

Born to be brave

“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.”

This is the Special Olympic athlete’s oath that was first recited July 20, 1968 at the opening ceremony of the very first Special Olympics International Games.

Since that day, more than four million Special Olympic athletes have bravely trained and competed to beat all odds.

Although this year’s Winter World Games are held in March, one University of Toledo fraternity decided to hold their very own Olympics this month. Sigma Phi Epsilon hosted the second annual UT Olympics Sunday, Feb. 26 from 12–5 p.m. in a campus-wide event that encouraged athletes of all kinds to come out and compete.

This multisport tournament included volleyball, indoor soccer and basketball. The majority of the Interfraternity Council and Panhel Council organizations at UT participated in the event. Each organization paid a \$25 fee and each individual participant paid \$5 to compete.

Jacob Lohr, member of Sigma Phi Epsilon and director of this year’s UT Olympics, said that, even though there were medals and prizes, these things were not the main focus of the event, but rather, helping the Special Olympians shine.

“The purpose of the event was to raise funds and awareness for people with disabilities and give them a time to shine,” Lohr said. “The three athletes that came to the event had an absolute blast and are excited to return next year.”

All funds raised from the event were directly donated to the Lucas County Special Olympics, a non-profit agency that provides sporting opportunities to athletes that are

determined eligible for Lucas County Board of Developmental Disability Services.

Three athletes from LCSO – Terrance, Craig and Zach – came out to meet the students and compete in the games with them.

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.”

Lohr, who was in charge of reaching out to organizations, creating a planning committee, creating an account to raise funds and reserving the Student Recreation Center, said that, even though he will not be the event director next year, he still wants to help host this event in the years to come.

“I would love to have this event next year and make it better than ever,” he said. “I want to pass the torch down to someone else who holds the same amount of passion for philanthropy as my chapter does. I will be on the committee again and help out in any way possible.”

The event helped to raise more than \$2,500, which will be used to fund athletes at LCSO.