



2016 *ANNUAL REPORT*

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Special Olympics
Ontario





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This year marks the 20th year of partnership between Staples Canada and Special Olympics! Throughout this partnership, Staples has been helping make dreams come true for over 22,000 registered Special Olympics Ontario athletes.

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KIMANA MAR
Special Olympics Athlete
Ottawa, Ontario



A YEAR IN REVIEW

The year of 2016

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ADDRESS FROM CHAIR OF THE BOARD

As my tenure as Chair of the Board comes to an end, it gives me great pleasure to share information about the continued growth and success of Special Olympics Ontario (SOO). Over recent years, the organization has seen tremendous growth (both athletes and volunteers) as well as many new programs and initiatives put in place during this time. Our board governance has been strengthened, such that SOO continues to receive the highest accreditation from Imagine Canada and remains one of the top performing charities in Canada.

To consistently achieve such a high standard requires the effort and dedication of many, from our talented board of directors, to the magnificent senior leadership team, SOO staff, coaches, volunteers, parents and last but not least the athletes. To each and every one of you, I tip my hat and say thank you for making my job as your Board Chair easier and immensely pleasurable!

As we draw to a close on the current strategic plan (2017), I feel confident that the framework and approach that was initiated in 2013 has been accomplished under 5 key pillars: (1) Advance quality sports and competitions (2) Build communities (3) Connect fans and funds (4) Develop movement leadership (5) Establish sustainable capabilities.

We are well under way to increasing athlete and volunteer growth, lowering the current average age (as a direct result of successful school program initiatives) and increasing participation in volunteer training. As a volunteer-driven organization, it is imperative that

we show our appreciation and thanks to over 10,000 registered volunteers, without whom Special Olympics Ontario simply would not exist. Further, the board of directors and the senior leadership team at SOO take fiscal responsibility very seriously and I am very proud to say that SOO finances are in great shape. We are well positioned to continue to fund and grow programs as required, for the fulfillment and pleasure of all athletes!

Special Olympics is more than just sport. Special Olympics provides resources, health screenings, networking opportunities and more. It is the largest organization in Canada to provide grassroots sports programs and competition opportunities from the local level to the world stage for individuals with an intellectual disability.

I am so very proud of each and every Special Olympics athlete. Their hard work, dedication and training allows them to grow both physically and emotionally, but more importantly with the strength and desire to be confident and respected individuals in society.

I hope that you enjoy reading this report and come away with a better understanding of a world-wide movement that changes lives daily in communities across Ontario. In closing, I thank each and every one of the SOO family who, over the years, I have come to know, appreciate and love... "you da best!"

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Shafiq Ebrahim'.

Shafiq Ebrahim



ADDRESS FROM PRESIDENT & CEO

I am pleased to present this Annual Report, highlighting the accomplishments and growth of Special Olympics Ontario during the last year. The hard work and dedication of athletes, coaches, volunteers and staff has truly been rewarded with amazing results.

Through the years, I have had the pleasure of personally interacting with athletes and their families, and seeing first-hand the positive effects participation in our programs has on their lives. It is heartwarming to witness the happy faces of athletes who are overjoyed to be part of a team, working together with others towards personal excellence. Families are proud to witness their growth, development and the confidence these successes bring to each and every athlete. I hope that as you read this report, you will sense some of that pride and joy as well.

A special thank you to our sponsors, partners and donors who make our work possible! You have been instrumental in raising awareness of our organization and the benefits of organized sports for those with intellectual disabilities. Your diligent fundraising and generosity in donating to this great cause make it possible for these programs to continue and for all athletes to be able to fully and effectively participate. Particularly noteworthy is our partnership with the Law Enforcement Torch Run. The Law Enforcement community has worked tirelessly to generate much needed funds and raise awareness of our work, and we would surely not be where we are today without their efforts.

As you review this report, remember that every single member of the Special Olympics family has played a role in our successes this year. We continually strive to ensure that new programs and initiatives are put in place to accommodate not only the growth of the movement, but an age range that now begins as young as two years of age. There is a lot of room for growth in the years to come; I sincerely hope that you will continue to be a part of this important movement. Take delight in knowing that your contributions have made a difference in the lives of so many and prepare yourself for an even more successful year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn MacDonell".

Glenn MacDonell

"There is no greater disability in society, than the inability to see a person as more."

~Robert M. Hensel

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Parent Advocate



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COMMUNITY REPORT

Volunteers are the root system that continues to provide Special Olympics Ontario the opportunity to exist, grow and enrich the lives of athletes with an intellectual disability. Our very foundation and future is bright due to more than 10,000 volunteers nurturing that root system for close to 50 years. The broadest and maybe the most meaningful definition of volunteering is: **"Doing more than you have to because you want to, in a cause that you consider good."** ~ Ivan Scheier

Over the past year, volunteers partnered with PGA Technical Director Glenn Cundari to develop a new golf program in North Bay. In Owen Sound, volunteers networked effectively with other rhythmic gymnastics programs to provide a much needed new sport in their community. Whilst in Lennox and Addington, coaches Marilyn and Erin Elliot saw the need for additional summer programming for bowlers and curlers. Connecting with bocce coaches in a neighbouring community for advice and peer mentoring, lead to athletes entering into their first bocce provincial qualifier within a few short months.

Everyone's reason for volunteering is personal to them. Volunteers provide their support, passion, dedication and time to help athletes gain the opportunity to participate, compete and meet new friends. At the same time and often unknowingly, volunteers enrich the lives of everyone around them by making their community a better place.

As for current initiatives, volunteers in Peel have already begun preparing for the 2017 Provincial Summer Games. Over 500 volunteers will come together to ensure quality competition and a meaningful experience that will leave a lasting impact on the lives of many.

To say thank you to the thousands of volunteers that make Special Olympics possible is simply not enough. We must also recognize that they are important and significantly instrumental, not only today, but in the years to come. At the same time, we commend them for their success in community programs that are the root of all our accomplishments.

Kelly Santini leading the way in support of Special Olympics

2016 marks the 12th year of the Ottawa Festival Breakfast, raising funds and awareness for individuals with an intellectual disability in Ottawa and District. Our sincere thanks and appreciation to Kelly Santini for their outstanding support of Special Olympics.

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pahl SPORT FESTIVALS (ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)



Special Olympics Ontario continues to emphasize the engagement of young athletes by expanding elementary school program delivery. Through partnerships with special education and physical education teachers, Special Olympics successfully impacted more than 1,000 young athletes throughout the 2015/2016 school year.

Special Olympics successfully ran 14 elementary school *pahl* sports festivals, encouraging young athletes and teachers involved with the movement. Our goal is to work closely with teachers to provide physical education resources to support the development of their students.

