



Special Olympics unites and strengthens us

Vancouver Canucks forward Brandon Sutter and SOBC – Creston athlete Frances Collison earned a standing ovation at the 2016 Sports Celebrities Festival.

When Special Olympics BC – Creston athlete Frances Collison took the stage at the 2016 Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Silver Wheaton, she had a powerful message to share.

"In Special Olympics, people see Frances first and not Down syndrome with its challenges. They see Frances Collison and what she is capable of!" she told the sold-out crowd of more than 650 attendees. "Special Olympics unites and strengthens every one of us in this room! Special Olympics athletes like me can reach their dreams!"

Collison inspired everyone with her speech about the fun, friends, and fame that Special Olympics has brought to her life, along with a healthy lifestyle and increased confidence and skills.

"When other people, who have the same disability as I have, see me doing Special Olympics sports that they think are impossible for them to do, they see hope. They hope that someday, they will be able to do that sport too, just like I do!" Collison said. "I think this happens for [Vancouver Canucks SCF ambassador] Brandon Sutter too. Lots of young hockey players look up to him and want to play hockey just like he does. We are role models both in our own way! This makes me feel proud. I feel so lucky to be part of something so special!"

Full Sports Celebrities Festival recap on page 18.



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Government of Canada supports and celebrates Special Olympics



Vincent Li, Arthur Pangilinan, Lois McNary, Pam Keith, Dan Howe, and Becki Allen shared Special Olympics stories and gratitude on Parliament Hill.

The **Government of Canada** has been a crucial supporter of Special Olympics Canada and Special Olympics BC, providing funds to develop new and existing sport programs and competitive opportunities. Without this significant support, we could not offer the full range of opportunities that make such a difference in the lives of Special Olympics athletes and their families.

This year, Special Olympics athletes, parents, volunteers, and staff from across Canada spent a day on Parliament Hill sharing the joy of Special Olympics with Members of Parliament, Senators, and Ministers.

It was a busy day of more than 130 meetings between Special Olympics representatives and Parliamentarians, sharing stories of how vital Government of Canada funding helps change lives through Special Olympics programs.

Representing Special Olympics BC were athletes Becki Allen of SOBC – Delta and Vincent Li of SOBC – Richmond, along with SOBC – Vancouver Co-Local Coordinator Arthur Pangilinan, SOBC Past Chair Pamela Keith, Vice President, Sport, Lois McNary, and President & CEO Dan Howe. The teams attended meetings

with many MPs from across B.C., including Delta MP Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities.

SOBC representatives were also invited to sit in the House of Commons and Senate Chambers, where they were officially recognized by Senator Larry Campbell who spoke about the importance of Special Olympics programs.

The day ended with an evening reception hosted by Minister Qualtrough that celebrated a successful day on the Hill. We are so grateful to all the MPs and Senators who took the time to meet with SOBC representatives, and to the Government of Canada for its ongoing support of the Special Olympics movement. If you have a moment, thank your local Member of Parliament for this support as it truly makes a difference. ○

Special Olympics BC Games returning to Kamloops

The **2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games** will be coming to Kamloops July 6 to 8! Hot on the heels of the successful 2015 SOBC Winter Games, Kamloops will be the first community to host back-to-back SOBC Winter and Summer Games.

The 2017 Provincial Games will be the largest SOBC Games to date, with almost 1,300 athletes with intellectual disabilities from all parts of the province and the Yukon expected to compete, supported by more than 350 volunteer coaches and mission staff. The Games will feature exciting competition and inspiring displays of sportsmanship in the 11 SOBC summer sports: 5- and 10-pin bowling, athletics, basketball, bocce, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming.

Competing in Provincial Games is a huge thrill in itself for the athletes, many of whom will have their first opportunities ever to travel with a team, and will experience the joy of challenging themselves to attain and exceed their athletic goals. The competitors will also be chasing the opportunity to advance to national and international levels of competition.

Top performers in Kamloops will qualify for spots on Team BC for the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, during the 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics movement. Out east, the participants will compete to advance to the 2019 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Abu Dhabi.

