Special Olympics Ontario

Fundraising, Partnerships, and Resources



Agenda

- Introduction
- National/Provincial Campaigns
- LETR
- Community Fundraising
- Resources
- Questions



Introduction

- About me: Jason Hussak, Manager of Community Fundraising and Sponsorships

- Fundraising locally
- Supporting major campaigns
- Working together



Empire Check Stand Campaign

- In Ontario - Sobey's, Safeway, and Foodland
- Raised over $1.73 million in Canada in 2026
- In 2026, campaign was from June 11-21
- Donation requests at check stand/cash
- Athletes/Volunteers visited local stores to thank the staff
- Priority stores with pre-arranged visits
- Share and push on social media, through supporters, etc.



Tim Hortons Special Olympics Donut

- Raised $1.3 million in Canada in 2026
  - Nearly half from Ontario
- Campaign ran from Feb 3rd to Feb 5th.
- Sold specialty donuts with all proceeds going to Special Olympics in Canada
- Returns Jan 29-31.
- Encourage pictures, visits, social posts, and help push awareness of the campaign



Campaign Overview

- Funds raised provide critical program support
  - Games Travel
  - Field staff support
  - Volunteer/Athlete Training
  - Admin, Insurance, Promotions
  - Development Initiatives
- Rely on local support to grow campaigns

- Please ask Provincial Office before approaching Provincial/National partners for local fundraising support



24H Blue

- Skiing fundraiser
- Held annually in Blue Mountain
- Participants can join individually or in teams
- 24 hours of skiing and snowboarding, team relay event
- SOO teams/clubs/communities encouraged to join



Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR)

- Major fundraising wing led by law enforcement partners
- Polar Plunge
  - 2026 – 35 plunges, $1.2 million raised
  - 2027 – goal of 40 plunges
  - Athletes/volunteers – 75% of funds raised sent back to local council
- Other events:
  - Pickleball for a Cause
  - OHL Big Ticket
  - NHL Alumni



Community Fundraising

- SPOTLIGHT – SOO-Sarnia
  - 1. Annual Raffles – Cheer for a Year & Last Blast
  - 2. Building Relationships with Local Service Clubs
  - 3. 50/50 Draws at Events (lottery license required, support available)
  - 4. Annual Banquet Silent Auction
  - 5. Grant Applications



Community Fundraising

- SPOTLIGHT – SOO-Sarnia
  - 6. Using CrowdChange for Online Fundraising
  - 7. Point-of-Sale (POS) System
  - 8. Social Media & Paid Addvertising
  - 9. Keeping Families Informed Without Overburdening Them

- Fundraising doesn't have to rely on athletes and families selling tickets or asking for donations



Community Fundraising

- Local Events
  - Galas
  - Golf tournaments
  - Pledge events (bowlathon, swimathon, etc)
  - Restaurant/pub events
- Tips:
  - Don’t do everything yourself
  - Build a team
  - Engage families of athletes, athlete stories
  - Plan thoroughly
  - Use available tools and resources
  - Know your market
  - Don’t be afraid to start small
  - Take advantage of existing opportunities (events like Polar Plunge, 3rd party events looking for charity recipients)



Resources

- CrowdChange
  - Online fundraising and payment platform
  - Launched in fall of 2021 to pilot communities
  - SOO Communities who do not yet have a page can get one upon request
  - Can be used to support a variety of events
  - Donations, registrations, tickets, sponsor campaigns, pledge-based events
  - Immediately provides tax receipts to donors
  - Money deposited directly into your community bank account within 3 days
  - Clear and easy reporting for treasurers
  - Continually developing and honing the platform
  - Lots of sharing tools (QR Codes, social media, etc)



Resources

- Resource Library
- https://www1.specialolympicsontario.com/resources/communities-and-clubs-2/marketing-and-fundraising/
  - Corporate Partnerships
  - Provincial and National Campaigns
  - Online Fundraising
  - Sample Letters
  - Facts and FAQs
  - Basic Templates



Resources

- Templates and Support
  - We are available to help!
  - If you're looking for template letters for things like
  - Sponsorship
  - Donation request
  - Auction request
  - Service club requests
  - Thank you to donors
  - Contact Jason at jasonh@specialolympicsontario.com



Questions?