“Our intellectually disabled students from three classes attended a school program hosted by SOO. They absolutely loved the activities, enjoyed the friendly guidance from staff, and benefited from interacting with peers from other schools.”

~ Al Wielinga, Harrisfield Public School

pahl sports festivals has expanded, engaging new athletes and champions. Having the opportunity to work with elementary school teachers across the province, along with high school, college and university students who volunteer their time to organize these events, greatly increases our ability to raise awareness about the

importance of physical literacy.

“My students attended the Special Olympics last year and when school started in Sept. 2015 the first thing they asked me was - when will we be going to the Special Olympics this year?! Once again, the students were full of joy while participating in their events. What a wonderful experience for all involved. Thanks!” ~ Julia Fortin, St. Jude Catholic School

Special Olympics Ontario school programs team is delighted to work with many enthusiastic teachers and volunteers and thrilled to see hundreds of smiling faces at our events! Having the opportunity to involve 1,000 young athletes in Special Olympics Ontario school programs is such a wonderful experience; we look forward to expanding programs to ensure everyone has an opportunity to participate. This is an important component of building confidence in athletes, as a young athlete in Guelph reminded us as she received her Special Olympics t-shirt. She looked up at her teacher and said “Look! I’m on the team!” This seemingly small statement speaks volumes to the impact that Special Olympics has on athletes and their families.

Canada,

YOU ARE WHY
WE
Brew



Proud Sponsor of **Special Olympics Canada**

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PARTNERS IN PLAY

Partners In Play (PIP) fosters the development of partnerships between Special Olympics Ontario (SOO), community sport organizations, municipalities and educational institutions. The project focuses on providing opportunities for younger Special Olympics' athletes to participate in the **Learn to Play/Learn to Train** sport specific programs of the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, while encouraging lifelong participation in sport.

Partnerships have been developed with sport clubs across Ontario in athletics, basketball, soccer and swimming. This has greatly improved accessibility for age appropriate programs, giving younger athletes the opportunity to be involved in an inclusive environment that provides access to quality coaching, training and competition. These opportunities allow Special Olympics' athletes to develop their athletic skills, while building confidence and self-esteem. As the program evolves, it is expected that the clubs will take advantage of the competition pathways available for Special Olympics' athletes.

Our partners benefit from the exposure as a Special Olympics Partners in Play club. Branding opportunities make them unique among their peers. Special Olympics offers coach and volunteer training as part of the development of the PIP program, as well as assists in the recruitment

of athletes and volunteers providing them with necessary resources.

PIP has increased awareness about Special Olympics' athletes and the organization as a whole, with community sport organizations, municipalities and educational institutions. The mutual benefits and goodwill for athletes and Partners in Play will continue to be enhanced as the program moves forward.

For additional information visit:

<http://play.specialolympicsontario.ca>

Young Athletes in the Community

SOO continues to seek likeminded individuals and organizations to partner and bolster community youth program delivery. During the 2015/2016 program year, SOO was fortunate to have met Melanie Cote and her daughter Alma. Alma is two years old, has Williams Syndrome and she loves to run! SOO and Melanie have begun working closely together to generate awareness, not only about Williams Syndrome, but about Special Olympics Active Start and FUNDamentals programs. Since September 2015, Alma has progressed from crawling and walking with a walker, to running circles around her Active Start volunteers!

"Special Olympics Ontario has been so amazing for Alma, and the whole family. When we learned that Alma had Williams Syndrome, I wasn't sure what the future would hold. Knowing that Special Olympics is working so hard to create a better future for all individuals with intellectual disabilities including my Alma, made joining the army of volunteers a no-brainer. Now I can't wait to see what the future brings." ~ Melanie Cote

SOO works tirelessly to engage young athletes, but this task would be impossible if not for the efforts of individuals like volunteers and family members. The emerging relationship between SOO and Melanie represents a clear path forward for strengthening ties between young athletes and the movement. Engaging young athletes in communities across the province is an extremely important objective, strengthening our goal to improve the health and opportunities for daily physical activity of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

We cannot thank Melanie and other parents enough for their support of young athletes and the Special Olympics' movement! We can't wait to see Alma on the podium at major games in the future!



HEALTHY ATHLETES



Healthy Athletes in Action

Healthy Athletes had an incredibly successful year, setting a record for the number of services provided across the province. Over 1,600 health screenings were provided to athletes in 2015-2016, in a variety of disciplines including: Health Promotion, Special Smiles, Opening Eyes, Fun Fitness, Fit Feet and our new mental health initiative: Strong Bodies, Strong Minds.

The program was provided this year at a local level, as well as at many of our larger invitational competitions and major games. The Healthy Athletes program in Guelph was highlighted by the participation of Guelph Public Health who provided nurses, dieticians and dental professionals.

Our newest national sponsor, Sobeys, provided nutritional education resources to Special Olympics athletes, giving them a holistic health experience by covering important topics such as nutrition and how it relates to competition, along with the importance of hydration, handwashing and hygiene. Special Olympics was proud

to also engage in **Bell Canada's Let's Talk** day, to have an open conversation on mental health issues with 10 Special Olympics athletes from Maplewood High School in Scarborough, Ontario. Facilitating this session was Dr. Yona Lunskey from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, who guided athletes through a variety of different topics related to mental health and well-being.

"Oh Healthy Athletes was wonderful. We enjoyed everything, thanks so much to all those that organized it and for all the volunteers. We quite enjoyed "Strong Minds" and talked to the individual in charge about organizing something similar at my son's school."

~ Cathy-Jo Coffin

Athlete Leadership

2016 saw a significant expansion of Special Olympics Ontario's Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPS).

Through our newest program, ALPS University, we continue to train athlete leaders emphasizing the

importance of the role they play in the progression of the Special Olympics' movement. Over 60 athlete leaders were trained in the communities of Guelph, London, Toronto, Ottawa and Barrie. The curriculum focused on four key topics: governance, social media, healthy living and speakers' engagements. In addition, a workshop on harassment, mental health and wellness was added.

ALPS University trains athletes to become advocates for themselves, their peers and the Special Olympics' movement. With a focus on sport and health, they have the opportunity to participate, as mentors, in future Healthy Athletes events, or as guest speakers and representatives of Special Olympics across the province.

We are excited about the future of the Athlete Leadership Programs as it fosters the holistic development of athletes, proving definitively that Special Olympics is more than sport.



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making dreams come true.

Special Olympics
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**WE'RE
FUELLED
FOR
SUCCESS.**

Special Olympics Canada would like to welcome Sobeys Inc. to the Special Olympics Movement. Through the Sobeys Inc. Better Food Fund, our athletes will have access to wholesome food, new cooking skills and nutrition education. In communities all across Canada, over 40,000 athletes with an intellectual disability will gain the knowledge and skills to lead healthier, more active lives and reach their full potential. From all of our athletes and their families, coaches and volunteers: welcome.

