Illinois Health and Hospital Association

To participate in Special Olympics, aspiring athletes must first get a physical. Yet some children who want to compete don't have insurance, a primary care doctor or transportation to get to an appointment. That's where UChicago Medicine AdventHealth comes in.

For the past three years, at Special Olympics Screening Events held in Bedford Park, UChicago Medicine AdventHealth residents provided the needed physicals for free.

"One of the things that drew me to medicine is to be able to give back," said Dr. Sravani Sagireddy. "It's really nice to be able to step into the community and help people who really need it."

At the screening events, the residents perform the standard vision, hearing and motor ability tests that are part of sports physicals. They also carefully assess each child for medical conditions that might make it unsafe for that child to participate in athletics.

"We can't do anything without our partners across the state and UChicago Medicine AdventHealth has been an incredible partner for us," said Special Olympics President and CEO Peter Beale-DelVecchio. He added that the four-hospital health system is "helping us do more and more all the time."

While focused on giving back to the community, the free Special Olympics Screening Event is mutually beneficial, said Dr. Leslie Sleuwen, director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Hinsdale.

"I think it goes both ways," she said. "We are helping these participants to be able to do the things they love, which is activity, and yet they're also helping us in enriching our residents' education and just how to take care of all different populations."