



2019-20 NADIIAA Special Olympic Activity Award Nominations

NADIIAA: Special Olympics Activity Award Nomination Form

Institution:

Averett University

Conference Affiliation/Independent:

USA South Athletic Conference

Please Provide a Brief Overall Description of the Activity/Project:**Description:**

Each year, Averett Athletics hosts the Special Olympians of the Piedmont region in Virginia for a Fall Fun Day. Our sport teams set up stations and our student-athletes gets paired up with a Special-Olympian. For each accomplished task, the Special-Olympians get a sticker on the card they received at check-in. The Special-Olympians get the chance to try new sports or to play the sport they love with our student-athletes.

To celebrate the Special Olympics 50-year anniversary, we invited Roger Johnson to come speak to our student-athletes. As a Special Olympics Global Messenger, Roger, who has cerebral palsy, shared his story, going over his background and involvement with Special Olympics. He reminded us that it is a privilege to be a collegiate student-athlete, and that no matter what limitations you may have, you can always find a way to overcome that and make a difference in sports and your everyday lives.

Objective:

To provide a fun day for the Special Olympians in our region by sharing the love and passion we have for our sports by pairing them with our student-athletes to make them feel involved and give them an experience of each of our sports here at Averett. This also gives our student-athletes a way to interact with the community and make a difference in these Special Olympians' lives.

How has this project impacted campus or local community or target audience:

The impact of these fall Special Olympics events was huge for our student-athletes. Starting off the year listening to Roger's story was very humbling because of everything he has gone through and everything he has overcome to become a difference maker in the community. Being able to spend time with a Special Olympian one month later gives our students a great perspective and appreciation of what they have, while also providing a day of care-free fun, games and laughs for the Special Olympians themselves.

Being able to host an event that is growing from year-to-year and having Special Olympics groups from all over the region returning each year is a great testament to the event itself, but even more so to our student-athletes, who are making our institution so proud in the way they interact with the Special Olympians.

After Roger's speech, each student-athlete pledged they will not take the opportunity of participating in collegiate athletics for granted

Approximate Number of Student-Athletes Participating in the Project/Activity:

350

Student-Athlete Group(s) Involved in the Project/Activity:

All 18 sports teams at Averett

Dates or Duration of the Project/Activity (e.g., days, weeks, months):

September 11th, 2018.

Community or Population Served by the Project/Activity:

115 Special Olympians from all over the Piedmont region, VA.

Additional Information via Website URL

<https://averettcougars.com/news/2018/9/13/general-news-video-averett-student-athletes-host-annual-special-olympics-fun-day.aspx>