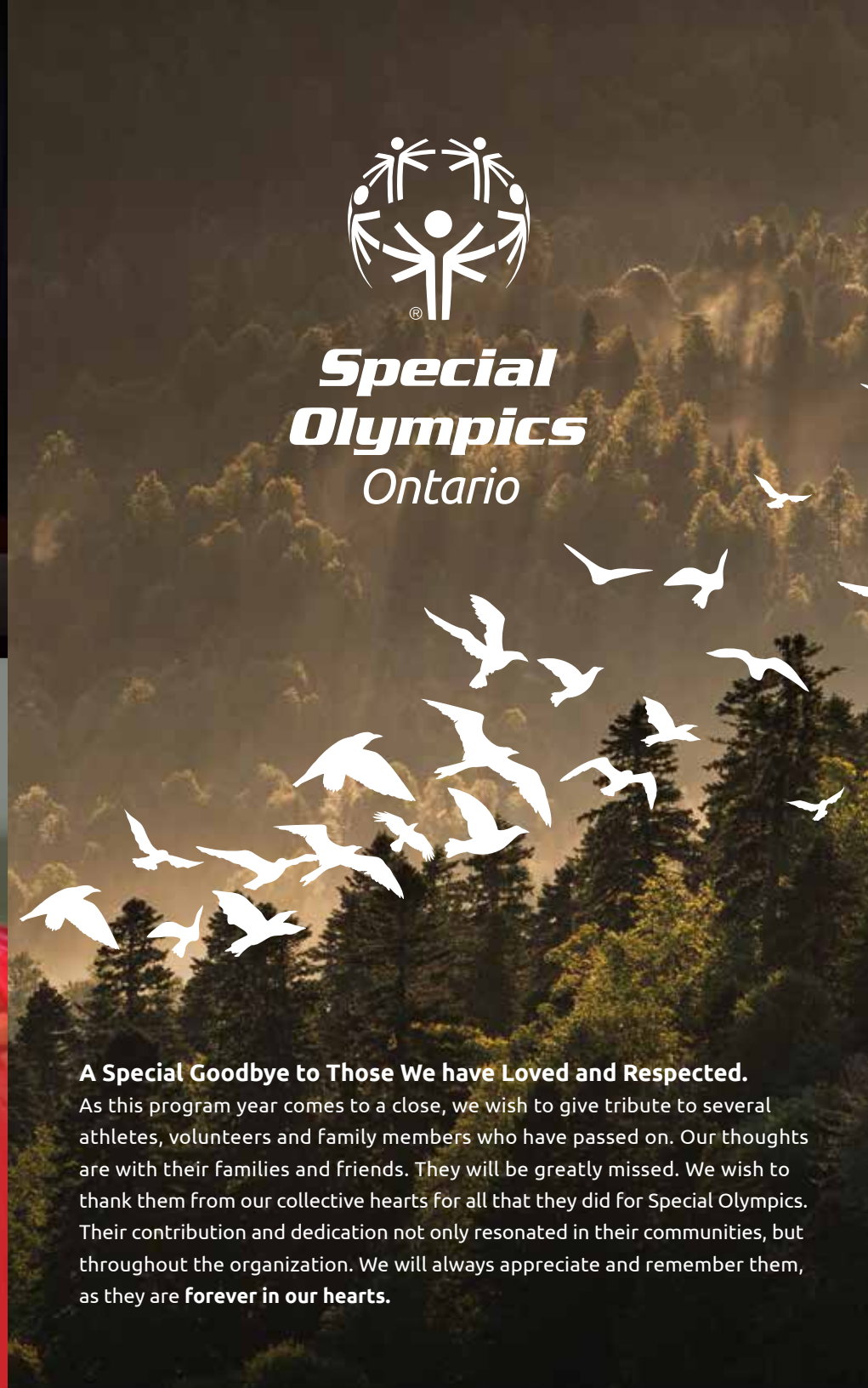
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A Special Goodbye to Those We have Loved and Respected.

As this program year comes to a close, we wish to give tribute to several athletes, volunteers and family members who have passed on. Our thoughts are with their families and friends. They will be greatly missed. We wish to thank them from our collective hearts for all that they did for Special Olympics. Their contribution and dedication not only resonated in their communities, but throughout the organization. We will always appreciate and remember them, as they are **forever in our hearts.**



2016 PROVINCIAL SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

School Championships

From its inaugural season in 2011, the School Championships program (formerly known as Four Corners), has continued to expand. 52 regional qualifiers were hosted this past season across five sports. The program reached over 5,000 student-athletes from hundreds of schools in every corner of the province.

J. Clarke Richardson CI in Ajax is one of these schools. Within the past couple of years, this school adjusted their program and physical education curriculum to focus on practicing the five current school championships sports, ensuring their students are prepared for each regional qualifier in their area. No year was this dedication more prevalent than at the Provincial School Championships this past June, where the school had three teams, and an additional eight athletes qualify in athletics to compete against over 500 athletes from across Ontario.

Amanda Morra (Educator) states that the program has had many additional positive outcomes within the school. "The Special Olympics School Championships program was integral in bringing out the best in our students. When they participate in Special Olympics, we notice improvement in attendance, social behavior, grades, class participation, friendships, etc. and a decrease in office referrals and behavioral incidents. Their positive qualities flourish and we see them believe in their own potential and skills, and as an educator Special Olympics teaches my students things that I would never be able to teach them through the curriculum. Our students learn to focus on their abilities rather than their disabilities, and they value that hard work and dedication can and will pay off."

The School Championships program is the first of its kind in North America and will continue to grow in the upcoming years. Interest has been sparked across the continent, and the program will aim expansion over the next few years to invite student athletes from Canada and the United States to compete.

**LET ME
WIN
BUT IF I
CANNOT
WIN
LET ME
BE BRAVE
IN THE
ATTEMPT**

~ Special Olympics Athletes' Oath



With great appreciation,
we offer our thanks to
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physical fitness for those
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BV180

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Ever dreamed of starting your own business? Rise can help.

Rise is a registered charity that provides low interest small business loans, free training and mentorship to men and women who have experienced a variety of challenges including an intellectual disability. All our programs and services are flexible to meet the needs of our clients, and we provide the ongoing mentoring and resources necessary to support business success. The business can be as big or as small as you want – full time, part time or seasonal. You can learn more about Rise and read the success profiles of our clients at www.riseassetdevelopment.com



Proud sponsor of the
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Determined to make a difference one pedal at a time.

The Beaver Valley 180 Bike Ride is a long riding tradition that unites the peloton with Special Olympics to make a difference. Recognizing the good fortune of others and the importance of supporting their goals, BV180 helps Special Olympics' athletes realize their dreams.





LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN



Message from Chief Al Frederick OACP Chair

It is with great pride that I report on another year of tremendous achievement for the Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run (OLETR). The OLETR represents an enduring partnership between Law Enforcement agencies and Special Olympics Ontario (SOO), over a rich and inspiring 29 year history.

Dedicated men and women across Ontario collaborate daily in the pursuit of safer communities and through the OLETR raise funds and awareness for over 22,000 athletes. This continuous commitment is instrumental in providing sustained sport programs and competitions across the province. The impact of annual, local OLETR activities for Special Olympics transcends the significance of fundraising alone and serves to galvanize whole communities in support of courageous Special Olympics athletes. From the leadership of Law Enforcement personnel and the annual Torch Run, community volunteers are inspired

to coach, donate and participate in Special Olympics programs. This influence is critical for the ongoing success and development of the athletes as they seek to grow and enrich their lives.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) Torch Run Executive Committee is dedicated to working with all partners in the pursuit of providing strong programs for Special Olympics. Continued success will build from the foundation of the hard work and experience of over 29 years of dedicated service of Law Enforcement personnel. This legacy, coupled with a collaborative approach of sharing ideas and continuous planning, will ensure the sustained growth of the program.

The OACP recognizes and commends all Law Enforcement personnel who selflessly give of their time and energy as participants and champions of the Torch Run in the communities they serve. On behalf of the OACP Torch Run Executive Committee, I sincerely thank all of the men and women in Law Enforcement who volunteer in so many capacities on behalf of the OLETR for Special Olympics. Torch Run for Special Olympics has completed another successful year thanks to the tireless support and dedication from Law Enforcement agencies and officers from across the province. As we move forward to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the program, the Law Enforcement Torch Run continues to be the pinnacle fundraiser for SOO.

Torch Run 2016 - A Year in Review

Law Enforcement agencies successfully hosted two Provincial Games in 2016, in Guelph and Durham. The Guelph Police Service proudly hosted the Special Olympics Ontario Provincial Spring Games from May 26-28. In total, over 900 athletes, coaches and team delegates participated in the games. The Law Enforcement Torch Run was a huge success with over 220 officers running the Flame of Hope into the opening ceremony to officially open the games! Thank you to Correctional Officer Carrie Gouthro and her dedicated team of volunteers who organized an incredible Final Leg! At closing ceremony, the torch was officially passed to Peel Regional Police who will host the 2017 Special Olympics Ontario Provincial Summer Games in Peel Region (July 13-16).

Durham Regional Police partnered with SOO and hosted the 2016 Provincial School Championships from June 1-3, at UOIT/Durham College Campus. The School Championships program uniquely provides quality sport competition with the opportunity for advancement to students aged 13-21 with an intellectual disability in the sports of athletics, bocce, basketball, floor hockey and soccer.

In total, 52 regional qualifiers took place across Ontario leading into the Provincial Championships in Durham. Local Law Enforcement participated in



95% of those events and remain the highlight of the athletes' experiences! Niagara Regional Police Service will host the 2017 School Championships.

Traditionally, the Torch Run has been driven by grassroots fundraising in the spring and summer months and as much as this trend still exists, we have seen tremendous growth in revenue throughout the calendar year. In the cold winter months, the Polar Plunge program grew from six plunges in 2014 to 11 plunges by 2016.

The Torch Run had tremendous growth with the Guardians of the Flame Endurance Series program. The series featured five events provincially this summer. Each event was designed not only to push participants to their physical limits, but to create an environment for participants to have a great time raising funds for Special Olympics! The events also saw a 15% increase in participants from 2,650 in 2015 to 3,047 in 2016 and has raised an amazing \$685,000 in three years!

October 2015 marked the final Beaver Valley 180 bike ride which was organized by Mike and Rosanne Van Hees. This incredible ride travelled 180km from Oakville to the Beaver Valley Ski Club in Markdale and raised an unprecedented \$1 MILLION in eight years for Special Olympics. The ride was escorted by the OPP Golden Helmets and was truly the crown jewel of organized rides! We thank Mike and Rosanne for their tireless

efforts over the past eight years.

Each year, the Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run recognizes officers who have made significant contributions to the movement. This year, awards were presented at the OACP Conference in Niagara Falls, Ontario on June 27, 2016. We are pleased to congratulate the following recipients:

Award of Honour:

Jayson Bouwkamp - Peel Regional Police
Melanie Kish-Lewis - Windsor Police Service
Julie Tilbury - Thunder Bay Police Service
Rob Prophet - Ontario Provincial Police

Distinguished Service Award:

Mark McGugan - London Police Service
Warren Giertuga - Thunder Bay Correctional Centre

The support of the Law Enforcement Torch Run has been invaluable to SOO over the past 29 years and we say thank you to the men and women of Law Enforcement who selflessly contribute so much, not only to the Special Olympics' movement, but to their communities each and every day.



Left to Right: Jayson Bouwkamp (Peel Regional Police), Mark McGugan (London Police Service), Warren Giertuga (Thunder Bay Correctional Centre), Melanie Kish-Lewis (Windsor Police Service), Julie Tilbury (Thunder Bay Police Service).

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**To learn more about this program,
visit: www.goforthegreen.ca**

**For more information,
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THANK YOU to the following sponsors of the "Special Supporter Golf Series"



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COACH & DEVELOPMENT

Special Olympics Ontario (SOO) introduced a new high performance training program at the Toronto Pan Am Centre October 2015. What an opportunity! The goal: for swimmers to benefit from extra training, over and above their regular practices.

Twenty swimmers attended every week from October to April. They were so privileged to have Heather Maclean as their head coach. Heather is a Canadian Olympic swim team member, who represented Canada at the 2012 Olympic Games in London. She is a full-time university student and ardent supporter of her sister Brittany, a member of the 2012 and 2016 Olympic teams.

The swimmers were so excited to learn that Heather was an Olympian and were thrilled when she invited Chantal Van Landeghem and Michelle Williams to coach with her occasionally.

Chantal and Michelle were on the 2015 Canadian team at the Pan American Games in Toronto. Heather brought her expertise, dedication and commitment every week to the athletes. She focused on technical improvement, endurance and speed in all of the strokes. Athletes improved immensely and benefited so much from this program.

The Canadian Olympic Team trained every week at the Toronto Pan Am Centre for the 2016 Rio Games. Yet on their only day off (Sunday), Chantal and Michelle came out to coach swimmers. The Olympians helped the athletes train hard for their opportunity to win medals at the 2016 Special Olympics Ontario Provincial Spring Games in Guelph.

Congratulations to Chantal and Michelle on their bronze medals at the 2016 Rio Games in Brazil in the 4 x 100m freestyle relay!

FRANK SELKE FUNDRAISING VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Special Olympics Canada presents this annual award to a fundraising volunteer who has made a significant contribution to the Special Olympics' movement, locally, provincially and/or nationally and has best exemplified the spirit, philosophy and goals of Special Olympics.

