



# M&T: Understanding What's Important

Sports facility an economic development win

BY PHIL HOSMER

THERE IS AN OLD SAYING that “if you build it, they will come.” That has certainly proven to be the case for the DE Turf Sports Complex in Frederica. After a lengthy process of planning and then construction, it opened in an open field off Route One in 2017. It has quickly established itself as one of the premier facilities of its type on the East Coast, featuring 12 state-of-the-art multi-purpose sports fields.

To commemorate the opening of DE Turf and the positive impact it has had on Delaware's communities and economy, Special Olympics Delaware athletes participated in a sports training clinic hosted October 4, at the DE Turf Sports Complex with M&T Bank. More than 100 athletes from local schools took part in technical and skills drills with Special Olympics coaches and 50 M&T Bank volunteers.

Since DE Turf opened, almost 90,000 out-of-state visitors have attended tournaments and booked more than 16,000 hotel rooms. Visitors have

traveled from 33 states, Canada and New Zealand. The total visitor attendance on tournament weekends since opening is more than 116,000.

DE Turf is the result of the efforts of local and state public officials, business representatives and M&T Bank. Last year, M&T announced it issued bonds in the sum of \$20.7 million for the construction and development of DE Turf, which allowed the sports complex to take advantage of historically low interest rates by locking in long-term, fixed-rate financing over a 30-year term.

After a short presentation from DE Turf Executive Director Chris Giacomucci, Special Olympics Delaware Executive Director Ann Grunert, and M&T Bank Regional President Nick Lambrow, the athletes enjoyed a variety of sports activities, including soccer and baseball.

The event received positive media attention in The Delaware State News, Delaware Business Now, WMDT-TV and WBOC-TV. ■