Kamloops has long been a key location for Special Olympics in B.C., as one of the first communities to offer Special Olympics programming in the province, beginning in 1983. This will be the fourth time Kamloops

has hosted SOBC Provincial Games, and Canada's Tournament Capital was also the host of the first official SOBC Summer Games in 1986.

In 2017, the SOBC Games Opening Ceremony will be held on July 6, followed by competition throughout Friday, July 7 and Saturday, July 8. A Closing Ceremony open to Games participants only will be held on July 8 and volunteer recognition breakfast on July 9.

SOBC is excited and grateful that Karl deBruijn, retired School District #73 Superintendent, has stepped up to serve as Chair of the 2017 SOBC Games Organizing Committee. DeBruijn, who worked with the school district for 40 years, also volunteered as a member of the organizing committee for the 2015 SOBC Winter Games that were held in Kamloops and Sun Peaks.

"I really believe in the mandate of Special Olympics BC and I am pleased to again have the opportunity to work with this organization," deBruijn says. "I really enjoyed



Track and field athletes proud on the podium at the last SOBC Summer Games in Langley.

SOBC is grateful to Karl deBruijn and all the volunteers set to give their time as members of the Games Organizing Committee. Joining deBruijn and the GOC as champions of the 2017 SOBC Summer Games are sponsors including the City of Kamloops and School District #73, who are generously returning as SOBC Games Platinum Sponsors. Sincere thanks to these first sponsors who have stepped forward to support the Games:

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- New Gold – New Afton Mine

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- Domtar – Kamloops
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being a part of the organizing committee during the 2015 SOBC Winter Games. It was a great opportunity to work with some really talented community members who were dedicated to making the Games a very special event for each of the athletes attending from around the province. We worked hard to ensure that our volunteers and our sport venues were completely ready to host the athletes and the competitions. We wanted each athlete to have a positive sport experience and an opportunity to achieve his/her personal best."

"Thanks to the hard work of the many Kamloops organizations and volunteers, the 2015 SOBC Winter Games were a great success. I am confident that we can do the same for the 2017 Summer Games," deBruijn says.

More than 1,000 volunteers will be needed to help stage this inspiring event. Learn more at www.sobcgameskamloops.ca and follow the excitement with SOBC on Facebook and Instagram @specialolympicsbc and Twitter @sobcsociety; the Games hashtags will be #SOBCGames #Kamloops2017. ○

Government of B.C. providing vital support to health, youth programs, competition

Thanks to the **Government of B.C.**, athletes like Melanie Sauze-Leduc are finding their balance. An SOBC – Langley athlete, Sauze-Leduc attended a Healthy Athletes screening in North Vancouver with her parents. She participated in FUNfitness screenings, which look to assess and improve an athlete's flexibility, functional strength, and aerobic capacity.

It was here she learned she has issues with balance, which may have been the reason she was having trouble riding a bicycle.

"That was the most valuable part of it. They gave us some exercises to help with her balance," Sauze-Leduc said. "It's very valuable information."

Support from The Government of B.C. has allowed SOBC to offer life-changing experiences and programs to athletes across the province. Expanding Healthy Athletes



screenings has been one of the outcomes of this funding, and has helped to address the unique health needs of people with intellectual disabilities.

Financially, between the government's funding of sport and funds received through Community Gaming Grants from the Gaming Policy Enforcement Branch, SOBC received more than \$367,000 in 2016. SOBC Locals also received gaming grants to support their year-round programs.

This significant level of funding is much appreciated and put to good use in expanding opportunities. Funds received help reduce costs of programs and competitions, host sport camps and events, transport athletes and coaches, and create new

opportunities for Special Olympics athletes and coaches.

SOBC has also been able to increase youth programming, giving more opportunities for athletes of all ages to experience the transformative power of sport.

The Government of B.C.'s Sport Branch has also been a tremendous source of assistance and resources to SOBC. Understanding and supporting SOBC's goals, Sport Branch staff have been working hard to open doors and inform us of other resources, contacts, and opportunities. This is invaluable as we expand programs, reach out to more athletes, increase the number and quality of competitions, and create opportunities.

