



Annual Report 2013
Revealing the Champion in All of Us

**Special
Olympics**
Alberta



Special Olympics Alberta

2,974 Athletes 1,102 Volunteers 545 Coaches
18 sports in 34 communities across Alberta

Airdrie & District

Barrhead

Brooks

Calgary

Camrose

Crowsnest Pass

Devon

Drumheller

Edmonton

Edson

Foothills

Fort McMurray

Grande Prairie

Hinton

Innisfail

Jasper

Lacombe

Lakeland

Leduc

Lethbridge

Lloydminster

Medicine Hat

Olds & District

Peace River

Red Deer

Rocky Mountain House

St. Albert

St. Paul

Strathcona

Vegreville

West Central

Westlock

Wetaskiwin

Whitecourt



Mission

Special Olympics Alberta is committed to enriching the lives of Albertans with an intellectual disability through sport.

Vision

Special Olympics Alberta provides individuals with an intellectual disability, of all ages, abilities, opportunity to realize their full athletic potential, with appropriate training, coaching and competitions, to develop life skills, a healthy body and self-esteem.

Special Olympics is more than an event!

Special Olympics delivers **world-class sport programs** to people with intellectual disabilities of **all ages** and a **wide range of abilities daily in communities across Alberta.**

Special Olympics believes that people with intellectual disabilities can, and will, **succeed when given the opportunity** – we are leveling the playing field.

Special Olympics is a catalyst for **social change**. Our programs help:

- instill confidence, self-esteem and other life skills in our athletes
- contribute to healthier athletes with life-long physical fitness habits
- change attitudes and create a more inclusive society
- strengthen communities

Special Olympics Alberta is an accredited chapter of Special Olympics Canada





Karen Saunders
Board of Directors Chair

Message from the Board of Directors Chair

Looking back at 2012-2013 makes me very proud to be a part of this organization and this family we call Special Olympics Alberta.

While always keeping our athletes, their experience and helping them achieve their goals as our true focus; we faced a number of changes throughout the year.

We have started a new tradition with our SO Dance gala – raising funds and awareness in a unique way. Eleven of our athletes experienced big changes when they journeyed 18 hours to compete at the World Winter Games in PyeongChang, South Korea – they were amazing! For the first time we had split Spring and Summer games that challenged the staff, but all athletes had a wonderful experience and achieved success in their chosen sports. 161 athletes, coaches and mission staff will now proudly wear Alberta colours next July in BC at the 2014 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games Vancouver.

We had changes at the provincial office – the end result is a rock solid team that is focused on doing the best for our athletes. They are full of plans and ideas to bring more awareness to the broader Alberta community; to share the stories of our athletes and to educate all about the strengths and abilities of those with an intellectual disability. And they are there to support you: the volunteers and coaches that give so generously of your time and are so committed to our athletes.

Thank you for all that you have done this past year – you have made a difference in so many lives.



Johnny Byrne
President and CEO

Message from the President and CEO

Annual reports are a time of celebration and reflection. I also see them as a time to look to the future and get excited about how our past accomplishments will help propel us forward.

In 2012-2013 we stepped up the engagement and empowerment of our Affiliate Representative and Athlete Leadership Councils. This helped establish them as a direct link and voice of our grass roots.

Our ground breaking provincial games were the cornerstone of our year. They provided over 1,200 athletes, volunteers and coaches with a quality competition and games experiences. These games also allowed us to select Team Alberta and to put our organization on a pedestal in two regions of the province, bringing heightened awareness and community engagement.

We heard loud and clear that affiliates need more support in recruiting, training and retaining volunteers. That job has started and we look forward to continuing to build our resources and take advantage of technology and online innovation to help us.

Soak in the pages ahead and celebrate with us the truly spectacular year we all made happen. I look forward to working together as we shape our bright future ahead.



A Year in Review

Advance Quality Sports and Competition

- Growth: 200 athletes, 100 volunteers, and community programs in Devon and Jasper
- Youth sports day in Calgary engaging over 100 youth in schools
- Virtual bowling competition held involving over 380 athletes from 8 affiliates
- Coach and Sport Development Workshops in six summer sports reached over 50 coaches
- *Athletes as Program Assistants* course piloted in Calgary
- Global Swimming Invitational, San Juan, Puerto Rico: Three athletes and one coach attended
- First ever National Golf Tournament, Hamilton: Ten athletes and five coaches attended
- 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games, PyeongChang, Korea: 11 athletes, 4 coaches, 1 mission staff from Alberta, brought home 18 medals for Team Canada
- Spring Games, Red Deer: Four sports, 26 affiliates, 553 athletes
- Summer Games, Devon: Seven sports, 17 affiliates, 394 athletes
- Grande Prairie named host of the 2015 Special Olympics Alberta Winter Games

