

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CENTRE COUNTY VOLUNTEER BELLAMARIE BREGAR INDUCTED INTO SPECIAL OLYMPICS PENNSYLVANIA HALL OF FAME**

(Norristown, PA, August 29, 2019) – Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) recently inducted four new members (two athletes and two volunteers) into its Hall of Fame as members of the Class of 2019. Among the inductees was Bellamarie Bregar, a Centre County volunteer who has been participating in Special Olympics for more than 27 years. The Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held during SOPA’s annual Leadership Conference Banquet at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center in State College, PA on Saturday, August 17, 2019.

In 1992, Bregar started the Gerry Ryan track meet in memory of a deceased co-manager of Centre County Special Olympics and still runs it to this day. She’s served as a ski coach since 1991, is integral in planning the Beaver Stadium Run, and during her time with Special Olympics Pennsylvania has held roles as a local program manager, head of delegation, athlete turned coach mentor, local program outreach coordinator, event coordinator and task force member. In addition, she co-wrote a grant to start the ‘Acres Project’ which included buying property to help those on the autism spectrum with employment and to provide social opportunities. She was named one of the “Top 100 People” in the community by Pennsylvania Business Central in 2017.

As soon as Bregar retired, she jumped directly into being Centre County’s Manager. Regardless of what’s happening in her life, she makes Special Olympics her priority. Bregar has mastered the art of developing connections throughout her circle. That helps set the stage for athletes to improve their lives in school, on the job, on the playing field or in the stands cheering on their favorite Penn State athletes. Despite dealing with a health issue this past year, Bregar’s commitment to her program hasn’t wavered.

“She works tirelessly to ensure that all who are eligible can find their way to participating in sports training and competition offered by Special Olympics,” said Pieter Ouwehand, a Centre County volunteer. “Her passion for serving others inspires us all to get involved in improving the quality of life for everyone in our community.”

#### **About The Hall of Fame Awards**

The Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) Hall of Fame awards honors athletes and volunteers who have made outstanding contributions both on and off the field of competition. This prestigious event is held during our annual Leadership Conference and Banquet in State College, PA. Learn more at <https://specialolympicspa.org/events/hall-of-fame>

#### **About Special Olympics Pennsylvania**

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to nearly 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For more information, visit: [www.specialolympicspa.org](http://www.specialolympicspa.org).

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