SOBC is extremely grateful for the support of the Government of B.C. If you have a moment, thank your local MLA for this support as it truly makes a difference. ○



SOBC – Golden athlete Sebastian Gylander visited MLA Norm MacDonald to share his story and our gratitude for the Government of B.C.'s support of Special Olympics.



Jessica and Janet Lehtonen of SOBC – Keremeos and SOBC – South Okanagan's Kyle Sanderson and Lee Chic spent time with MLA Linda Larson to explain the impact of the Province's support.

Special Olympics Team Canada 2017

Sending heartfelt congratulations to the 15 Special Olympics BC athletes, seven coaches, one mission staff member, and one wax technician who have earned spots on **Team Canada** for the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria!

The hardworking team members earned their places through their performances at the 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador. The team members from SOBC join the Special Olympics Team Canada roster of 110 athletes, 35 coaches and mission staff, two team managers, and one Chef de Mission, and will compete in Austria from March 14 to 25, 2017.

SOBC – Surrey athlete Susan Wang is part of a big B.C. contingent on the national alpine skiing team, alongside SOBC – Victoria’s Michael Langridge and SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook’s Roxana Podrasky, Jonathan Robins, and Erin Thom as well as Head Coach Randy Scott of SOBC – North Shore and coach Mark Schnurr of SOBC – Coquitlam. Wang is thrilled to be advancing to her first World Games.

“I can’t believe I’m going to the world level,” Wang told Surrey’s *The Now* newspaper. “[Skiing is] my passion. I love speed and the rush of adventure. I go super fast. It takes all of my stress away. Skiing really helps me so much.”

In May, the 148 members of Team Canada 2017 participated in training camps at Ontario’s Teen Ranch, which brought together

the team’s athletes, coaches, and mission staff from all across the country. The first training camp involved the snowshoeing, speed skating, and floor hockey teams; the second brought together the alpine skiing, cross country skiing, and figure skating teams.

SOBC Region 5 Coordinator Darren Inouye, the mission staff member for Team Canada’s figure skaters, said the May training camp was a great experience, and the three skaters from B.C. – Alexander Pang of SOBC – Vancouver, Darlene Jakubowski of SOBC – Fort St. John, and Marc Theriault of SOBC – Surrey – did “extremely well.” The team members had opportunities to train together in their sports and also enjoy getting to know each other through the informal interactions and meals.



SO Team Canada cross country skiers Justin Sigal, Tracey Melesko, and Francis Stanley training in Kelowna.

“It was very much a family atmosphere, even though it’s a big deal. People got the job done and had fun doing it,” Inouye said.

Inouye said both he and the B.C. skaters are “over the moon” about being part of the national team. “It’s a ton of fun. It’s a pretty big honour to move up the ladder, and to see these guys do their thing,” Inouye said. ○

Listed here by sport and alphabetically by last name, the national team members from SOBC are:

Alpine Skiing

Athletes	SOBC Local
Michael Langridge	Victoria
Roxana Podrasky	Kimberley/Cranbrook
Jonathan Robins	Kimberley/Cranbrook
Erin Thom	Kimberley/Cranbrook
Susan Wang	Surrey

Coaches	SOBC Local
Mark Schnurr	Coquitlam
Randy Scott, Head Coach	North Shore

Cross Country Skiing

Athletes	SOBC Local
Dennis Lynch	Nanaimo
Tracey Melesko	Kelowna
Justin Sigal	Vernon
Francis Stanley	Kelowna

Coach	SOBC Local
Ray Huson	Penticton

Wax Technician	SOBC Local
Garth Vickers	Kelowna

Figure Skating

Athletes	SOBC Local
Darlene Jakubowski	Fort St. John
Alexander Pang	Vancouver
Marc Theriault	Surrey

