



SPECIAL OLYMPICS SASKATCHEWAN
ANNUAL REPORT
2023-2024

About

Special Olympics is a global grassroots movement, bringing community programs and competition opportunities to more than 4.5 million children, youth and adults with intellectual disabilities across 170 countries worldwide.

Our Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

Our vision is that sport will open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities all over the world.

Mission

Special Olympics Saskatchewan is dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals with an intellectual disability through sport.

Values

Inclusion: We foster inclusive communities

Diversity: We honour what is unique in each individual

Empowerment: We give everyone the opportunity to pursue their full potential

Respect: We operate in an environment of cooperation, collaboration and dignity

Excellence: We elevate standards and performance.

Our Communities & Districts

Our Special Olympics Communities play a vital role in the development of our athletes and volunteers. Every individual who is involved at the community level is giving our athletes the opportunity to participate and engage in sport.

South East District:

Special Olympics Estevan
Special Olympics Weyburn

Regina Sport District:

Special Olympics Regina

South West District:

Special Olympics Moose Jaw
Special Olympics Swift Current

Parkland Valley District:

Special Olympics Yorkton & District

Saskatoon Sport District:

Special Olympics Saskatoon

Rivers West District:

Special Olympics Kindersley
Special Olympics Meadow Lake
Special Olympics Unity & District
Special Olympics Battlefords & District

Lakeland District:

Special Olympics Melfort
Special Olympics Nipawin
Special Olympics Prince Albert

Meet Our Team



MORGAN CARVER
Chief Executive Officer

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

Put your health first.

If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

To have the ability to fly.



MADISON LAUGHREN
Sponsorship and Event Planning Coordinator

If you could eat only one meal/food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Cheesecake of any kind!

What is something you've always wanted to learn?

Trick riding



JARET DEZOTELL
Community Coordinator

Would you rather go back in time or transport to the future?

I would like to travel to the future and see what advancements or changes have been made to Society.

What are your favourite activities?

Spending time with family, going for walks, listening to podcast, playing and watching sports, and watching movies



SAM NAMIKI
Operations Coordinator

If you could pick up any new skill in an instant, what would it be?

Learning every language, and speak it like a native speaker

What is your dream Vacation?

Hawaii



BROOKLYN WEISGERBER
Program Coordinator

If you could live in any other country in the world, where would you live?

I'd say probably France. Then I could work on my French skills and eat some good food!

If you become famous right now, what would it be for?

It would probably have something to do with my passion for fitness and weight lifting



TARA MEIER
Youth, Health and Marketing Coordinator

What superpower would you never have?

I would never want to read minds.

If police arrested you with no explanation, what would your friends and family assume you've done?

Speeding ticket.



ROBBIE BOMBOIR
Maintenance

Who knows you best?

Morgan

What makes you the happiest?

Working



LUCAS FAYE
Assistant

What is your proudest accomplishment?

Playing 7 sports and winning a bunch of medals in them.

What qualities do you look for in a friend?

Being nice & friendly, And definitely not MEAN!

Letter From Our CEO : Morgan Carver

As I write to you at the close of another remarkable year, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and excitement for the future of our organization. This past year has been one of significant transformation and growth, and it is my privilege to share these updates with you as the new CEO of Special Olympics Saskatchewan. First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our outgoing CEO, whose leadership and dedication have been instrumental in bringing us to where we are today.

Stepping into this role, I am inspired by the incredible foundation laid, and I am committed to building upon it as we move forward. Within our office, we have seen a number of positive changes aimed at enhancing our ability to serve our athletes and their families. We have welcomed several new team members whose fresh perspectives and skills are already making a significant impact. Our renewed focus on collaboration and innovation drives us towards greater efficiency and effectiveness in all we do.

Introducing our new strategic plan is one of the most exciting developments this year. This plan sets a clear and ambitious course for the next three years. Our goals include expanding our athlete offerings, increasing community engagement, and improving our support structures to ensure every athlete can reach their full potential.

Reflecting on the past year, the National Winter Games in Calgary was undoubtedly a highlight. Our athletes showcased incredible talents and determination, and their performances were truly inspiring. Thank you to the coaches, volunteers, and staff for making this experience unforgettable.

In addition to these developments, Special Olympics received much positive news from the Health world when we were provided insights into a recent study done by Dr. Meghann Lloyd out of Ontario Tech University with their research into the effects of diabetes on Special Olympics athletes. This research is crucial in understanding our athletes' unique health challenges and developing tailored support and resources. In their research, they found that athletes enrolled in Special Olympics programming are 15% less likely to be diagnosed with diabetes compared to their peers. Our commitment to health and wellness extends beyond the playing field and informs our efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and provide comprehensive care. Read more about the study [here](#).