Congratulations Michel Lafortune
(Mississauga, Ontario) - recipient of this year's award.





KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS



The Flag Relay

Special Olympics Ontario would like to thank the Knights of Columbus (KOC) for their continued support throughout the years. 2016 was the inaugural year for the very successful Flag Relay. Six flags travelled across Ontario visiting 113 districts gathering signatures from local KOC members, MPP's, Chiefs of Police, Mayors and other dignitaries to showcase their commitment and support for Special Olympics. The flags were proudly showcased at the opening ceremony of the Provincial School Championships in Durham Region (June 1-3).



**KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS**
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

"In service to one. In service to all."



MAJOR GAMES



2016 Provincial Spring Games

Congratulations to Constable Chris Probst and the Guelph Police Service for hosting the hugely successful provincial spring games. The support for the games in Guelph was immense, not only from a fundraising perspective, but also a volunteer perspective. Over 600 volunteers dedicated their time from May 26 – May 29 to host over 1,000 athletes, coaches and managers and over 600 families, friends and supporters. Highlights from the games include the closing ceremony with Dr. Frank Hayden entering the event on the back of a golf cart, the basketball tournament where the gold medal in the Heat Division was won in overtime and the amazing opening ceremony with Suzie McNeil and the Mudmen entertaining everyone.

The University of Guelph was instrumental in the hosting of the spring games. Their support was incredible; it allowed us to take the games to a new level. Denso showcased their support by being a major contributor as the volunteer sponsor. Denso hosted many fundraising events for the games and provided an incredible number of volunteers.

The provincial spring games is a qualifying event for athletes to be selected to participate in the 2018 Special Olympics Canada National Summer Games in Antigonish, Nova Scotia (July 31-August 4).



Wizard Foundation

Thank you to the Wizard Foundation for their generosity and continued support towards the Special Olympics' movement. Their contributions impact thousands of lives and have played a significant role in the growth of Special Olympics Ontario, dating back to 1988.





PATRONS*

Special thanks to supporters of the Special Olympics Canada National Winter Games

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*Patrons level sponsors donating \$1,600+

2016 National Winter Games

Congratulations to the members of Team Ontario for their achievements at the 2016 National Winter Games. The team consisted of 201 athletes, 60 coaches and 14 Leadership members. We are proud to announce that 40% of the athletes and coaches attended the national games for the first time.

The national games were hosted in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, and what an experience that was. The hospitality, the sport venues, the people...all amazing! The members of Team Ontario came home with many fond memories of the games. The 2016 National Winter Games was a qualifying event for the 2017 World Winter Games.

Team Ontario brought home 211 medals in total, with all teams in curling and floor hockey returning with medals. Every athlete in cross country skiing, snowshoeing and speed skating achieved their personal best times. Figure skaters achieved podium finishes in every discipline. Alpine skiers received podium finishes in all three ability levels, including a full sweep of podium places in two races, with two Ontario

athletes tied for gold in one race. The results are a true reflection of the Pathways for Champions Training Program (funded by the Government of Ontario, Sport Priority Funding). The program taught athletes how to strive to be high performance athletes.

2017 World Winter Games – Austria

Austria...here we come! Special Olympics Ontario is proud of the 37 athletes, six coaches and three staff members who have been named to Team Canada. They will be part of the 148 member team that will represent Canada in Graz, Schladming and Ramsau, Austria in March 2017.

The team includes the Guelph BunsMaster Rollers (2007 World Winter Games silver medalist), who will be returning to the world stage to claim the gold medal they missed eight years earlier.

Congratulations to all the members of Team Canada. Good Luck, Bonne Chance in Austria.



SCOTIABANK



VIA RAIL



Proud Sponsor of
Special Olympics Ontario

Scotiabank's Hockey for Hockey Program

From its 2011/2012 inaugural season, Scotiabank's Hockey for Hockey Program has continued to successfully expand. Scotiabank's generous support improves the lives of athletes with an intellectual disability, giving them the opportunity to enjoy the sport of floor hockey.

For this endeavor, we cannot thank you enough, Scotiabank!



Proud Sponsor of Special Olympics Ontario

9 Years and Counting...

VIA Rail is a proud and enthusiastic supporter of Special Olympics Ontario, assisting with travel arrangements for athletes, families and coaches to regional, provincial and national games. Their continued partnership is truly appreciated.

Thanks VIA for the safe travels in the past and into the future!



PROVINCIAL AWARDS



TEAM OF THE YEAR

Manitoulin Island
The Manitoulin Rockin' Sweepers
Curling Team

The Manitoulin Rockin' Sweepers, also known as "Team Fancy Pants" has not only swept the rocks in curling, but the hearts of the people around them. The members of this team are Regan Millsap, Rebecca Strain, Randy Corbiere, Andrew Splawnyck, and Jeffrey Panamick, along with coaches Nancy Leeson and Ellen Holroyd.

This team is the definition of sportsmanship, teamwork and heart. Many athletes on this team had to make an important decision between competing individually in other sports for a chance to participate in world games, or to stay true to their curling team. All of them chose to stay with the team, even though this meant they would not be able to compete at world games. Whether they were balancing a full time job, or being a full time student, athletes on the team committed themselves to practicing and following a nutritional and physical fitness plan. They worked together as a team to achieve their common goal.

Their hard work paid off as they won silver in the A Division at the 2016 National Winter Games in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. This team is known for always being high spirited, friendly, and respectful to coaches and other athletes. They support their local community off the ice, lending a helping hand at Special Olympics fundraising events.

This is a young, multi-talented team who are working even harder than ever to establish their future goal of winning gold at the next national games

Congratulations Manitoulin Rockin' Sweepers on being presented with the 2016 Team of the Year Award.



SCHOOL TEAM OF THE YEAR

Bracebridge
Bracebridge Muskoka Lakes Secondary School
Basketball Team

The Bracebridge Muskoka Lakes Secondary School (BMLSS) basketball team had a fantastic 2015/2016 season. After winning the qualifier hosted at their school during the year, the team represented BMLSS at the 2016 School Championships in Durham region. Team members Colton Kacsma, Logan Finch, Cobey Jutras, Michael Towns and Alex Aldridge were coached by BMLSS teachers Julia McCreadie and Breandan Roche.

Teacher and coach, Julia McCreadie states how Special Olympics has made the team feel included within their school. "When the boys on this team came to high school they didn't know what it felt like to be part of something... to be part of a team. Before they had the opportunity to compete with Special Olympics Ontario, they didn't know what it felt like to put on their school's jersey, to wear their school colours and represent their entire school, to simply be part of something bigger than themselves."