Coach	SOBC Local
Elizabeth Roman	Surrey

Snowshoeing

Athlete	SOBC Local
Tony Wilkinson	Kelowna

Coaches	SOBC Local
Maureen Hunter	Campbell River
David Wilkinson	Kelowna

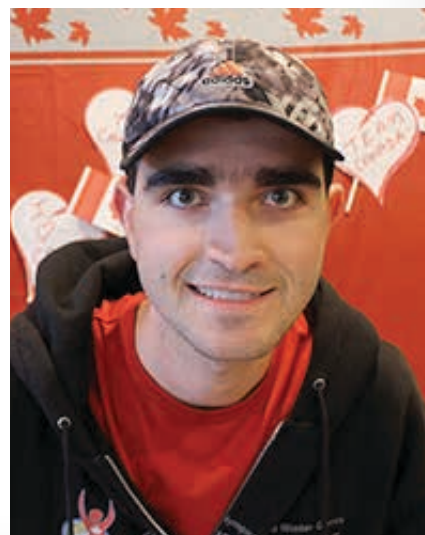
Speed Skating

Athletes	SOBC Local
Paige Norton	Abbotsford
Matthew Williams	Langley

Coach	SOBC Local
Donna Bilous, SOBC Region 3 Coordinator	Head Coach

Mission Staff

Darren Inouye SOBC Region 5 Coordinator



Snowshoer Tony Wilkinson at the national team training camp.

Team BC delivered at 2016 Special Olympics Canada Games



The Lower Mainland, Island, and northern members of Team BC 2016 prior to flying off to Corner Brook!

The **2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games** took Team BC from sea to sea for the first time, and the 126 athletes delivered outstanding performances on the Rock. Team BC 2016 earned 120 medals and achieved many personal bests competing in seven sports at the Special Olympics Canada Games in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, from March 1 to 5.

Team BC 2016 was comprised of 126 athletes, 42 volunteer coaches, and 10 mission staff from 31 communities around the province. After working hard over the preceding year both in their sport-specific training and on their fitness and nutrition, Team BC members were very prepared to compete in Corner Brook, and they did their province proud.

Highlights included the triple gold medal performances by speed skater Paige Norton of Abbotsford, cross country skier Francis Stanley of Kelowna, figure skater Marc Theriault of Surrey, and alpine skier Michael Langridge of Victoria, as well as the two exciting all-B.C. gold-medal games in curling

and floor hockey, and a B.C. podium sweep in the 2.5-kilometre classic cross country skiing M3 division by Vernon's Justin Sigal (gold) and Prince George's Josh Pudney (silver) and Danny Lafreniere (bronze).

"We are so thrilled with the results – both the personal bests and medals," Team BC 2016 Chef de Mission Leslie Thornley said. "We really are so pleased with what the athletes did and how they represented us."

The 2016 National Games were the first to be held in Newfoundland and Labrador in the 47-year history of Special Olympics Canada Games, and the local volunteers and supporters provided an exceptional experience for the more than 950 delegation members from Canada's 10 provinces and two of three territories.

Turn to page 5 to read about the members of Team BC 2016 who qualified for Team Canada 2017 based on the performances in Corner Brook!

Team BC 2016 Full results, roster, photos, and videos: specialolympics.bc.ca/team-bc-2016. ○

Alpine skiing

7 gold, 7 silver, 6 bronze + super PBs

"Skiing is my passion. I love to go really fast. ... I was so surprised [to win gold in slalom on the first day of competition.] Today was amazing. All the races were so fun."

— Athlete Susan Wang of SOBC – Surrey

"Special Olympics athletes are the best, and they make the rest of us better people!"

— Head Coach Randy Scott of SOBC – North Shore



Jonathan Robins of SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook finishing a race in style.



Alpine skiing athletes and coaches enjoying Marble Mountain.



Ray Huson

Team BC cross country skiing podium sweep starring Justin Sigal of SOBC – Vernon (gold) and SOBC – Prince George’s Josh Pudney and Danny Lafreniere (silver and bronze)!

Cross country skiing

11 gold, 13 silver, 9 bronze + heaps of PBs

“The athletes made their coaches and all of Team BC proud. We’re really happy with everyone – they excelled.”

— Head Coach Garth Vickers of SOBC – Kelowna

“High winds challenged all of the athletes, but they powered through – there were so many performances to be proud of.”

— Mission staff Jean Tetarenko, SOBC Region 6 Coordinator



Jean Tetarenko

Cross country skiing athletes and coaches had a blast in Corner Brook.

