



Lindsay Robinson/The Pendulum

Athletes and volunteers alike enjoyed a day in the sun at the Special Olympics.

A day at the Olympics

Volunteers abound for the event

Angel Herlihy
The Pendulum

Unlike last year, sunshine and blue skies greeted the 300 athletes from Alamance County as they arrived for the Special Olympics on Friday, April 10.

These individuals, both adults and children, participated in a variety of track and field events at Bakatsias soccer field.

Each athlete was paired with an Elon volunteer who was in charge of making sure he got to his events on time.

Some athletes had as many as two or three volunteers due to the amount of people who volunteered their time. "There were 438 Elon students that volunteered to help this year," said Kevin Shytle, a volunteer coordinator. "That's the most we've ever had."

Excitement filled the air as Special Olympian, Shawn Majors, lit the Olympic torch during the opening ceremonies to begin the games.



Lindsay Robinson/The Pendulum
Athletes and volunteer buddy-up.

Smiles lit up the faces of not only the athletes, but also the volunteers and spectators.

Jim Drummond, the Elon representative for the Olympics Committee, said, "The atmosphere of the day was extremely upbeat and compassionate. There were nothing but pervasive feelings of fun and excitement."

Susan Martin, a junior volunteer, said, "We all had a great time. The volunteers seemed almost as excited as the athletes themselves."

Martin said that the friendship she formed with her athlete, J.J.

Florence, was one that made a lasting impression.

The games ended at 12:30 p.m. and afterwards a dance was held for the athletes under the big tent on the field.

As the day came to a close, everyone formed a circle around the soccer field, joined hands and sang to Whitney Houston's song, "The Greatest Love of All."



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"Let Me Win... But If I Cannot Win... Let Me Be Brave In The Attempt," is the Special Olympic's oath.

"Regardless of who won first place in the events, everyone of the athletes left here today as winners," said Judy Thompson, Special Olympics Coordinator of Alamance County Recreation.



Penny Stevenson/The Pendulum

Athletes participate in a dance following the games.



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David Ward and junior volunteer Melissa Laughlin relax on the grass.