaborate with healthcare professionals and healthcare organizations to provide holistic support to SOAZ athletes. Include all key constituency Healthy Athletes support and advisory groups as appropriate.
- Ensure the success of SOAZ's Unified Sports® Program as a hallmark feature of the organization. Oversee the volunteers and staff working with the athletes to ensure that the program remains cutting-edge and award-winning.

- Further develop and, as appropriate, sunset programs and advocacy initiatives as warranted by ROI and other metrics.

## Qualifications and Experience

To be successful, the next CEO of SOAZ will need to have a combination of leadership experience in either a nonprofit organization, professional association, corporate or healthcare setting that focuses on fundraising, program development, and volunteer engagement.

Specific qualifications include:

- A bachelor's degree or higher.
- Six to ten years of experience in a nonprofit senior leadership role or as a nonprofit CEO/ED.
- Experience with governance, volunteer development and volunteer leadership in a nonprofit association.
- Proven track record of strategic leadership, strategic planning, and accomplishment of annual goals.
- Record of achievement in fundraising in an organization with an annual budget of \$3 million or higher.
- Familiarity or connection to individuals with intellectual disabilities or athletic program experience a plus.

## Key Skills and Abilities

- Strong public spokesperson.
- Effective and transparent communicator with the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
- Brings constituents together around the Healthy Athletes program and support.
- Customer service orientation, exhibiting both internal hospitality and external customer satisfaction.
- Strong financial management, ability to measure ROI, forecasting, and business sustainability skills.

- Visionary who can see the big picture and motivate staff, volunteers, donors and key constituents toward a shared vision.
- Strategic thinker who can develop and follow the strategic plan.

## Personal and Professional Qualities

- Acts ethically to safeguard confidential information and to adhere to the SOAZ mission and core values.
- Builds a sense of shared purpose and commitment in staff, volunteers, donors, and key influencers.
- Positions SOAZ for the future, looking beyond the current positioning and envisioning strategic expansion, including but not limited to, conducting SWOT and risk management analyses for the organization.
- Continuously surveys critical external trends, market demands, and industry changes.
- Guides and mentors others in performing effectively and in providing professional development opportunities leading to a career path within SOAZ.
- Networks outside and inside the organization and the field to build positive strategic relationships in keeping with the SOAZ strategic plan.
- Addresses problems and challenges, uses critical-thinking in moving beyond the standard methods and solutions, keeping SOAZ cutting-edge and ahead of the curve.
- Practices life-long learning, willing to implement new concepts, technologies, and methods.
- An open and honest communicator who brings all relevant information, both good and bad, to the Board of Directors in a timely fashion.
- A hard worker but able to model a work-life balance.



## Measures of Success

After one year, the CEO will have:

- In-depth knowledge of the organization, its events, programs and annual performance metrics.
- Initiated the process to establish a new strategic plan demonstrating excellent skills in navigating the SOAZ landscape and focusing on desired outcomes.
- Established relationships of trust with the staff, Board, volunteer leaders and donors.
- Ensured an annual operational and development plan until the completion of the new strategic plan.
- Assessed infrastructure and staff structure to ensure the continued success of SOAZ.
- Positioned SOAZ for an even more successful future and continued growth.
- Established a presence with key constituencies and as the spokesperson for SOAZ.
- Met annual fundraising goals.

After three years, the CEO will have:

- Implemented the newly established strategic plan with metrics. In conjunction with the staff team, developed the annual operational plan with staff goals and objectives.
- Consistently met annual fundraising growth goals.
- Ensured that SOAZ remains the undisputed leader in Unified Programs, in sports, arts and other future areas. Understands, embraces, plans and implements the SOAZ Unified agenda.
- Enhanced the image and position of SOAZ so that it is an undisputed leader in Special Olympics International.
- Expanded the Healthy Athletes and Unified Sports® Programs.
- Built a welcoming, results-oriented team culture among both volunteers and staff.

## II. Organization Review

### About Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ)

#### The Vision

Special Olympics is an unprecedented global movement, which, through quality sports training and competition, improves the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, and, in turn, the lives of everyone they touch. Special Olympics empowers people with intellectual disabilities to realize their full potential and develop their skills through year-round sports training and competition. As a result, Special Olympics athletes become fulfilled and productive members of their families and the communities in which they live. Special Olympics is an experience that is energizing, healthy, skillful, welcoming and joyful. Today, Special Olympics stands as a leader in the field of intellectual disability and has sharpened the focus on its mission as not just "nice," but critical, not just as a sports organization for people with intellectual disabilities, but also as an effective catalyst for social change. Children and adults with intellectual disabilities, who participate in Special Olympics exhibit boundless courage and enthusiasm, enjoy the rewards of friendship, and ultimately discover not only new abilities and talents but "their voices" as well.