Curling

**Quesnel Lightning, gold
BC Islanders, silver
Surrey Rocks, 4th
Sunshine Coast Curlers, 5th**

“I have to tell you something about the Quesnel Lightning team that came home from Corner Brook with the gold medal. As with any team game, everyone has to do their part, and this team was no different, whether it was putting rocks into the house, sweeping for the right weight, or advising the skip, but in curling, it often comes down to the ability of the skip to stay calm and make the right shot when it counts. On our team that was the job of Glenda Melnychuk... [Her] performance would have to be considered outstanding.”

— Coach Rick Prosk of SOBC – Quesnel



Morgan Hunter

Sunshine Coast Curlers: coaches Bill Scobbie and Susan Storry with athletes Richard Lang, Michele Lacroix, Lance Barker, Thomas White, and Dale Eckert.

“Making friends from all over B.C. and Canada” is the most memorable Special Olympics experience for BC Islanders skip Michael Booth of SOBC – Port Alberni.

“By athletes being part of this sport program it enhances their lives in so many ways. We are more than just a sports organization.”

—Coach Sheila Snell of SOBC – Surrey

“I consider Special Olympics to be my second family.”

— Coach Art Peck of SOBC – Nanaimo

Floor hockey

**Vancouver Storm, gold
Kootenays Storm, silver
BC Vipers, silver**



Darren Inoué

Kootenays Storm players charging hard.

“What I like about Special Olympics is getting to go to other parts of the world and meeting new people.”

— BC Vipers player Jason Mills of SOBC – Nanaimo

“I’ve seen a marked improvement [in our team]. We have come a long way from qualifiers to Provincials to here.”

— Vancouver Storm player Mathew Schmiing of SOBC – Vancouver

“The [Kootenays Storm] team was excited. As soon as we found out that they were sending us to Newfoundland, we started practicing pretty hard. ... I don’t think you could get more of a complete team.”

— Coach Derek Taylor of SOBC – Grand Forks

Figure skating

7 gold, 4 silver

“I felt quite surprised about getting myself gold.”

— Athlete Alexander Pang of SOBC – Vancouver

“I love sports and always try my best at everything I do.”

— Athlete Michael Phillips of SOBC – Nanaimo



Darlene Jakubowski of SOBC – Fort St. John precise on ice.

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- Victoria Police Department

Team BC 2016 boosted by Honorary GM Randy Smallwood

Randy Smallwood, President and CEO of Silver Wheaton and a member of the Special Olympics BC Board of Directors, was named Team BC 2016's Honorary General Manager and joined the team in Corner Brook to cheer them on.

Smallwood took the time to attend several team training camps during the months leading up to the Games, encouraging the athletes and coaches and assisting with training exercises and logistics.

"I'm honoured to be selected for this role, and am very much looking forward to the Games," Smallwood said prior to the Games. "I feel that B.C. has one of the best Special Olympics programs in Canada, if not in North America, and I look forward to supporting the team and joining them in Corner Brook."

Smallwood generously supports SOBC through his efforts as a member of the Board of Directors since 2012 and through his work with the Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Silver Wheaton, the annual gala for SOBC and the Canucks for Kids Fund that has raised more than \$4 million to date.

Silver Wheaton is a significant supporter of Special Olympics, as the Presenting Sponsor of the Sports Celebrities Festival and an ongoing major sponsor of the Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament. ○



Honorary General Manager Randy Smallwood presenting Team BC speed skater Eric Bruneau with a hard-earned medal.

Snowshoeing 2 gold, 9 silver, 7 bronze + so many huge PBs

"Thank you everyone who has supported us and believes in Special Olympics. Special Olympics is about more than sport. It is about changing and challenging the world one moment at a time. Thank you for being part of our family and allowing us to share some of our special moments."

— Mission staff George Maclagan

"My daughter Terri Carelius has been with Special Olympics for 20 years. It has been a lifeline for her. She has developed many skills and confidence. I want to send a big thank you to all the coaches who give up their free time to work with the athletes. They truly are a blessing and without them these Games would not be possible."

— Sandra Carelius, mother of Team BC and SOBC – Victoria athlete Terri



William Thatcher of SOBC – Trail chasing down a competitor.