As we look ahead, I am excited about the possibilities that lie before us. The strength of our community – our athletes, families, volunteers, and supporters – gives me great confidence in our ability to achieve our goals and create an even brighter future for Special Olympics Saskatchewan.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication. Together, we are making a profound difference in the lives of our athletes and communities.

Warmest regards,

Morgan Carver

CEO, Special Olympics Saskatchewan



Our Board of Directors

Laurie Carpenter | Chair
Rhonda Penno | Vice Chair
Corey Hadden
Mahendre Bungsy
Carrie Hanwell
Jasmin Ogren
Trevor Walsh
Jessica Waller
Darren Whitehead
Tamara Flegel
Kim Folk
Tyler Kowalski
Sue Schmidt

Knights of Columbus Designate:
Terry Shalley

Athlete Representatives:
Carl Paulhus
Tyler Piercy-Servant



Statement of Operations

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

REVENUES	2024	2023
SASKATCHEWAN LOTTERIES TRUST FUND	313,757	347,200
SELF HELP REVENUE	582,592	467,323
NATIONAL SPORT ORGANIZATION	283,292	280,570
	1,179,641	1,095,093
EXPENSES	2024	2023
ADMINISTRATION	295,620	290,132
CAPACITY/INTERACTION	262,343	238,635
PARTICIPATION	347,839	247,205
EXCELLENCE	76,743	187,291
CATEGORICAL GRANT	3,481	6,000
MEMBERSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	65,486	63,004
FUNDRAISING	58,893	55,355
	1,110,405	1,087,622
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	69,236	7,471

Sports Offered



Alpine Skiing



Cross Country Skiing



Rhythmic Gymnastics



Athletics



Curling



Snowshoeing



Basketball



Figure Skating



Soccer



Bocce



Floor Hockey



Softball



5-Pin Bowling



Golf



Speed Skating



10-Pin Bowling



Powerlifting



Swimming

1068 Athletes | 193 Coaches | 358 Volunteers





Athlete Profile

Harold Robinson

Harold has been an athlete with Special Olympics Swift Current for 10 years. He currently participates in bowling, Swimming, Baseball, and Floor Hockey.

This past year Harold was a Member of 2024 Team Saskatchewan for bowling at the 2024 National Winter Games in Calgary. Harold trained hard for 8 months to attend the Games, and his scores continued to improve and his positive attitude was apparent. Harold also had some personal bests in Swimming this past season.

This past year, Harold was asked to address the Swift Current City Council and share his experience from the 2024 National Games. At first Harold was a bit nervous, but when it came time for him to talk, he was very articulate, humorous and represented Special Olympics with great pride. His confidence has improved so much over the 10 years that he has been involved with Special Olympics.

Harold is always encouraging and respectful of his fellow athletes. He's a very positive person and doesn't say negative things to anyone. Even if he's not doing well on a particular night, he doesn't get frustrated and that's such a positive thing for the other athletes to see. He shows consistent respect for his coaches and officials. Harold just doesn't have the personality to be anything but respectful.

Athlete Profile

Scot Earl

Scot has been an athlete with Special Olympics Melfort for 21 Years. He currently participates in Curling, Swimming, Bocce Ball, and Bowling.

This past year Scot won a Gold medal in Curling at the 2024 SOC National Winter Games in Calgary and also at the SOS Curling bonspiel Regina. This is Scot's second year swimming competitively, and he trains twice per week in Melfort. He takes his swimming very seriously.

His coach has noticed significant improvement and is confident that if he continues to improve, he will medal at a future Provincial and maybe a National competition. In addition to Curling and competitive Swimming, Scot also bowls in Melfort once a week, and participates in Bocce during the summer.

Scot has always been a good sport on and off the ice. He enjoys competition but is humble in victory and gracious in defeat. He is a great team player, he is always supportive of his fellow teammates. His teammates look up to him. Importantly, he recognizes and is appreciative of his role as the third on the Curling team, and understanding that his skip calls the shots. Scot has a hearing impairment, but he has not let this be a barrier in participating in the sports he loves and plays well. This past year as a member of Team Sask, Scot and his Mother Marlene lead a Team Building session for all Athletes, Coaches, and Mission Staff on using sign language. The session covered the basics of sign language, and everyone learned how to sign their own names, and the sport that they were competing in at the Games. The session allowed Team Sask to be more inclusive, and provided everyone with information on how to more effectively communicate with Scot.



