



For Immediate Release

## Six inspiring projects awarded 2018 WOA Service to Society grants

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Six inspiring, Olympian-led projects have been awarded 2018 Service to Society grants by World Olympians Association. The successful recipients from Palau, Japan, Moldova, Cape Verde, Chile and the United States of America, spanning all five continents, will each receive US five thousand dollars (\$5,000) towards the running costs of their projects as part of WOA's mission to empower Olympians to make a positive difference in their communities and build a better society through sport.

The projects, supported by each country's National Olympians Association, align with the Olympic values and the activities of the Olympic Movement. They each aim to spread the spirit of Olympism across a range of themes including youth engagement and education, inclusion, sport for all, and gender equality.

The 2018 Service to Society projects are:

- ***Maximising the appeal of Olympic sport* - Palau Olympians Association [Oceania]**
  - Using Olympic combat sports to increase youth participation in Palau
- ***Dream big, inspire a generation* - Olympians Association of Japan [Asia]**
  - Supporting Olympic education in schools in the lead up to Tokyo 2020
- ***Building an inclusive culture of Olympism* - Moldova Olympians Association [Europe]**
  - Inspiring youth engagement in underprivileged communities in Moldova
- ***Olympians for Sports4Life* - Cape Verde Olympians Association [Africa]**
  - Enhancing participation and leadership opportunities for women in sport in Cape Verde
- ***Olympics for the Youth* - Chilean Olympians Association [Americas]**
  - Providing access to sport for vulnerable children in Chile

- ***Wish of a Lifetime* - US Olympians and Paralympians Association [Americas]**
  - Granting the wishes of senior citizens while promoting respect for older generations

Since WOA's Service to Society Grants were established in 2016, communities around the world have benefitted from the projects funded. From a drowning prevention education programme in India, to an Olympian-run chicken farm in Zimbabwe that is funding the ongoing development and career transition of the county's Olympians, to bringing the Olympic values to children in post-conflict zones in Colombia, the projects have demonstrated the strong desire of Olympians to make a positive impact in their communities.

**WOA President Joël Bouzou OLY said:**

"We are thrilled to be able to help fund these six inspiring, Olympian-led projects in 2018 through our Service to Society grants. We firmly believe that Olympians have the ability to make a genuine difference in their communities, spreading the spirit and practice of Olympism to drive positive social change.

"Over the past 12 months, we have watched with pride as the projects from our inaugural round of funding in 2017 have flourished. We look forward to following this year's recipients with interest as their projects develop through the hard work, dedication and passion of the Olympians involved."

-ENDS-

**Notes to Editors**

You can find out more about WOA's Service to Society grant programme [HERE](#).

**Details of the 2018 Service to Society funded projects can be found below:**

**Palau Olympians Association [Oceania] – *Maximising the appeal of Olympic sport***

The project looks to increase sport participation in the small island nation, by maximising the potential of low cost, high benefit Olympic sports such as judo, boxing and wrestling. Working with schools and national associations, the Palau Olympians Association will help develop training programmes and boost skill sets amongst P.E. teachers in order to encourage children to try new sports and promote an active and healthy lifestyle amongst youth.

**Olympians Association of Japan [Asia] – *Dream big, inspire a generation***

With Tokyo 2020 on the horizon, the Olympians Association of Japan will support Olympic education through a programme of lectures and school visits promoting the Olympic Games and encouraging the next generation of athletes and fans to dream big, play fair and never give up. The project aims to enhance the fun and enjoyment of sport by providing primary and secondary school children with the opportunity to improve their skills through training sessions and workshops with Olympians, promote understanding and friendship and support the development of sport in Japan.

### **Moldova Olympians Association [Europe] – *Building an inclusive culture of Olympism***

The Moldova Olympians Association aims to inspire youth engagement by promoting the Olympic values and supporting community sports activities in the poorest areas of the country. Olympians will attend sporting events, run master classes, donate sports equipment and facilitate access to sporting facilities in underprivileged areas of Moldova, in order to demonstrate the positive impact sport can have as a tool for social development and to help young people realise their full potential.

### **Cape Verde Olympians Association [Africa] - *Olympians for Sports4Life***

Increasing the participation and leadership opportunities for women in sport is the long-term aim of the Cape Verde Olympians Association, which will work alongside the IOC Athlete Career Programme, schools and national federations to develop a leadership camp for Olympians and other local sports leaders in order to address the existing gender imbalance in the country (only 10% of sports leadership positions are currently held by women, and women and girls make up just 21% of sports participants).

### **Chilean Olympians Association [Americas 1] - *Olympics for the Youth***

Keeping vulnerable children off the streets and involved in sport is the overarching goal of the Chilean Olympians Association, which aims to provide access to sport and a healthy and active environment for underprivileged children. With the help of a sports psychologist, groups of 20 children aged 7-16 years old will be taught important life skills, alongside the Olympic values of friendship, excellence and respect, to help them achieve their future goals. They will also take part in weekly sports sessions, and each month will be given the opportunity to meet an Olympian.

### **US Olympians and Paralympians Association (USOPA) [Americas 2] - *Wish of a Lifetime***

Founded by Olympian Jeremy Bloom and supported by the USOPA, Wish of a Lifetime's mission is to shift the way society views and values our older generations by fulfilling the dreams of senior citizens. The Service of Society grant will be used to grant the wishes of multiple senior citizens in 2018 and to grow the organisation's presence by sharing the inspirational stories of wish recipients and creating a culture where seniors are respected, valued, and involved in their communities.

### **About World Olympians Association**

WOA is the member organisation for the more than 120,000 Olympians worldwide. Our remit is to work for the benefit of all Olympians at all stages of their lives, empowering them to serve society and help make the world a better place. With 147 member National Olympians Associations spread across all five continents, WOA provides support to Olympian-run events and projects based on the Olympic ideals laid down by the founder of the modern Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin.

### **For more information**

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