Speed skating 13 gold, 8 silver, 12 bronze + reams of PBs

"Out of a possible 46 medals the speed skating team could win, we took home 33! Thirteen gold, eight silver, 12 bronze. Way to go team. Thanks to all the coaches for a great week and to all the training coaches who worked so hard with your athletes over the past year for them to be the best they could be. Great performances and a ton of personal bests!!"

— Head Coach Donna Bilous,
SOBC Region 3 Coordinator



Sarah Maxwell of SOBC – Victoria speeding to the finish line.



All thumbs up from Team BC alpine skiers!



SOBC – Quesnel's Cory Melnychuk and SOBC – Vancouver's Chantal Chan ready to race.



Cross country skiers Dennis Lynch of SOBC – Nanaimo, Shelly Poland of SOBC – Golden, and SOBC – Kelowna's Kirk Gawryluk and Katarina Gerhardt.



Speed skating athletes, coaches, and mission staff taking in the sights.



The gold-medal-winning Quesnel Lightning curling team with Premier Christy Clark, Cariboo North MLA Coralee Oakes, and Quesnel Mayor Bob Simpson.



The BC Islanders curling team receiving their silver medals: Michael Booth and Cody Booth of SOBC – Port Alberni, Ken Davidson, Sherri Lines, and Shelley Marinus of SOBC – Comox Valley, and coaches Cheryl Clay of SOBC – Campbell River and Art Peck of SOBC – Nanaimo.



Surrey Rocks curlers Dale Wright, Steven Dew, David Baxter, and Jay Laitar of SOBC – Surrey and Danny Pace of SOBC – Victoria.



Team BC mission staff Darren Inouye, George Maclagan, Georgina McIntosh, Jill Harris, Emma Woo, Leslie Thornley, Shawn Fevens, Tom Norton, Jean Tetarenko, and Morgan Hunter.



The victorious Vancouver Storm floor hockey team.



The BC Vipers flash their hard-earned silver medals.



Smiling skaters Arianna Phillips of SOBC – Nanaimo, Darlene Jakubowski of SOBC – Fort St. John, Alexandra Magee and Stephanie Divin of SOBC – Surrey, and Laura Dale of SOBC – Terrace.



Kootenays Storm floor hockey players Maclean Brown, Steven Stirling, Kathy Schmidt, and James Warman of SOBC – Creston.



Team BC superfans: sport performance expert Jacques Thibault, Team BC Honorary General Manager and SOBC Chair Randy Smallwood, Patti Hirst, and SOBC Vice Chair Ted Hirst.



Your Team BC Snow Jets! Snowshoeing athletes and coaches exploring Corner Brook.



SOBC – Victoria Team BC members received roses upon their return.



Tegan Raines of SOBC – Prince George charging through a race.

2016 Special Olympics BC award winners

Athletic Achievement Award

A dedicated and accomplished swimmer, Special Olympics BC – Richmond's **Magnus Batara** found himself at the top of the podium at the 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Los Angeles, an incredible four times, capturing the gold medal in the 100m breaststroke, 200m breaststroke, 100m butterfly, and 4x100m medley relay.

Batara is a talented athlete with a long list of accomplishments. His strong work ethic and fun-loving attitude have made him a role model to his teammates, and he is the deserving winner of SOBC's 2016 Athletic Achievement Award.



Magnus Batara receiving the SOBC Athletic Achievement Award from Richmond Mayor Malcolm Brodie.

Batara's self-discipline and independence has grown dramatically over his nine years with SOBC. Always looking to improve, he devotes a great deal of time and effort to developing his skills in the pool.

A versatile athlete, Batara has participated in floor hockey, soccer, athletics, basketball, swimming, and Club Fit during his time with SOBC. He won a silver medal with the Team BC floor hockey team at the 2012 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games in St. Albert, Alta.

Batara has received recognition in his community for his amazing accomplishments. This includes recently winning the inaugural Richmond News Sportsperson of the Year Award at the Richmond Sports Awards, and representing his community as a torchbearer in the 2015 Pan Am Games Torch Relay.