Volunteer Profile

Angela Wright



Angela has been volunteering with Special Olympics Swift Current for 9 years. She is currently on the SO Swift Current CEC as a Member at Large, and has taken on the marketing role. She also helps out with Coaching, and can be seen at many Special Olympics events.

She does the social media posts on Facebook and Instagram for SO Swift Current. She has made the pages look more professional and business like but still fun and inviting for all. Posts are standardized so all sports get the same exposure and style of exposure. She keeps the pages up to date with events and accomplishments.

Angela embraces people with intellectual disabilities in every aspect of her life by leading an inclusive lifestyle and taking opportunities to use her respect and diversity during her roles on the CEC and the marketing. Her social media skills show how inclusive we can be in sport and within the community. The photos are done with the utmost respect for the individuals involved.

She has made the community aware that we are more than just another group but a group that has many potentials and strengths that everyone can draw from. Her posts show how the athletes and volunteers both benefit mentally and socially.

This year Angela volunteered as a Mission Staff for 2024 Team Sask that attended the National Winter Games in Calgary. Angela was a great addition to the Team, and helped out Jordan and Larry as part of the Speed Skating squad. Angela also presented sessions on Stretching, Self Massage, and Nutrition at the Full Team Training Camp in September.

2024 Special Olympics Canada Games Calgary

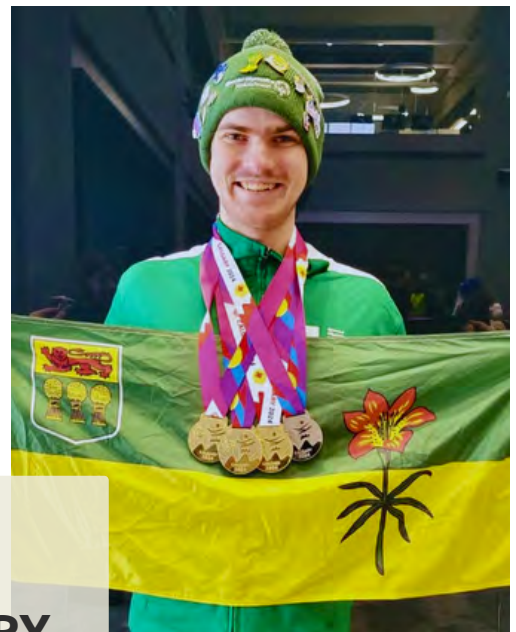
2024 Team Saskatchewan participated in the Special Olympics Canada National Winter Games hosted in Calgary, AB, from February 27 to March 2. The team comprised 48 athletes, 19 coaches, and 5 mission staff. Athletes came from the Communities of Weyburn, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Humboldt, Saskatoon, Nipawin, Melfort, and Prince Albert. Athletes competed against others across Canada in 8 different sports: Alpine Skiing, Cross Country Skiing, 5-pin Bowling, Curling, Floor Hockey, Snowshoeing, Figure Skating and Speed Skating.

The journey for Team Sask started with the selection of Athletes, Coaches, and Mission Staff in early 2023. From there, the hard work and dedication began. Athletes practised and trained hard for their respective sports, and coaches and mission staff ensured the athletes were prepared for the exciting opportunity of representing their Province on the National stage.

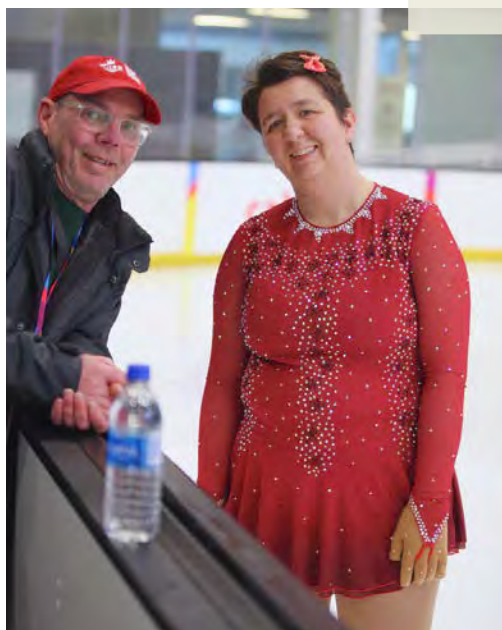
All Team Members arrived in Calgary on Monday, February 26th, in the afternoon after a full day of snowy winter travel, and it was an early night for all. The following day, athletes had the opportunity to practise and prepare for the Opening Ceremonies. Five-time National Games athlete Daniel Fiedelleck from Melfort and his curling team had the honour of being Team Saskatchewan's flag bearers for the Opening Ceremonies! After an incredible ceremony, everyone was hyped and ready for the next five days of competition.

