



Fitness Advisory Committee Member Bios and Contact Information



Cecilia Ancalmo

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Since 2016, Cecilia has served as the Development Officer of International Tennis Federation (ITF) for the Central American and Spanish speaking countries in the Caribbean Region. Cecilia is a member of the Tennis Advisory Committee of Special Olympics Latin America. Prior to working for ITF, she served as the Technical Director for COTECC (Tennis Confederation of Central America and the Caribbean) from 2000 to 2016. From 1992 to 2009 she worked for El Salvador Tennis Federation. As Technical Director from 2003 to 2009, and as Director of Development from 1992 to 2002. She has served as an International Technical Delegate for the Tennis Event of the Pan American Games 2011 and 2015 as well as for the Central American and Caribbean Games in 2010, 2014, 2018, and 2023. She is currently studying for her Master in Physical Activity: Training and Sports Management at the European University of the Atlantic and holds a Master in Education and the specialty of Family Educational Counseling of the Villanueva University Center, Attached to the Complutense University of Madrid. Additionally, she has served as the tutor of the ITF Play Tennis Course, which she has taught in Central America on many occasions, as well as the ITF Workshop for Parents of Tennis Players since 2020. She has taught courses to parents in Central America, Mexico and the Dominican Republic.

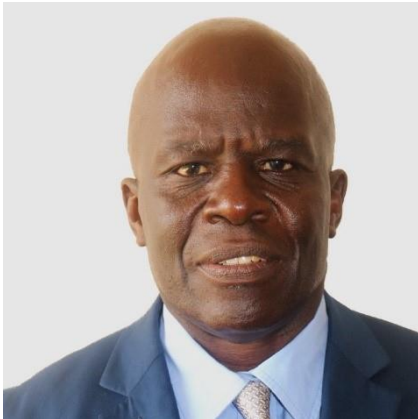


Dr. Linda Bandini

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Linda Bandini, PhD, RD is a Professor of Pediatrics at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center/University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School and Adjunct Clinical Professor in the Department of Health Sciences at Boston University. Her research is focused on health promotion for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Dr. Bandini has conducted studies on dietary intake, physical activity, and weight management in this population. She is the Principal Investigator of the Healthy Weight Research Network for Children with Autism and Developmental Disabilities (HWRN), funded by the

Maternal and Child Health Bureau. She is also the Director of Nutrition for the UMass Chan-Shriver Center LEND program where she oversees the development of a nutrition education curriculum for adolescents and young adults with I/DD and supervises nutrition students in experiential learning with the I/DD population.



Peter Bukhala

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Prof. Peter Bukhala holds a Master's degree from McGill University- Canada and a PhD in Disability studies from Kenyatta University –Kenya. His expertise is in programme planning for inclusive physical activities. He was instrumental in the development of the Camp Shriver sports programmes at Kenyatta University that provides inclusive opportunities for youngsters with and without disabilities to interact and acquire sports skills. He was a Eunice Kennedy Shriver Fellow (2009) and a member of the Global steering committee for

the development of the Special Olympics International Strategic Plan: 2010-2015. Prof. Bukhala was a member of the International Paralympic Committee Sports Science Committee: 2010-2014 representing the African region. He is a Board member of the International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity (IFAPA) representing the African region, a member of the Inter-University Council of East Africa on the development of benchmarks for sports education.

Prof. Bukhala teaches disability sports and has supervised and mentored students in sports science at Masters and PhD levels. Prof. Bukhala is currently the Director, Research and Postgraduate Support and Associate Professor in the Department of Health Promotion and Sports Science (MMUST). In this capacity he has attracted substantial grants to MMUST and developed networks between the community and the University. He is a visiting Professor in the IMAPA programme at Katholieke University - Leuven, Belgium. Locally, he is a member of the County Government of Kakamega Sports Committee where he chairs the Youth Empowerment Fund. He is also the Chair to the Ikolomani Constituency Sports Committee. His current research interest is in the development of sports programmes targeting inclusive community engagement in sports.

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Catherine Carty

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Catherine is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair Manager in Inclusive Sport in MTU. She leads a global consortium to advance the inclusive policy actions of UNESCO's sport work. She focuses on advancing human rights, sustainable development and the principle of no one left behind. Catherine led a three-day session at Expo2020 Dubai on this topic bringing together UN and multi-lateral agencies, Governments, the Sports Sector, development banks, and human rights institutions. Catherine is strategically involved in advancing UNESCO's Fit for Life flagship. She was on the guidelines development group of WHO's 2020 Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines. She chaired the disability subgroup. Catherine sits on the steering group for Measuring Sports Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals; the advisory group of the Centre of Sport and Human Rights; the UN Interagency Group for Sport for Development and Peace; the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network; #WeThe15 Steering Group, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) towards an integrated policy approach advisory group.