Building Communities

- National strategic plan adopted at 2012 AGM. New strategic and business plans implemented by the board for 2013-2014
- Athlete Leadership Committee selected by peer election at AGM. First Athlete Leadership workshop hosted and a chair was elected.
- Healthcare community engaged to provide Physiotherapy and Dietician sessions at Spring Games

Connecting Fans & Funds

- \$654,506 invested in Community Development
- Increased awareness through Facebook and Twitter
- LETR completed Final Leg Torch Runs for both Provincial Games expanding the traditional run to include school awareness visits
- Special Olympics Alberta Festival "S.O. Dance!" partnered Olympic celebrities and athletes to create an electrifying evening of dancing, fundraising and awareness
- The 28th Motor Dealers Association Charity Classic raised \$226,000
- LETR ran activities that reached four new communities and raised over \$315,000 provincially



Our Athletes Home and Abroad

Special Olympics World Winter Games PyeongChang



On the evening of January 29, 2013 in the snowy mountains of the Republic of Korea, thousands

gathered in the Yongpyong Dome, to officially open the start of the 10th Special Olympics World Winter Games. For the next eight days over 3,300 athletes and coaches, representing 112 countries fulfilled their dreams and embodied the athlete's oath at the highest level.

Canada was proudly represented by 102 athletes and 39 coaches and mission staff from ten provinces and two territories. Alberta sent an all-time high number of athletes in individual sports. With 11 athletes, 4 coaches, and 1 mission staff from the sports of Alpine and Cross Country Skiing, and Figure and Speed Skating bringing home 18 medals and being world class ambassadors for our province and programs.

Special Olympics Alberta Spring Games Red Deer and Summer Games Devon



It is a great privilege and significant responsibility to host a Special Olympics Games. In 2013, two of our provinces finest communities played host to our athletes, volunteers and supporters. Red Deer hosted the Spring Games from April 19 to 21 and Devon hosted the Summer Games from June 21 to 23.

Red Deer celebrated its centennial in style playing host to the Spring Games. 553 athletes took part in 5 and 10 pin bowling, basketball and swimming.

Devon became the smallest town to ever host a Summer Games. The size of the town had no effect on the grandeur of the games with 394 athletes being treated to an amazing games experience. The Summer Games was a frenzy of sports in: athletics, powerlifting, soccer, softball, rhythmic gymnastics and, for the first time, bocce and golf. Despite devastating rainfall and flooding, our southern affiliates made the journey to compete and show the true spirit of sports leadership.



Thank you to all our wonderful sponsors!

Spring Games: The City of Red Deer, Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools, Safeway, Servus Credit Union, The Wallah Group, Red Deer and District Community Foundation, Nova Chemicals, Red Deer Public Schools, Studon Electric and Controls Inc. Optimist International, Copies Now and The Sutter Fund

Summer Games: Town of Devon, Devon Golf and Country Club, City of Leduc, Leduc County, Devon IGA, Oil Country Engineering, Parkland County, RE/MAX, Shriners, City of Spruce Grove, Government of Alberta, Allstar Show Industries, Devon Home Hardware, Qualico, Tim Hortons

Alberta Law Enforcement Torch Run



From the humble beginnings in Wichita, Kansas to more than 100,000 law enforcement officers from around the world, the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) has become an essential part of the Special Olympics Alberta. The mission of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics is to raise awareness and funds for the Special Olympics movement worldwide. Officers from every Alberta Law Enforcement Agency take part in several different events throughout the year: Free the Fuzz, Harley Raffle Draw, LETR Wal-Mart Sit, Cycle for a Cause, Half Marathon, Cora Cops and Crepes, and Polar Plunge.

LETR Sponsors: Wal-Mart, Coras, Skyway, Visions, Arbour Lake Residents Association
Alberta LETR raised over \$315,000 in 2012.

Motor Dealers Association of Alberta

To date, the MDA has generously donated over \$5.25 million to Special Olympics Alberta in the past 32 years. As the largest single donor to Special Olympics Alberta, the MDA has continued their strong support to athletes and sports programs with a donation of \$226,000 in 2012.





Female Athlete of the Year

Katie Foreman
Airdrie

Open-minded and dedicated are the best ways to describe Katie. In the last two years alone, she has learned a new sport, participated in the Alberta Summer Games for swimming, improved her personal bests and shown true dedication to becoming a better athlete. Katie strives to live an independent life. She participated in the Transitional Vocation Program at Mount Royal University, a program that helps the individual to become more self-sufficient, teaches healthy lifestyle choices, and ways to obtain and retain employment. She challenges herself with new activities and pushes herself to improve. Embracing a lifestyle of sports, she loves to make a commitment to set new goals for herself and puts in the hard work to accomplish this. She is also a team player cheering on others and encouraging them.



