



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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More than 340 members of the Vancouver Police Department generously answered the call this winter to help give Special Olympics BC (SOBC) athletes the life-changing opportunity of competing in the 2012 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games.

The VPD members gave more than 1,220 overtime hours, totalling \$36,675 in donations, to support SOBC's Team BC 2012 in travelling to compete in the Special Olympics National Games in St. Albert, Alberta. Their generosity helped give this empowering experience to more than 35 members of Team BC, including four SOBC – Vancouver athletes.

At the National Games, the members of Team BC competed with determination and passion, and experienced the empowerment and pride that comes from giving their very best efforts on this national stage. They demonstrated inspiring sportsmanship and respect with all their fellow athletes, and made friends from across the country. They felt the joy of walking into the Opening Ceremony as Team BC being greeted with a cheering crowd filling the stands.

The athletes sponsored by the VPD members were grateful for the opportunity afforded to them, and were honoured to be supported by the VPD.

"Thank you so very much. We had a great time winning GOLD," SOBC – Nanaimo floor hockey player Bill Polz wrote to the VPD members. Polz scored a hat trick in his team's gold-medal game to help them capture first place in their division, and he was overjoyed at the experience. "I was so thankful and tearful. Thank you again."

In 2011, VPD members turned their overtime hours into \$24,500 worth of donations to help athletes compete in the 2011 SOBC Winter Sport Championships. The Team BC members qualified for their National Games berths through their performances in that event. VPD members have long been supporting Special Olympics through the BC Law Enforcement Torch Run, giving their time and support to initiatives such as the annual Torch Run and stepping up to volunteer at SOBC events such as last year's provincial championships and this year's Healthy Athletes Screening Day.

"It was inspiring to see the men and women of the VPD again go above and beyond to support deserving Special Olympics athletes. They have given generously to make a difference in the lives of others, and should be commended for their community spirit and big hearts," said VPD Inspector Dean Robinson, a member of the BC Law Enforcement Torch Run Executive Committee.

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About Special Olympics BC:

Special Olympics BC is dedicated to providing individuals with intellectual disabilities opportunities to enrich their lives and celebrate personal achievement through positive sport experiences. In 55 communities around the province, we provide year-round training and competitive opportunities in 18

different sports to more than 3,900 athletes of all ages and abilities, thanks to the dedicated efforts of over 2,900 volunteers. For more information, please visit www.specialolympics.bc.ca. Find us on Facebook and Twitter: www.facebook.com/specialolympicsbc / @sobcsociety.

For more information and interview opportunities, please contact:

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