Carol Curtin, MSW, PhD

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Carol Curtin, PhD serves as the Associate Director of the University of Massachusetts Medical School Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center in addition to her roles as Director of the Shriver Center's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) programs. She is also Co-Director of the MCHB-funded Healthy Weight Research Network (HWRN). She is a Professor in the UMMS Departments of Family Medicine & Community Health and Psychiatry at the Medical School, and a faculty member of the

UMMS Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Dr. Curtin also maintains faculty appointments in the Department of Pediatrics at Tufts University School of Medicine and at the Moakley Center for Public Management at Suffolk University.

Dr. Curtin has over 35 years of experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities/psychiatric disorders and their families in a variety of settings and using a variety of clinical modalities. She has extensive management and leadership experience, having directed programs in clinical, academic, and research settings. Her

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research is focused on health promotion with an emphasis on identifying unique modifiable risk factors for obesity in populations of children and adults with disabilities and devising targeted and tailored interventions to meet their needs. She has served as a PI or Co-Investigator on private and federally-funded projects that have included epidemiological studies on the prevalence of obesity in disabled populations, weight loss and physical activity interventions for adolescents with ID and autism, and observational studies on physical activity, dietary patterns, and/or obesity in children with a varied developmental disabilities.



Ayoub Deboub

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Ayoub is a Special Olympics Health Messenger and participates in swimming and football for Special Olympics Ireland. He is passionate about fitness because it makes him feel good and more active. He enjoys being a special Olympics athlete because he likes playing in competitions with his team and having fun. If he is not competing, he tends to go to the gym or create motivational speaking videos on YouTube.



Kilian Fisher

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Kilian Fisher is Director of International Public Affairs, IHRSA, The Global Health & Fitness Association and Manager– Global Health & Fitness Alliance, Standards, Inclusive Health, Fitness, Sports, Physical Activity, Aquatics; Director Spa Life International; Non Executive Director (NED) on Charity Boards. He is a member of the IHRSA Global Public Affairs Team supporting our members around the World. This role includes being the staff lead for Standards including “Active & Safe commitment, CEN , RESNA and Global Health & Fitness Alliance. Kilian represents IHRSA as the

Global Association for Health ,Fitness, Aquatics & Sports Clubs on: WHO (World Health Organisation) Sport Sector Dialogue, WHO Global meeting on Non Communicable Diseaseses & Mental Health 2019, BIAC (Business at OECD) Health Committee and other relevant Policy areas, OECD Expert Group on Public Health, represents IHRSA as an official CEN Liaison Organisation on Standard on Fitness Facilities and other Working Groups, represents IHRSA on RESNA inclusive fitness standards committee, and is the Global

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Industry Lead for UFIT supported by IHRSA. IHRSA's mission is to grow, protect, and promote the health and fitness industry, and to provide its members with the benefits that will help them be more successful. IHRSA and its members (health clubs, fitness facilities, gyms, spas, sports clubs, and industry suppliers) are dedicated to make the world healthier through regular exercise. Kilian is the former CEO of ILAM, the industry body for 'Sports, Fitness, Aquatic Facilities, Spas, Wellness, MD Consultancy Services leading over 50 projects. He served in Facility/Clubs Operational & Top Level Management for 20 years in UK & Ireland. He also served as the HRSA Board Director (Global) 2008-2012 and chaired the Membership & Standards Committee. He's also served as the Member Institute of Directors Ireland, with over 20 EU/National Funded Projects ranging from Fitness to Sports to Outdoor to Facilities Management & Operations/Design to Adapted Physical Activity standards development, skills research, qualifications, and frameworks.



Tabo Huntley

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Dr. Tabo Huntley is an experienced performance leader and strategist who has a track record of delivering identified academic, organisational and elite sport outcomes. As an academic, Tabo teaches across sport coaching, physical education and strength and conditioning, and draws on a wealth of experiences to create a positive learning environment.