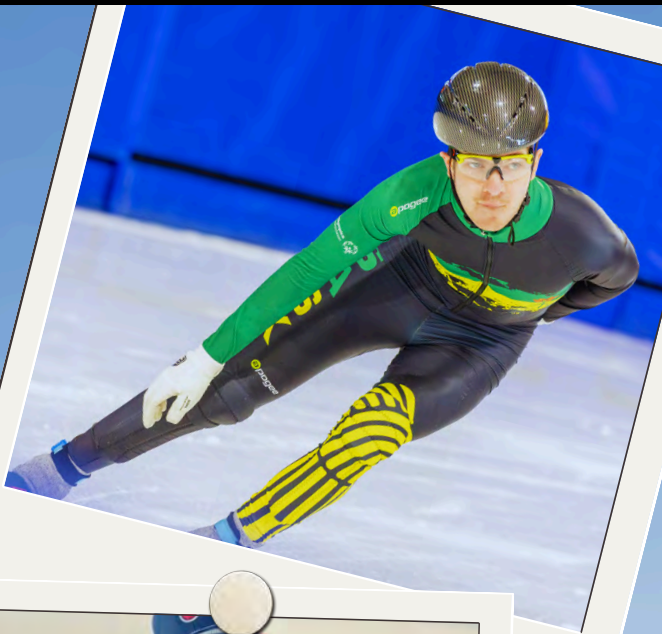
The competition days were action-packed and full of ups and downs as the athletes faced and overcame challenges, beat their personal bests, and created long-lasting memories and stories. Team Saskatchewan brought home 9 gold medals, 5 silver medals, and 15 bronze medals for an overall total of 29 medals. Speed Skating athlete Jordan Stevenson was honoured to hold the Team Sask sign at the closing ceremonies. It would only be a Special Olympics event with a dance to wrap things up. Following the Closing Ceremonies, athletes participated in the "Glitz and Glam" dance to celebrate a well-done week.

As the first National Games for many of our team members, we were fortunate to have experienced veterans who Guided us to a successful week. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who played a part in making 2024 Team Sask a success, including athletes, coaches, mission staff, caregivers, families, and our dedicated fans who cheered us on in Calgary. The Games were a memorable experience for all, and we eagerly anticipate the next Team Sask at the 2026 Summer Games in Medicine Hat!

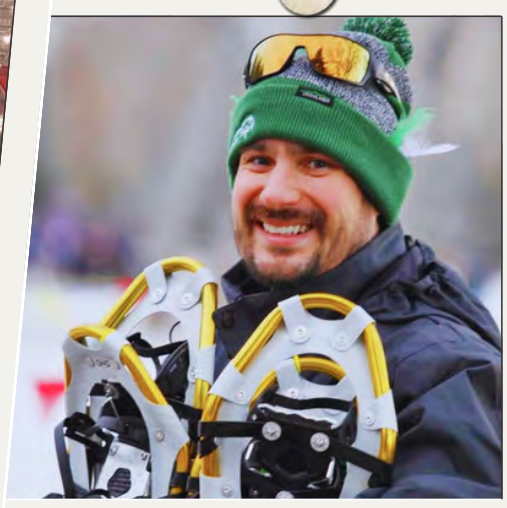


2024
NATIONAL GAMES CALGARY





2024
National games Calgary



2022-2023 SOS Award Winners

Athlete of the Year:	Tyler Servant Taylor Carter
Team of the Year:	SO Regina Wildcats Basketball
Coach of the Year:	Sheldon Dean Jackie Powell
Volunteer of the Year:	Tyler Kowalski
Shining Star:	Lindsay Markwart
Unsung Hero Award:	Carl Kruger
Athlete Lifetime Dedication	Daniel Goebel
Junior Coach of the Year:	Lindsey Chabot
Honorary Life Member	Darren Whitehead
Bob Pedde Award	Rick Sanden
LETR Outstanding Service	Frank Kovacs
Community Excellence Award	Special Olympics Humboldt
Presidents Citation Award	Sasktel
Unified Sports Spotlight Award	Carlton Comprehensive High School

Coaches Symposium 2023



The 2023 SOS Coaches Symposium took place in Elk Ridge Resort from October 13-15. In attendance were just under 60 volunteer coaches from all across Saskatchewan who came together for a weekend of connection, knowledge, and fun.

Friday evening, coaches arrived at the resort and took part in their respective sport-specific breakout groups. Following this, everyone had the opportunity to grab some food, have a drink, and watch the Riders take on the Stampeders on the large projector screen. Although the football game wasn't the outcome we hoped for, the connection and comradery between our coaches were already growing stronger.