Congratulations to Magnus and nominees Nicky Chow (SOBC – Richmond), Cory Duhaime (SOBC – Delta), Krista Meikle (SOBC – Victoria), Tanya Norman (SOBC – Powell River), Alex Pang (SOBC – Vancouver), Shelly Poland (SOBC – Golden), Jonathan Robins (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), Darien Tielemans (SOBC – Cowichan Valley) Susan Wang (SOBC – Surrey). ○

Grassroots Coach Award

Special Olympics BC – Vernon's **Janny Jung** is the Head Coach of Club Fit and snowshoeing and Assistant Coach and team manager for athletics. In these roles she has worked to create an inclusive experience for all athletes, counsel athletes on nutrition and healthy living, and help athletes overcome their fears through visualization.

Jung is a dedicated and compassionate coach who regularly uses her skills to help athletes overcome nervousness, gain confidence, and perform to their potential. A mentor to coaches and athletes in her Local, Jung is the worthy winner of SOBC's 2016 Grassroots Coach Award.

Jung tailored the Club Fit program in Vernon to better suit the needs of the Local's athletes by creating two levels: one that takes a developmental approach and another that challenges athletes with higher skill levels. This change has proven to be very successful, and athletes in both levels have made significant improvements in their skills, balance, and core strength.

A passionate and hardworking coach, Jung built SOBC – Vernon's snowshoeing program from the ground up. This year, Jung took the program's athletes to a friendly competition. This sparked a strong desire in the athletes to develop their skills and become more involved



Janny Jung (right) receiving the Grassroots Coach Award from SOBC – Vernon athlete Stacey Madden and Executive Committee member Noelle Typusiak.

in their fitness and nutrition programs.

As Assistant Coach and team manager of SOBC – Vernon's athletics program, Jung plays an integral role with the team. This includes keeping the team organized with paperwork, providing valuable feedback and direction to athletes, and supporting the program's Head Coach.

Congratulations to Janny and nominees Clem Andrews (SOBC – Surrey), Chuck Bertrand (SOBC – Sunshine Coast), Davin Fung (SOBC – Vancouver), Meghan Jamieson (SOBC – Richmond), Aaron Leontowich (SOBC – Kamloops), Ricky Long (SOBC – Victoria), Vivian Marsh (SOBC – Fort St. John), Emily Mittermayr (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), Bill Scobbie (SOBC – Port Alberni), Dave Showers (SOBC – Richmond), Susan Storry (SOBC – Powell River), Sue Rowe (SOBC – Golden), Bev Whitehead (SOBC – Comox Valley). ○

Howard Carter Award

Longtime coach **Garth Vickers** has been SOBC – Kelowna's cross-country skiing Head Coach since 1997-98, and has served as the sport's Provincial Coach for many years, where he has championed development, growth, new techniques, and opportunities for athletes and coaches.

Vickers is an outstanding mentor known for his exceptional ability to bring out the best in each athlete, his dedicated leadership for athletes and coaches competing at Provincial, National, and World Games, his instrumental work to support the development of youth programs and fellow coaches, and his genuine caring for his athletes. After 18-plus years as an outstanding coach, SOBC is proud to name Vickers as the winner of the 2016 Howard Carter Award.

As a former special education teacher, Vickers brings invaluable understanding and skills to the table, and he is able to coach and develop athletes at all levels, not just provincial and national teams. His athletes love him – he is truly considered their friend and he considers them friends, his nominators said.

"The athletes and their success is always at the front of Garth's mind. He finds a way for each athlete to achieve success and improve, regardless of their ability level," his nominators wrote. "He helps his athletes learn and fosters their growth not only in sport, but helps them translate that into their everyday life. This confidence can be seen in Garth's athletes."

Vickers is also known as an outstanding mentor to other coaches, and as an instrumental figure in the development of

youth programs. He has devoted great skill and care to helping create, grow, and support the SOBC – Kelowna youth programs.

Congratulations to Garth and nominees Nikki Apps (SOBC – Comox Valley), Greg Bodin (SOBC – Coquitlam), Glen Ellison (SOBC – Richmond), Craig Hikida (SOBC – Vancouver), Randy James (SOBC – Comox Valley), Courtney Keith Motz (SOBC – Delta), Steve Norton (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), Marie Telder (SOBC – Sunshine Coast), Wilma VanHage (SOBC – Prince George). ○



Garth Vickers receiving the Howard Carter Award from SOBC – Kelowna Local Coordinator Sue Foisy.