Tabo actively researches in the area of learning, development and education within the context of Paralympic and Disability sport. Here by drawing on critical social theory and disability studies, Tabo seeks

to explore disabled peoples' experiences of sport and physical activity, the social barriers that constrain their agency and the solutions needed to create empowering environments. As a result of this focus, Tabo has delivered a number of international evaluation projects for agencies such as Special Olympics International and World Para Hockey and is the Project Director for the Erasmus funded ParaCoach project. Tabo supervises a number of PhD students, who are exploring learning and education in Special Olympics, a large UK Governing Body of Sport and within a National Football Academy. In his various coaching roles, Tabo's senior athletes have achieved European and World Championship honours and his youth team simply enjoys playing football. Tabo is also an accredited UKSCA strength and conditioning coach and has worked with a number of professional teams and athletes.

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Banele Makhonco

Banele is a Special Olympics South Africa athlete and athlete leader who built on his basketball and athletics skills to become a coach. Then, he became decided to share his training techniques with others in his community.

Banele sees that exercise has countless benefits, such as weight loss and muscle gain, better sleep, and more energy. He also believes exercise can help with disease prevention and increased immunity. But what he admires most is the fact that fitness can bring a boost in self-confidence and a new joy for life.

He is not only committed to his own personal fitness, but is now using his skills and knowledge to run a small community exercise club in his home town. He is working hard to support and encourage other athletes and community members to keep fit and stay healthy.



Aiden McNeese

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Aidan McNeese is 20 years old and has been an athlete for seven years with Special Olympics Colorado. During that time, he has competed in athletics, swimming, skiing, bowling, cycling, basketball, flag football, and softball. Swimming, softball, and skiing are the sports he finds the most joy. He swam at the 2022 USA Games in Orlando, Florida where he earned 2 Silver and 1 Gold medal. He is a lifeguard and certified swim

instructor which he loves but being an athlete is what he most loves. He is a Regional Fitness Captain and a health messenger and loves helping athletes understand that being healthy is a big factor in having a fun season.

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Graham Melstrand

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Graham is the Executive Vice President of Community Health and Wellness for the American Council on Exercise where develops and aligns ACE strategies to support and advance the ACE mission and vision with key stakeholders including communities, government, healthcare and payers. In his role he provides oversight for ACE’s community education and outreach, health advocacy and government relations efforts is active on numerous advisory boards and committees including the Coalition for the Registration of Exercise Professionals (CREP) and the Physical Activity Alliance (PAA), and has previously served on the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), Committee on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (COAES) and the Facility Certification and Outcomes Committee of the Medical Fitness Association (MFA). Melstrand holds a bachelor's degree in physical education and athletic training from California State University, Long Beach. As a competitive cyclist, Melstrand participated in the U.S. Olympic Trials (1984, 1988) and was a member of the U.S. National Team Development Program (1983 - 1990).



Tom Norton

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Tom has been involved with Special Olympics for over 30 years first with the Law Enforcement Torch Run starting in 1990, as a coach in Athletics, and as a strength and conditioning coach for speed skating among other pursuits.

“As the father of an accomplished Special Olympics athlete, I treasure the time I’m able to spend with our daughter and all my athletes. Time is a very valuable commodity and to be able to spend it in such a rewarding pursuit of excellence is a privilege, which only reinforces how important it is to give of yourself. Building better athletes and watching lives change before your very eyes is a remarkable experience and I’m inspired every day by the resilience and resourcefulness of each and every athlete I have worked with.”

Known for his exceptional sport experience and his outstanding rapport with his athletes, Tom has dedicated his involvement with the Special Olympics organization Special Olympics BC – Abbotsford. A Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer [RCMP Ret.] with

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more than 35 years of meritorious service he brings to bear more than 40 years of practical experience in Athletics as a former competitive athlete and High Performance coach. Norton has been a member of 12 Special Olympics Regional and Provincial teams, four Special Olympics National teams 2011 World Summer Games Athens Greece, 2015 World Summer Games in Los Angeles CA., 2017 World Winter Games Graz Austria, 2019 World Summer Games Abu Dhabi and a Local training coach for athletes going to Special Olympics Provincial, National and World Games. He “lives by his motto ‘helping you help yourself,’ which fosters an environment of empowerment for all involved in Special Olympics.” As a mentor for coaches and volunteers alike, Tom keenly and enthusiastically provides coaching support to all program volunteers to aid in their personal development. Some of his awards include: 2015 Special Olympics North America Coach of the Year, 2015 Special Olympics Canada Male Coach of the Year, 2014 Howard Carter Award Performance Coach of the Year Special Olympics British Columbia, and the 2012 Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal for Community Engagement and Volunteerism.