Saturday morning, we welcomed our first keynote speaker of the weekend, Corey Hirsch, who was an NHL goalie, Olympics silver medalist, and commentator for the Vancouver Canucks. Cory shared with us his own personal battles with mental health in sports, as well as provided our coaches with educational tools on how to recognize and cope with these difficult times. His presentation was one of strength and hope that our coaches valued. We then heard from Rhonda Shishkin who provided some important educational pieces on concussion awareness, recognition, treatment, and prevention. This information was also important for our coaches as we continued to learn more about the subject.

Following lunch, our annual Coaches Symposium Scavenger Hunt commenced. The theme this year was "different types of campers" and included the Minimalists, the Cavepeople, the Glampers, the Partiers, the Retirees, the Newbies, and the Instagramers/Influencers. Teams were sent on a hunt around the resort, working hard to complete all the tasks and solve each puzzle they encountered along the way. In the end, it was the Minimalists who came out on top! Our Coaches Symposium Scavenger Hunt Trophy also had quite the adventure of its own, as it traveled around the resort with some of the coaches.

In the post-adrenaline rush of the scavenger hunt, our coaches heard from Dillon Schmidt and Landon Gordon of Creative Options Regina (COR), who shared tips for not only helping our athletes through difficult times but also on how to care for themselves. Afterward, our coaches were updated on SOS matters through the SOS Information Share. To wrap up a great day, everyone gathered for a meal, and some drinks, and then participated in a paint night, played board games, and watched some hockey on the projector screen.

Sunday, our coaches came together once again to hear from our first speaker of the day - Mark Epp. Mark spoke to us about the different components of team dynamics and culture in relation to how coaches can work to build and strengthen each of the dynamics. Closing out our event was our final keynote speaker of the weekend - Andrew Haley. Andrew is a former world-class World Record-setting Paralympic swimmer and is now a successful businessman who works for the Toronto Blue Jays. He has had his fair share of ups and downs after being diagnosed with cancer twice. As a result, Andrew lost part of his leg, but he never let it dictate his life. Andrew shared his message of resiliency with our coaches and gave them tips on how to motivate their athletes so that they can have the most positive sports experience possible.

After an action-packed weekend, our coaches said their goodbyes and made their way back to their home communities. With them, they took many memories, new friendships, and additional knowledge both for themselves and for their athletes. Thank you to our provincial partners SaskTel and Sport Canada for the support in allowing this event to be possible. Thank you to the staff at Elk Ridge and our tremendous speakers who took the time to be a part of our successful weekend. A massive thank you to each and every person who joined us for our Coaches Symposium - we appreciate everything you do for your athletes and your communities.



2023-24 Try It Camps

Try it camps are an excellent way for a community to either give a new sport a try or to kick off a new sport. This year, two try it camps took place. We visited Unity to help them kick off their new bocce program and also paid a visit to Saskatoon who was starting a new powerlifting program. On August 14, 2023 in Saskatoon, 4 athletes and a couple of new volunteers gathered at the YWCA to learn the basics of the 3 lifts in powerlifting. Athletes had the chance to watch the lifts being demonstrated and also had the opportunity to try the lifts themselves. On August 15, 2023 in Unity, we welcomed 6 athletes and a number of volunteers. Everyone gathered for a fun introduction to bocce, had the opportunity to play in a few practice games, and then enjoyed a delicious meal together. Both try-it camps resulted in the creation of a new sport program in the community. We are looking forward to helping other communities kick off new sports in this coming year!

2023-24 Training and Workshops

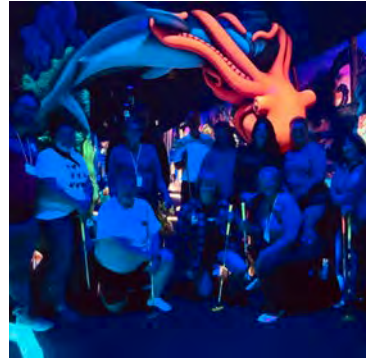
This year, SOS hosted 3 SOC Competition Introduction Workshops. These workshops took place in Saskatoon, Regina, and online via Zoom. On November 18 and 19, 2023, the SOC Comp Intro workshop took place in Saskatoon where 5 coaches came out to learn about coaching Special Olympics Athletes. On December 2 and 3, 2023, 7 coaches came out to Regina ready to learn and expand their knowledge. And on June 15 and 16, 2024 a virtual offering of the course took place via Zoom. This workshop had 6 attendees. All participants gained important knowledge surrounding Special Olympics and working with our athletes. They took part in small group activities, discussions, and were eager to learn. We look forward to hosting more SOC Competition Introduction Workshops this year and having more new coaches trained!