Male Athlete of the Year

Shaun Pydde
Wetaskiwin

Shaun has come a long way from sitting on the court during floor hockey to becoming a leader and role model for his fellow athletes. After 12 years in Special Olympics, Shaun has become a community leader, is a hardworking employed citizen, an enthusiastic fundraiser and an avid sports competitor in: floor hockey, bowling, curling, and golf. Passionate about making a difference, Shaun initiated a fundraising drive at his work by collecting bottles where all the proceeds went towards sponsoring the Special Olympics Wetaskiwin annual banquet for athletes and volunteers. He now has inspired his whole family to take part in fundraising for the local Special Olympics programs. It is Shaun's leadership in sports and in the community that creates a growing awareness of Special Olympics and how simple acts can make a big impact.



Team of the Year

**Wetaskiwin
Wildcats**
Floor Hockey

Wetaskiwin

This team is all about sportsmanship and fair play. The athletes not only strive for their best on the court, but also in the community. Many of the team members live independently, have jobs, participate in community activities and volunteer locally. The Wetaskiwin Wildcats have played floor hockey together for almost 20 years and in that time they have travelled to many places like San Diego and Montreal while being solid ambassadors for Alberta and Special Olympics. They have helped promote the sport of floor hockey in Special Olympics-team members took part in the developmental floor hockey program in Montana. Being part of the community is important for the Wildcats. The team has assisted seniors with mobility issues and provided support with lawn care and maintenance as a way to give back to the community. Together, their hard work and commitment has allowed them to reveal their full potential.



Volunteer of the Year

Diane Yanch
Strathcona

Diane is a jack-of-all-trades. She does everything from registrations and volunteer management, coordinating programs, tournament organization, being the cheerleader for all, and now she is starting to dabble in coaching. She is more than an administrator to Special Olympics Strathcona County. She is loved by all the athletes – she is a big sister, a shoulder for those who need it, and a strong female leader for the female athletes who go to her for advice. In addition to all her roles in her home community, she was a Director of Logistics for the Summer Games Devon. Even with a full time job, Diane dedicates her time volunteering and giving to Special Olympics. She is untiring, selfless and limitless. She embodies the spirit of volunteerism and Special Olympics.



Female Coach of the Year

Sheana McDermott
Wetaskiwin

Sheana is the chair of the AMC and head coach of 5 and 10 pin bowling. She is one of the initial founders of Special Olympics in Wetaskiwin. She was doing bowling before it was even affiliated. She has been involved in every aspect of our club and always advocating for her bowlers. She is a mentor, a mom, a coach, and social worker. She will do anything for Special Olympics that needs doing- she has been bus driver, event planner and front line volunteer at times. With all she does, she also takes the time to manage over 60 Bowlers in two classes of 5 and 10 pin bowling all at the same time. Her commitment is boundless. No matter what- win, lose or draw, her first words are always “Did you have fun?”, and “That’s ok you did your best.” She is all about sportsmanship. Sheana is the first to arrive and the last to leave- providing everyone the perfect example of what a volunteer and coach is.



Male Coach of the Year

Jason Gillow
Wetaskiwin

Jason has been the head coach of Wetaskiwin’s floor hockey for over 16 years and was an assistant coach before that. He strives to bring out the best in our athletes with sportsmanship being a priority. He assists with life skills and community involvement. Jason is also a referee and works to improve his credentials every chance he gets. Jason has a host of credentials as a coach including several gold medals in provincial games, one gold medal in San Diego, and two silver medals in Montreal. He is supportive of our athletes both during practice and in the community and assists with fundraising and promoting the local club. Jason goes the extra mile each and every time something needs to be done and he always leads by example. Above all, sportsmanship and respect is always demanded by Jason- no excuses.



Motor Dealers Association of Alberta Community Leadership Award

Camrose has made an amazing resurgence over the past two years. Behind a solid leadership team, they have revitalized their AMC ensuring their volunteers are engaged and empowered while putting their athletes first in decision making. They have demonstrated strong community engagement working with the local university, hockey team and Law Enforcement. They continue to grow their programs ensuring the needs of current and potential athletes are met. They have grown from 68 to 78 athletes and increased their volunteers from 10 to 37. Special Olympics in Camrose has become a staple in that community because of quality of their program and the reputation they have built. They have had an amazing year and things are only looking up.