After finding out they had qualified months before the championships, the team worked tirelessly to prepare for the tournament with weekly practices honing their skills and teamwork. With the immense support of their friends, families and schoolmates, the team travelled down to Durham for their first ever championships experience.

Their preparation paid off, as after two tough days of competition, the team returned home proudly to their school with gold medals and a championship banner in the Foster Division.

Congratulations BMLSS on being named the first ever School Team of the Year!



FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR
Midhurst
Cathy Smith

Cathy Smith is a long-standing athlete with Special Olympics Ontario. She has been involved in the movement since 1996 and has participated in several sports including: five-pin bowling, swimming, cross-country skiing, athletics and snowshoeing.

Cathy demonstrated her athletic ability in transitioning from nordic skiing to snowshoeing as part of her training for world games. Her newfound love for the sport of snowshoeing made her a strong competitor. Throughout her training, she continuously demonstrated her hard work and dedication. Her coaches would push her to the limit, but she would smile through it and always put her best efforts forward.

She has participated in many regional, provincial and national games. One of her greatest highlights thus far was travelling with Team

Canada to Los Angeles for the 2015 World Summer Games in athletics, where she brought home gold and silver medals!

Cathy brings nothing but joy and positivity to those around her. She is an inspiration to many as she continues to venture out of her comfort zone by participating in new programs, meeting people and working with coaches. She interacts well with her coaches, athletes and volunteers, and uses her own personal experience to mentor the younger athletes.

Congratulations Cathy Smith on being presented with the 2016 Female Athlete of the Year Award.



MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR
Manitoulin Island
Dayne Tipper

Dayne Tipper began his career as a Special Olympics athlete in 2006 on Manitoulin Island. He is multi-talented and participates in various sports such as athletics, snowshoeing, floor hockey and softball.

Dayne is known for his leadership qualities and always displays great sportsmanship. He continuously puts the best interests of others before his own, creating opportunities for other athletes to participate and score. His thoughtfulness and positivity is highly valued by other athletes and his coaches.

Dayne started with Special Olympics by participating in athletics (50 metre race). Since then he has displayed perseverance in his training. As such, he is now able to compete in the 1500m races. Dayne was extremely sick the night before and the morning of his

final races at the 2016 National Winter Games in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. However, his commitment, dedication and desire to compete earned him a bronze medal showcasing his hard work. He knew and understood what his goal was and completed the task that he set out to accomplish.

His vibrant personality is not what makes him a great athlete, rather it is the fact that he is an amazing person and a leader. His constant positivity, courteous behaviour to others and hard work is what makes Dayne the all-around superstar that he is!

Congratulations Dayne on being presented with the 2016 Male Athlete of the Year Award.

PROVINCIAL AWARDS



Talin is an athlete whose hard work and dedication has led to many accomplishments both on and off the field. Participating in athletics, soccer and bocce, Talin won silver medals at the 2013 Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA) Track and Field Championships and in 100m and long jump at the 2013 Special Olympics Provincial Summer Games. She was also provincial school championship gold medalist for 100m, 200m, long jump and shot put.

SCHOOL ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

St. Catharines

Talin Najarian

Governor Simcoe Secondary School

Off the playing field, Talin has dedicated herself to many community initiatives, including the school beautification project, participating in the awareness of the Armenian genocide in Ottawa, volunteering on the Syrian refugee committee and volunteering

at the Folk Arts Niagara event. She has accomplished all this while still maintaining excellence in her studies, receiving the Principal's Commendation for Outstanding Academic Achievement in 2014!

Continuing to strive for success, Talin has applied to Mohawk College in the Career Exploration Program and also would like to become a personal trainer.

Congratulations Talin, on being presented with the first ever 2016 School Athlete of the Year award.



ATHLETE LIFE TIME AWARD

London

Scott Tennant

Leadership, hard work, and sportsmanship are values that are the foundation of Special Olympics and are embodied by the contributions of Scott Tennant, the 2016 recipient of the Athlete Lifetime Achievement Award. Scott started his illustrious career in the fall of 2000, when he attended his first floor hockey practice, and since then has been an influential figure in the Special Olympics community.

Scott has particularly excelled in floor hockey. Although this list does not do justice to his achievements, he won gold medals in the national winter games in 2008 and 2012, as well as a silver medal at the 2009 World Winter Games and the 2015 Provincial Floor Hockey Games Championship. As an athlete, Scott is known for his tough and tenacious play as well as his leadership ability to rally his team in tough situations.

Undoubtedly, Scott's greatest achievements have manifested

themselves off the playing field. Scott is the epitome of a Special Olympics ambassador and has taken part in countless events to raise awareness for Special Olympics. For his work in the community and in athletics, Scott was awarded the London Sports person of the year in 2009, and was inducted into the Guelph Sports Hall of Fame on October 26, 2009.

"Scooter", as Scott is known by his peers, is a leader and a gifted speaker. His speeches at public events exude warmth and sincerity. One particular moment that best describes Scott is when he found out his team did not qualify for world games. In response, Scott delivered a message that speaks to his character as an individual: "Our dream has ended, but someone else's dream is just around the corner."

Congratulations Scott, on being presented with the 2016 Athlete Lifetime Achievement Award.



EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

North Bay

Rob Saunders

Special Olympics Ontario is nothing without the commitment and dedication of volunteers, coaches and educators who work behind the scenes to provide programs, services and resources to Special Olympics athletes. Rob Saunders is a testament to this dedication. He has been an integral figure in developing Special Olympics in the north east district for nearly 35 years. Over these years, Rob has held many roles. He has been to countless national and provincial games as an athletics and swim coach, and has also held the position of Community Coordinator for North Bay.

Rob's dedication and commitment to the Special Olympics' movement is evident in the legacy he is creating within school programs. In the Near North District School Board, Rob acts as coordinator and has championed school events and sport opportunities. Among them include hosting seven generic Special Olympics school events that have dramatically increased in size and brought new members to the Special Olympics community.

At the 2015 Provincial Winter Games in North Bay, Rob played an integral part as community liaison with the games management team. As a testament to his work in North Bay, Rob received the Pete Palangio Award for contribution to sport at the North Bay Sports Hall of Fame.

An abundance of coaches, educators and volunteers have been recruited as a result of Rob's dedication to the values of Special Olympics. As a lifelong learner, Rob continues to develop his skills and the skills of leaders within his community to improve athlete experiences. Rob embodies what all educators and community leaders in Special Olympics aspire to be.

Congratulations Rob on being presented with the 2016 Educator of the Year Award.



FEMALE COACH OF THE YEAR
Simcoe
Shirley Shaw

An athlete's success in competition and in their local community can be greatly influenced by the skills they develop through wonderful coaches. Shirley Shaw is a testament to this. She has been an active participant in all aspects of Special Olympics for over 10 years.