Leadership Conference

The 2024 Special Olympics Saskatchewan Leadership Conference was held at the Parktown Hotel in Saskatoon from May 3-5. All together 42 people gathered in Saskatoon to learn, network, and have fun!

In attendance were volunteers from 12 different communities, SOS Staff and Board of Directors. The Conference began with a supper and social on Friday night. The first part of the Social featured a team trivia challenge; as well as a couple rounds of Singo, which had everyone singing along to their favorite tunes.



On Saturday Morning the opening keynote address was delivered by Beth Hanishewski. Beth spoke about building trust and relationships with volunteer groups, and also how to take better care of yourself.

Ivy + Dean Consulting company delivered two sessions on Saturday including Grant Writing 101 and Finding Success in Fundraising. Volunteers in attendance were able to learn some key tips and tricks on fundraising and grant writing that they could then take back to their communities. The session portion of Saturday wrapped up with a session on Social Media 101 for communities, where the group was educated the group on how to connect with people on social media, and fundraising opportunities through SOS as well.

Saturday night featured two different group outings. One half of the group went and tested their skills on a 18 hole indoor mini-golf course; while the other half took part in Axe-Throwing, which was a first time activity for most!

The Conference wrapped up on Sunday with a Community Roundtable discussion where volunteers got to hear what other communities are doing, and how certain approaches work in regards to recruitment, registration, fundraising and more.

Thanks to everyone who attended the Conference, and we will see you in 2026!

National Volunteer Week

Thank you, Volunteers! Join us in applauding Special Olympics volunteers across Saskatchewan. We might be biased, but we at SOS feel like we have the BEST volunteers around. Volunteers are an integral part of the Special Olympics movement. They are the individuals that continue to keep our activities running all year round. To our volunteers: we applaud you for giving countless hours, you are truly making a difference in your communities. We couldn't do it without you, so thank you so much!

Volunteering with Special Olympics is about transforming lives, including your own. It is about a spirit of giving, teamwork, and inclusion. It is about making your community a more welcoming and accepting place for all people of all abilities. Our volunteers give their all to cheer on athletes.

From coaches, to officials, to team managers, there is something for everyone. Join our family of over 17,500 volunteers across Canada and help enrich the lives of individuals with an intellectual disability through sport. We promise, you'll get even more out of it than you give.

[Hyperlink to volunteer](#)

About LETR

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® (LETR) for Special Olympics is a proactive community program that promotes and empowers LETR agencies/officers and their families to help raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics.

The Sask. LETR carried out several fundraising and awareness events across the province, including the Polar Plunge; Cops, Pops & Pizza; the Truck Ride & Truck Pull; and various other events. All funds raised stay in our province and go toward helping our 1,400+ Special Olympics athletes in a variety of different ways!

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Saskatchewan had another successful year in 2023-2024. They raised more than \$160,000 for our Saskatchewan athletes.

Polar Plunge 2024

2024 was a battle of two cities! We opened the 2024 LETR Polar Plunge season in Saskatoon. It was the perfect day to be #FreezinForAReason. In total, 67 brrr-ave participants took the plunge at Cabela's Saskatoon. One week later, 112 brrr-ave participants took the plunge at Victoria Park Regina in conjunction with FROST Festival Regina. Together, Saskatoon and Regina raised over \$58,000 for Special Olympics programs. We were warmed by the generosity of all the plungers, volunteers, sponsors and supporters.

This event simply could not have happened without the support of Loraas Disposal Saskatoon & Regina, Icon Scaffolding Regina, Chinook Scaffolding Systems Saskatoon, Paradise Leisurescapes Saskatoon, Cabela's Preston Crossing Saskatoon, Mace Electrical Contracting Saskatoon, Cora's Preston Crossing Saskatoon, Custom Courier Co., SaskWater, Regina Downtown BID, Search and Rescue Regina, Atlas Sewer, Saskatoon Fire Department, Regina Fire Department and, of course, the Sask. LETR. Partnering with us since our very first year, we are so thankful for their continued support.



2023 Polar Plunge Regina



2023 Polar Plunge Saskatoon

Free Our Finest 2023

The Saskatoon community helped Free Our Finest with another successful event on the weekend of August 18th-20th, 2023! This weekend raised over 10 thousand for Special Olympics Saskatchewan athletes across the province!!

Cst. Ryan Crawford and Cst. Mike Melnyk from Saskatoon Police Services volunteered to stay on the scaffolding to fundraise and bring awareness for Special Olympics Saskatchewan! Throughout the weekend they brought high spirits, energy, great music and fantastic jokes!