#### The Mission

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

SOAZ believes in Innovation and Impact and through the Sports, Unified, Health, Law Enforcement Torch Run, and Leadership programs serves over 25,000 participants each year. SOAZ continues to be globally recognized for having innovative and impactful programs for individuals with and without intellectual disabilities.



SOAZ holds itself accountable to grow at an incredible rate and has more than tripled participation in the past six years. Through this tremendous growth cycle, SOAZ has maintained its accountability to donors and partners.

#### Programs Overview

##### Athlete Leadership Program:

Includes Athlete Input Council, Athlete Employment Project, and SOAR (Special Olympics Advocacy Resources)

##### Health Programs:

Includes Healthy LEAP (Lifestyle Education at Practice), Healthy Athletes, SOfit, and the Health Leadership Committee

##### Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics:

The largest fundraiser for SOAZ involving many different branches of law enforcement statewide

##### Unified Champion Schools®:

Includes Unified Sports®, Inclusive Youth Leadership, and Whole School Engagement

##### Young Athletes Program™

Innovative sports and play program for children 2½–7 years old.

#### Sports and Competitions

##### Traditional Sports Training and Competition:

Special Olympics Arizona offers training and competition for children and adults with intellectual



disabilities who are 8 years or older in 20 sports: Alpine Skiing, Swimming, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Bocce, Bowling, Cheerleading, Cross Country Skiing, Equestrian, Flag Football, Floor Ball, Golf, Powerlifting, Snowboarding, Snowshoeing, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, and Volleyball. Currently, there are 292 delegations across Arizona serving 25,000 participants.

### **Unified Sports®**

Unified Sports® is an inclusive program, which combines individuals with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and individuals without intellectual disabilities (unified partners) on sports teams for training and competition. Athletes and partners compete alongside one another, each in a meaningful and integral role on the Unified Sports® team, creating unique teammate bonds through sports experiences like any other sports team. Participation in Unified Sports® leads to new friendships, improved self-esteem and positive changes in attitude, behavior, and performance.

### **Area Competitions**

Special Olympics Arizona requires athletes to train for a minimum of 8 weeks before registering for area or regional competitions. Participation at the area level is required for statewide competitions. More than 100 area sports competitions are held annually throughout Arizona.

## **Special Olympics Arizona – Support Services Office**

Administration/Finance/Programs/Competitions  
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Phoenix, AZ 85043  
(Tel) 602-230-1200  
(Fax) 602-230-1110

*Web Presence:* [specialolympicsarizona.org](http://specialolympicsarizona.org)  
*Social Media Presence:* Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube

## **SOAZ Board of Directors**

### **Board Chair**

- **Douglas Steele**, City of Peoria Police Department

### **Board Officers**

- **Tom O'Malley**, JDM Partners, LLC, Past Chair
- **Jim Pitman**, Phoenix Suns, Treasurer
- **Susan Boswell**, Quarles & Brady LLP, Secretary
- **Dr. Rena Szabo**, Banner Medical Group, Medical Advisory Council Chair
- **Chas Harvick**, FTI Consulting, Executive Committee Member at large
- **Cullen Maxey**, Arizona Diamondbacks, Engagement Committee, Chair

### **Board of Directors**

- **Raymond Brown**, Community Leader
- **Lynda Christel**, Mayo Clinic
- **Ryan Duncan**, Nathan & Associates, Inc.
- **David Funkhouser**, Quarles & Brady LLP
- **Greg Geist**, Wells Fargo
- **Tom Hatton**, Mountainside Fitness
- **Todd Jones**, Snell & Wilmer LLP
- **Robin Lea-Amos**, Arizona Sports & Tourism Authority
- **Christi Lundeen**, Mercy Care Plan
- **Jeff Moloznik**, Red Development
- **Darren Moore**, UPS
- **Amy Chriswell Pawlowski**, UnitedHealth Group, United HealthCare
- **Barry Saunders**, Express Interlock LLC
- **Eric Schechter**, Great American Merchandise & Events
- **Sheila Schmidt**, Ryan Companies
- **Naman Shah**, Neudesic LLC
- **Rudy Sleiman**, Deloitte
- **James Stover**, Cenpatico Integrated Care
- **Casey Strunk**, Strunk Insurance Group, Inc.
- **James Tucker**, Special Olympics Arizona Athlete & Global Messenger
- **Michael Warren**, Michael A. Warren D.D.S & Associates

## III. To Apply

All interested parties should apply on the Current Searches page at:  
[www.vettedolutions.com](http://www.vettedolutions.com)

Please include a cover letter specifically tied to the qualifications, experiences and personal characteristics outlined in this position profile along with a chronologically organized resume.

Thank you for your interest in SOAZ and the position of CEO.

## IV. About Vetted Solutions

**Vetted Solutions** is a Washington, D.C. based executive search firm specializing in association, nonprofit, and hospitality/destination marketing community recruiting and consulting. We focus on CEO and senior staff positions.



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