Shirley's dedication and work ethic as a coach has been especially notable in the development of an elite swimming program for Special Olympics athletes in Simcoe. Shirley is known for her methodical coaching style, and through her nurturing and leadership has progressed beginner swimmers to elite athletes who now compete in provincial, national and world games!

Shirley is involved in all facets of her swimming program from nutrition, strength and conditioning, finances and volunteer work.

She is constantly working to provide the best for Special Olympics services and programs in Simcoe.

As a lifelong learner, Shirley continues to enhance her coaching skills by attending training sessions, while also offering her expertise to her fellow coaches and volunteers. Shirley has earned the admiration and respect of coaches and volunteers for the strong swim program she pioneered, a testament to her passion and dedication for the athletes.

Congratulations Shirley on being presented with the 2016 Female Coach of the year Award.



MALE COACH OF THE YEAR
Perth
Terry Fox

Special Olympics proves every day that the benefits of sport are felt far beyond the playing field. None of this would be possible without the dedication and guidance of Special Olympics' coaches who provide athletes with opportunities to experience the gift that sport and physical activity have to offer.

Terry Fox is one of these individuals whose dedication and leadership has remained consistent for 25 years within the Special Olympics community in Perth, Ontario.

Terry has worked extensively in the field of special needs. In the early 1990's he started a baseball team for his clients as a means to get them active. He eventually saw an advertisement in the newspaper looking for a coach for the challenger division in the local little league. Terry saw this as an opportunity to raise funds for his group and eventually this program evolved into a Special Olympics multi-sport program for

the area. Terry's peers admire his dedication to the Special Olympics' movement in Perth. As a coach of four of the six sports that are offered, he has logged more than 7,000 hours to Special Olympics initiatives!

Terry is generous with his time and expertise and has nurtured Special Olympics in Perth since its inception. The best measure of a coach is his ability to affect athletes in the broader aspects of life. Terry balances athletic and life skills development perfectly and has helped his players through struggles both on and off the field. Terry's dedication, leadership and continued contribution is the backbone of the Special Olympics community in Perth. He is the embodiment of what coaches aspire to be.

Congratulations Terry on being presented with the 2016 Male Coach of the Year Award.

PROVINCIAL AWARDS

In communities across the province certain individuals have become central to the development of Special Olympics programs, its athletes, volunteers and their families.

Diane Wahlman is one of these exceptional individuals who has had a tremendous impact on every aspect of Special Olympics in her community and district. Diane has devoted 18 years to the Special Olympics community, particularly in Timmins and the North East District. Her success has been evident in the countless appearances at provincial and national games, and the standard of excellence to which Timmins holds themselves. Some of her amazing achievements include attending the 2013 Provincial Summer Games in York Region as team manager for the Timmins soccer team. She renewed this position in 2014, attending the National Summer Games in Vancouver, B.C. More recently, Diane served as team manager for the Timmins basketball team at the 2016 Provincial Spring Games in Guelph.



PRESIDENT'S AWARD
Timmins
Diane Wahlman

Diane's impact has been felt both on and off the playing field. As a trailblazer of the old Region 10 and a member of various provincial and

regional committees, Diane continues to enhance the opportunities for athletes within Timmins and Northern Ontario. Timmins was one of the first community groups to target schools for recruitment and events, a strategy that has proven to be a model and an incredible source of growth across the province. This has translated into an influx of younger athletes into programs. As a true advocate for Special Olympics Ontario, Diane has been responsible for raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for Special Olympics, and with her tutelage has seen athletes and volunteers inducted into the Timmins Sports Hall of Fame.

Her importance in the lives of volunteers, coaches, and athletes is the truest measure of her impact. Throughout the years, Diane has been a motherly figure in the Timmins community. She is adored and respected for going the extra mile to ensure the success of her colleagues and athletes.

Congratulations Diane on being presented with the 2016 President's Award.

Denita Minoletti has been volunteering for over 5 years with Special Olympics Ontario in Thunder Bay. During this time, Denita has been an integral part of the phenomenal growth of Special Olympics in the North West and has been the driving force in the development of several events, programs, initiatives and partnerships that have seen a wide variety of new athletes enter the movement. Her commitment to Special Olympics is exemplified by the hundreds of hours she dedicates every month to athletes, coaches, programs and the community.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
Thunder Bay
Denita Minoletti

During her time with Special Olympics Ontario, Denita has had a diverse portfolio including sport, marketing/fundraising, administration and major games. As an event coordinator, Denita played a significant role in the organization and execution of banquets, social events and fundraising initiatives including the Polar Bear Plunge, Conquer the Fort Run and the Christmas Parade of Lights.

Denita oversees almost every aspect of the organization and is the consummate supporter providing assistance, guidance and encouragement to everyone she encounters. If you are working on a project with Special Olympics in Thunder Bay you can be assured that Denita will be right beside you helping to make it a success.

Denita continues to have a profound impact on athletes, coaches, volunteers and families that make up Special Olympics. Her positivity, hard work and dedication are an incredible example of what makes Special Olympics in Thunder Bay the successful program it is today.

Congratulations, Denita, on being presented with the 2016 Volunteer of the Year Award.



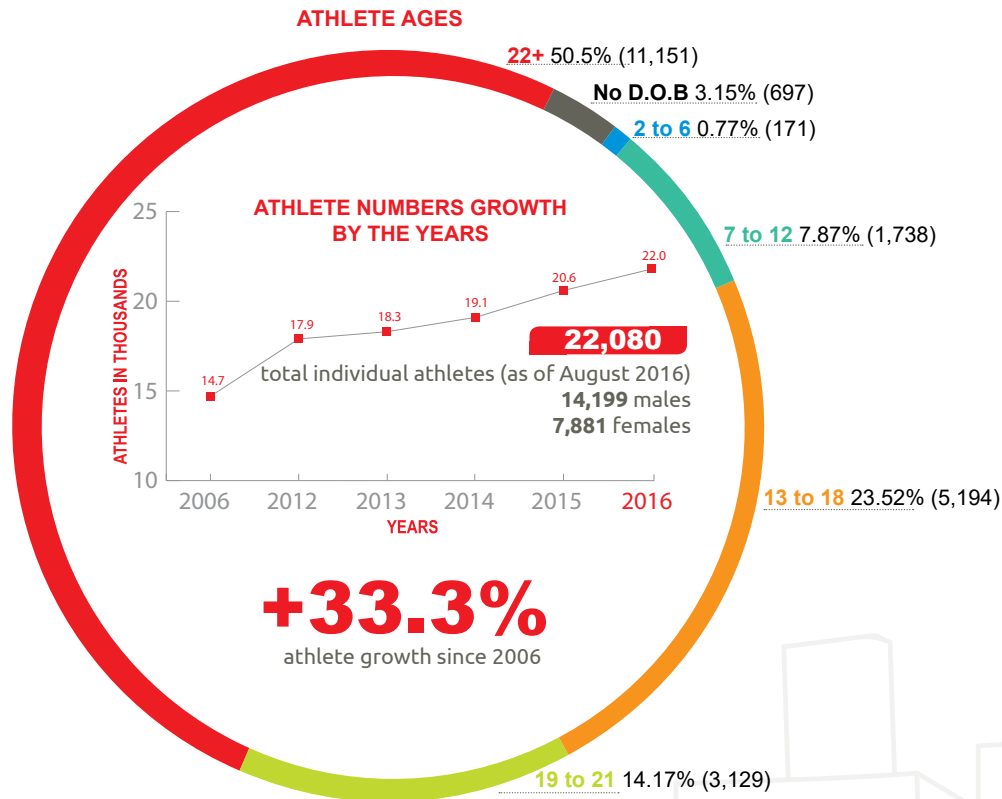
A humble thank you to the Ontario Hockey League for their proud and enthusiastic partnership with Special Olympics Ontario and for their continued support of changing attitudes, raising awareness and promoting respect for a more inclusive society.