In addition, other amazing officers partnered with different SOS athletes throughout the weekend to continue fundraising by selling LETR stuffies and T-shirts! While SOS volunteers brought the heat with additional fundraising with the BBQ; selling hotdogs, hamburgers and pop!



2023 Free Our Finest Saskatoon

On August 31, 2023 it was Prince Albert's turn to Free Our Finest. Throughout the day Prince Albert's very own finest got arrested and had to raise \$500 to post their bail and be released.

Prince Albert community answer the call and made their first ever LETR Free Our Finest event a great success. Together, Prince Albert community raised over 22 thousand for Special Olympics Saskatchewan athletes.



Truck Ride and Truck Pull 2023

Presented by SaskTel and sponsored by our friends at SGI the 2023 Truck Ride and truck Pull raised over 23 thousand for Special Olympics Saskatchewan programs!

We had more than 30 trucks joined us this year. And we had 5 teams competing to be the fastest team to pull a 15tons truck for 15 meters.

We are incredibly grateful to have so many hardworking and dedicated truck drivers to support the Truck Ride for Special Olympics Saskatchewan!





2023 Truck Ride & Pull

2023-24 Empires + Tim Hortons Campaign

Empires

Together, we raised more than \$1.4M in support of Special Olympics athletes with the help of our National Partner, Empire Company Limited (Sobeys Inc)!

Special Olympics Saskatchewan extends our gratitude to Empire Company Limited, and its participating banners, and every customer who donated to Special Olympics Canada from April 25 to May 5. Funds raised at Sobeys, Safeway and IGA in Saskatchewan during the campaign will provide athletes with an intellectual disability the opportunity to participate in sport, make friends, learn skills and stay healthy right here in Saskatchewan.

Thank you for helping to create more inclusive communities across Canada!

Tim Hortons

We are proud to announce that a record-breaking \$884,000 was raised through the sale of Special Olympics Donuts at Tim Hortons from Feb. 2-4!

100% of the funds raised to support community sport programs for more than 42,000 Special Olympics athletes across Canada with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

A huge thank you once again to our Special Olympics Saskatchewan community – athletes, coaches, volunteers, staff, friends, family, champions and supporters – for making this the most successful year yet. Thanks to your collective power, together we are creating a more inclusive Canada. #ChooseToInclude





2023-2024 School Youth Programs

With our Active Start and FUNdamental school based program, over 100 students participated in AS/FUNdamental programming across the provinces, in schools such as Evan Hardy Collegiate, St. Matthew Catholic School, and Gull Lake School. Schools are encouraged to implement Special Olympics School Programs as a part of Phys. Ed. programming in order to meet the needs of their youth population with an intellectual disability.

Special Olympics Active Start and FUNdamentals school programs are the first of their kind in Canada. They provide specific training and educational opportunities for children/youth with a developmental/intellectual disability and their classmates, many of whom do not have any other avenues for structured physical fitness.

The programs are built on the rationale that, when children with a developmental/intellectual disability receive early instruction in basic motor skills and developmentally appropriate play, there is an excellent opportunity for improvement in their physical, social, and cognitive abilities.

These programs provide the necessary tools for teachers to foster their Special Education students' physical literacy goals.

Active Start is designed to allow children aged 2 to 6 to learn basic motor skills such as walking, running, jumping, and throwing.

FUNdamentals is a continuation of the Active Start Program for athletes aged 7 to 12. This program transitions from basic movement skills to basic sport skills.

The programs are available FREE to any classroom that has students with a developmental/intellectual disability that will be taking part in the program.

The programs include:

- Curriculum aligned programming, lessons, and manuals
- Support and education from Special Olympics Saskatchewan
- A specialized equipment kit (when available)

If schools are interested in starting up programs, please contact the Youth, Health and Marketing Coordinator at Special Olympics Saskatchewan.



2023-2024 Unified Sports

Special Olympics is dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences. Unified Sports joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.

In the 2023-2024 season, we had 19 schools playing Unified Sports; Bocce, BAGGO, and Basketball with 230 Athletes and 168 partner athletes participating. Unfortunately, due to job action, the Unified Basketball season was cut short, seeing the cancellation of the Regina, Tommy Douglas and Provincial Tournaments. While tournaments may have been canceled, the Regina Unified Basketball Lunch league was able to get some games in! Read below for a recap on the Bocce and BAGGO tournaments that occurred during the past season!

Bocce

From as far as Porcupine Plain, schools gathered on October 11th at the Saskatoon Sport Centre to bring their A-game. With high energy on the turf, schools such as Tommy Douglas and Evan Hardy Collegiate showed up to have a blast and show off what their practices have been doing. While the competition was tough, teams worked together to come up with different strategies, while simultaneously cheering on their school teams and calculating points.