Katrina L. Piercy, PhD, RD, ACSM-CEP, FACSM

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Dr. Piercy is the Director for the Division of Prevention Science in the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) in the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and serves as a dietitian officer in the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. As a Clinical Exercise Physiologist and Registered Dietitian, Dr. Piercy advises agency and departmental senior officials on current physical activity and nutrition science to inform policies and programs related to health promotion and disease prevention. Dr. Piercy and her team is trusted to lead, execute, and disseminate multi-year national public health policy initiatives on behalf of HHS,

including the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, and the *National Youth Sports Strategy*. They also inform the work of the Presidentially appointed President’s Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition which is managed by ODPHP. She serves as a subject matter expert for the Move Your Way® communications campaign, the first federal physical activity campaign to accompany the *Physical Activity Guidelines*.

Dr. Piercy received her Doctorate in Clinical Exercise Physiology and Nutrition from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and her Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Health Services with minors in Biology and Psychology from Saint Joseph’s University while on a division 1 soccer scholarship. She completed her dietetic internship at the National Institutes of Health.

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Viviene Temple, PhD

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Viviene is a Professor in the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education at the University of Victoria. Viviene is a fellow of the International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity (IFAPA). In 2021, Viviene was IFAPA's G. Lawrence Rarick Memorial Scholar, and with input from Special Olympics, she presented and published COVID-19 pandemic and individuals with intellectual disability: Special Olympics as an example of organizational responses and challenges in *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly*, see <https://doi.org/10.1123/apaq.2021-0137>.

Viviene's teaching and research focuses on identifying and ameliorating barriers to physical activity participation among persons with disabilities and enhancing motor skill development. This work has included a national evaluation of the Active Start (2 – 6 years) and FUNdamentals (7 – 12 years) programs for Special Olympics Canada. Viviene is also the Head Coach of the Special Olympics Active Start and FUNdamentals programs at University of Victoria.



Carly Wright

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Carly Wright is the Vice President, Advocacy & Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for SHAPE America - the Society of Health and Physical Educators. Carly works on federal, state, and local initiatives related to improving, implementing, and assessing school health education and physical education programs and policies in schools. She also represents SHAPE America before the U.S. Congress, federal agencies, and participates in national coalitions which work to elevate and promote health and physical education policies across the country. Carly also leads efforts related to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) for SHAPE America. She is the staff liaison to the EDI Committee and works collaboratively with the Board of Directors, SHAPE America staff, and volunteers to advance EDI throughout the organization.

Carly has led numerous of webinars, presentations, and trainings across the United States on advocating for health education, physical education and the overall wellness of our nation's children. She has worked for SHAPE America for over fourteen years and loves working with passionate advocates from the health and physical education community.

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Crystal Zabka-Belsky, MS, RDN, CSSD, LMNT, LDN

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With a dual background in nutrition and exercise physiology, Crystal published a thesis highlighting her developed risk assessment instrument aimed at identifying and treating disordered eating in female athletes, which was piloted and implemented at the University of Nebraska. Crystal has extensive experience in the health field as a Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics and is in her 15th year at OMNI Inventive Care, currently serving as the Director of Nutrition, Exercise & Health Promotion, where she established the first-ever Special Olympics team and served as the Head of Delegation. Her clinical expertise includes sports nutrition, eating disorders, substance abuse disorders, weight management, mental health collaborations and wellness for individuals with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities.

Crystal has extensive experience serving on professional boards nationally including ongoing board positions for the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics, as well as locally including an ongoing second term as the Chair of the Nebraska Board of Medical Nutrition Therapy and an ongoing position on the Special Olympics Nebraska Health Advisory Committee. In collaboration with Special Olympics Nebraska, Crystal led research efforts aimed at assessing food insecurity in the state of Nebraska for individuals with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities and identifying hot spots of need to target training and outreach efforts and to better equip insurance providers with evidence-based direction. She also serves as a Health Promotions Clinical Director for Special Olympics Nebraska. In innovative practice, Crystal spent three years as a sports dietitian in the NBA during the Gatorade-sponsored integration of sports nutrition services into the NBA G-League and served as a consulting sport scientist for the Sweat Testing Program for the Gatorade Sports Science Institute. Crystal's commitment to professional development landed her in a teaching position at the University of Nebraska. In addition, Crystal owns a private practice, through which she does sports nutrition consulting with youth, elite, college, professional and Team USA athletes.

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