REACH REPORT 2016

Volunteers, Community Participation & Support

Athlete Numbers & Demographics



Special Olympics Ontario Clubs & Programs

2,296

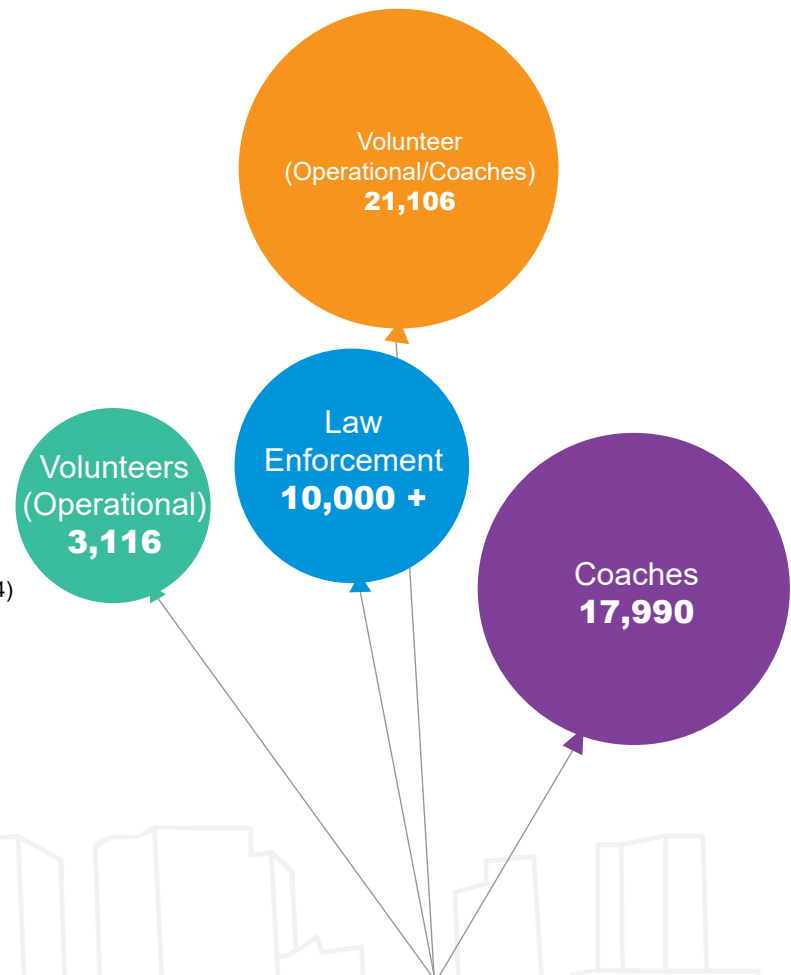
total clubs related
to Special Olympics Ontario

- 1,055 Community Clubs
- 1,169 School Clubs
- 72 Youth Clubs

9,899 community athletes, 4,873 community volunteers, 12,181 school athletes, 5,524 school educators, 59 school boards, 963 schools and 1,772 development programs (Youth Programs, Active Start, Fundamentals & Healthy Living).

\$8,892,219

an increase of 51.5% dollars this year versus \$4,312,852 in 2010.





Special Olympics Ontario gratefully acknowledges
the support of the **Government of Ontario**.





FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS POUR OLYMPIQUES SPÉCIAUX

2015 was a record-breaking year for motionball, from the number of events we hosted to the number of young professionals we engaged.

We are proud to have reached a milestone \$1M net donation in the 2015 calendar year, and look forward to making this an annual net donation in the years to come.



2015 In Numbers



18 events



12 cities across
Canada



5,000 Gala
Guests

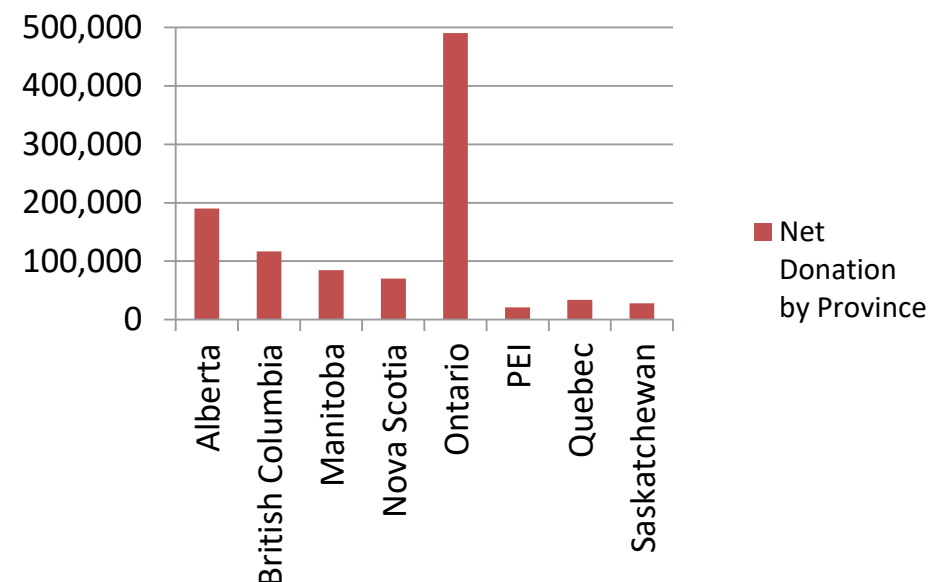


275 Marathon of
Sport Teams



**\$1,058,000 = 2015 net donation to the
Special Olympics Canada Foundation.**

At motionball's request, 70% of the funds raised from each event, were sent to the affiliated Special Olympics Provincial Chapter.



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