Regina kicked off their tournament on October 17th at the AffinityPlex turf. With schools coming from Vibank, Lumsden, and Milestone, the atmosphere was energetic. Teams were busy playing across all skill levels. Scott Collegiate, Campbell Collegiate, and Lumsden High School competed in Division 1, while St. Marguerite Bourgeoys School had their first experience participating in a Unified bocce tournament. When not busy competing, many teams were seen cheering on each other and giving helpful tips off the court. One of the best quotes to come out of the tournament came from Campbell Collegiate's very own Kevin Machin who was often heard saying "Become the bocce".



BAGGO

2 cities. 14 schools. Too many bean bags to count!

The annual BAGGO tournaments went down in Saskatoon (February 14th) and Regina (February 15th) over the past week, with 14 schools bringing not only their top BAGGO skills but lots of school spirit and pom poms. For the tournament, BAGGO, also known as cornhole or bean bag toss, was played in 4 person teams, with each bag in the hole equaling 3 points and each bag on the board equaling 1 point.

In Saskatoon, there were more than bean bags in the air as the tournament took place on Valentine's Day. Hanley Composite School had an exciting debut, with bringing their BAGGO boards that their shop class made, showing that BAGGO goes further than the court. Their next steps are sanding down their boards and painting them, with the plan to debut the final project at next year's BAGGO tournament.

In Regina, Ecole Centennial had their Unified debut, showing up with 10 teams, all ready to show off what they have been practicing and celebrating hard with pom poms. One of the best plays of the tournament came out of Regina with a bag in one from another court over, causing all 4 teams to go crazy over the BAGGO.



End of Recap

We are so excited to come back this upcoming season offering Bocce, BAGGO, and Basketball and CANNOT wait to see everyone on the courts! If you are interested in learning more or starting a Unified Sports program at your school, please contact the Youth, Health and Marketing Coordinator at Special Olympics Saskatchewan!

2023-2024 AS/FUN Community Youth Program

Over the last year, we had 4 Active Start and FUNdamental community programs running across the province, in communities such as Estevan, Moose Jaw, Warman, and Saskatoon. In Saskatoon, we saw the addition of a Summer Active Start and FUNdamental program, expanding our reach to over 80 athletes participating in fun and positive movement experiences to develop and improve basic motor and sport skills.

Special Olympics offers child and youth programs designed to help children with an intellectual disability develop basic motor and sport skills through fun and positive movement experiences. We currently have two Special Olympics Youth Programs:

Active Start for athletes ages 2 to 6 is a family-centered program targeting children with intellectual disabilities ages 2 to 6. Through the program, children learn basic motor skills such as walking, running, jumping, and throwing in a fun and safe environment. Skills developed through the Active Start Program are: physical skill acquisition, physical fitness, social skill development, decision making, knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of physical activity.

FUNdamentals is a continuation of the Active Start Program for athletes aged 7 to 12 (participation in Active Start prior to registering in FUNdamentals is NOT required). This program transitions from basic movement skills to basic sport skills while maintaining an atmosphere of fun and meaningful interaction. This program also promotes specific sport education, proper nutrition, and social inclusion through participation in positive sport experiences.

Skills developed through the FUNdamentals Program are: develops physical literacy skills, improves fundamental motor skills, participates in a structured physical activity, and increases understanding of game structure.

Communities are encouraged to implement the Active Start and FUNdamentals Programs as a part of their Special Olympics programming in order to meet the needs of their youth population with an intellectual disability.

If schools are interested in starting up programs, please contact the Youth, Health and Marketing Coordinator at Special Olympics Saskatchewan.



2024 Provincial 50/50 - We have a Winner!

Each year, Special Olympics Saskatchewan hosts a province-wide 50/50 fundraiser. This year was another successful 50/50 with a total of \$31,205.00 in ticket sales! Ticket sales occurred between February 12 - May 31. With the help of a few individuals within the Special Olympics office, we conducted the draw on June 28, the drawing ticket number (#04871) was none other than our very own longtime volunteer and supporter, Lynn Quist!

Lynn has been volunteering with Special Olympics since she was around 30 years old. When we called her to let her know she had won a total of \$15,602.50, she couldn't believe it. Thank you to everyone who purchased a ticket in support of Special Olympics athletes across the province, and to all the communities that took part in making this year's 50/50 a HUGE success! All funds raised will go directly back into supporting our SO Communities and athletes.

Congratulations, Lynn!



Provincial Partners



Champion of Volunteers



SASK LOTTERIES