Murray Koch Youth Development Award

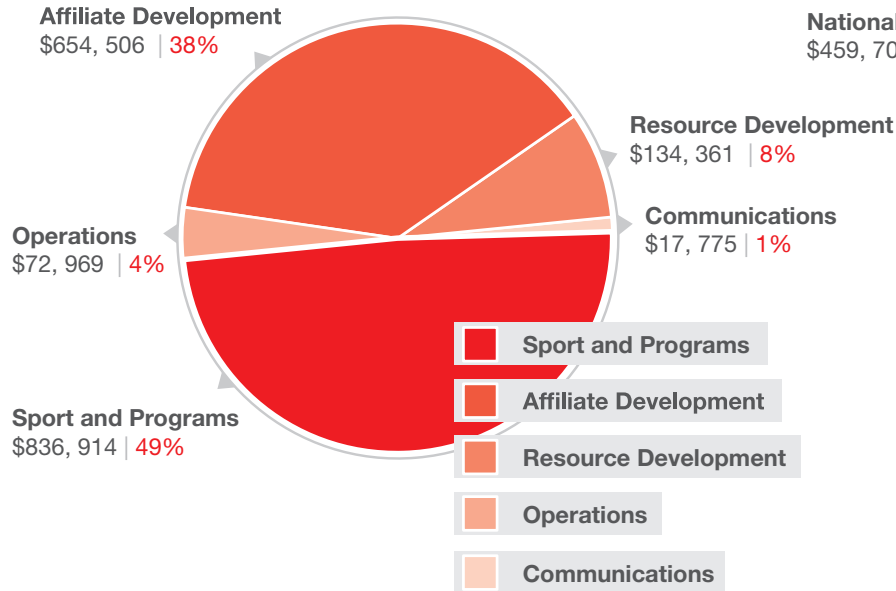
Calgary has continually demonstrated a youth friendly environment and has shown that they understand and embrace the importance of young athlete participation. In June they took the initiative to plan and host a Youth Sports day for schools in Calgary that reached over 100 youth with an intellectual disability. This was the first of its kind event in Alberta and showed great leadership in the youth development area. They continue to run youth inclusive programs and have one of the longest standing community based Young Athletes program.

LETR Community Spirit Award

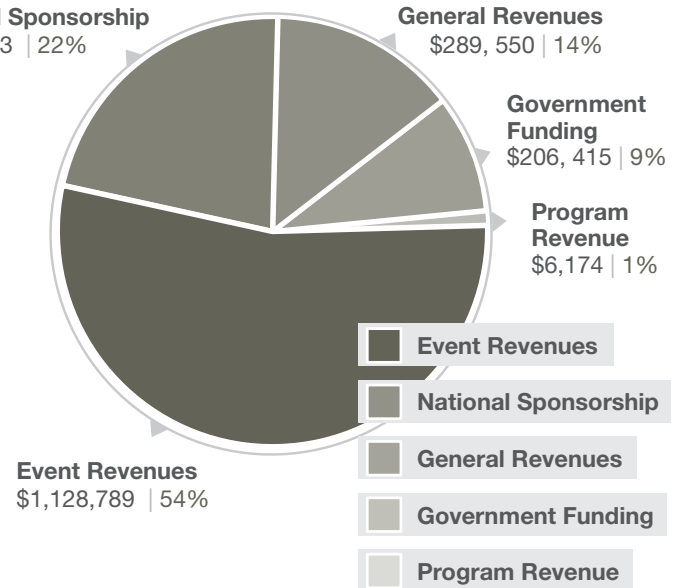
Old and District has embodied the spirit of the relationship between the LETR and Special Olympics this past year. They are being recognized for the commitment they have shown to building that relationship. Although there have been challenges identifying local law enforcement available to spearhead LETR events. The Olds affiliate continued to work tirelessly with the Provincial Executive to find new and inventive ways to create events in their community. When the opportunity arose to host a portion of the Final Leg, they embraced it. The stop turned out to be one of the highlights of the year for the LETR and was a symbol of the amazing community spirit that defines the Olds and District.

Financial Information

Where Does Your Money Go? Actual 2012/2013
Total Expenses \$ 1,716,525



Sources of Funding Actual 2012/2013
Total Revenue \$2,090,630



Donors over \$1000, includes all Special Olympics communities in Alberta

AGAT Laboratories LTD
Alberta Moose Association - Gaming
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* Athlete determined through a new nomination process by the ALC

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Michelle Deering, Martha McCormack, Katie McGillivray, Sallie Szanik, Jodi Flanagan, Georgette Reed, Bill McLaren

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