President's Award

In his almost seven years with SOBC – Kamloops, Fundraising Coordinator **Michael Maveety** has demonstrated his dedication and passion for Special Olympics by consistently stepping up to help his Local in any way he can. Maveety leads by example and encourages everyone around him to be the best they can be. His calm demeanour, caring personality, and responsiveness to the needs of others have made him a well-liked and highly valued member of the SOBC – Kamloops community.

A dedicated volunteer, a caring coach, and an inspiring role model, Maveety has shown himself to be a valuable asset to his Local and is the winner of SOBC's 2016 President's Award.

As Fundraising Coordinator, Maveety has played an important role in supporting his Local's athletes, volunteers, and programs through his hard work and creativity. He coordinates all the national fundraising campaigns in Kamloops, and has developed his own successful signature events that have helped his Local raise funds and increase its exposure in the community.

Maveety works hard to support sport programs at SOBC – Kamloops, including coaching the 10-pin bowling and bocce teams, assisting with athlete registration, and ordering uniforms for many of the Local's teams. To provide more opportunities for

SOBC athletes, Maveety helped develop an adapted Zumba program and a weight-training program at the local YMCA-YWCA.

The programs have been a great success, with great attendance and lots of smiling faces.

Congratulations to Michael and nominees Andrea Boyes (SOBC – Victoria), Jo Buck (SOBC – Terrace), Joan Gerhardt (SOBC – Kelowna), Anita Hui (SOBC – Vancouver), Leo Mittermayr (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), Karen Myers (SOBC – Prince Rupert), Rick Stanley (SOBC – Nanaimo), Chuck Yee (SOBC – Richmond). ○



Michael Maveety receiving the President's Award from SOBC – Kamloops Local Coordinator Marilyn McLean.

Spirit of Sport Award

Special Olympics BC – Port Alberni's **Simone Myers** has been involved with SOBC for 13 years and currently participates in 5-pin bowling, swimming, basketball, curling, floor hockey, athletics, and softball. She is a caring teammate who is a friend to everyone at her Local. She calls to check up on fellow athletes when they are sick and miss practice, and she

provides advice and support for teammates when they are having problems at practice or in their personal lives.

A friendly, positive, and helpful athlete, Myers is a valued teammate and a pleasure to coach. Myers always encourages fellow athletes to have fun and to do their best, and she is the deserving recipient of SOBC's 2016 Spirit of Sport Award.

"She is a joy to coach as she never complains, always competes to the best of her abilities, and is not afraid to try new things. She always has a smile on her face, offering to help as she sees is needed," her nominators wrote.

Myers is a proud Special Olympics athlete who is grateful to the volunteers who support SOBC. Every year she writes and delivers a speech at SOBC – Port Alberni's year-end banquet thanking volunteers for their dedication and commitment. She does this by herself, and asks the Local's Executive Committee for permission to give the speech.

A dedicated ambassador for SOBC, Myers can often be seen wearing her Special Olympics jacket in her community. Last year, she brought the silver medal she won in floor hockey at the 2015 Special Olympics BC Winter Games in Kamloops to her work. This inspired her coworkers to post a photo on Facebook congratulating her and her team.

Congratulations to Simone and nominees Julie Black (SOBC – Cowichan Valley), Dean Cake (SOBC – Quesnel), Jeremy Cheverie (SOBC – Victoria), Tyler Coe (SOBC – Delta), Dawn Hadler (SOBC – Salt Spring Island), Chelsea Kaake (SOBC – Delta), Roxana Podrasky (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), Adrian Rosen (SOBC – Prince George), Brad Smith (SOBC – Delta), Dallas Stager (SOBC – Vancouver), Kelsey Thomson (SOBC – Richmond). ○



Simone Myers (second from left) receiving her award with Anne Evans and Linda Scobbie, SOBC – Port Alberni Volunteer Coordinator and Local Coordinator, and Michelle Cruickshank, SOBC Manager, Community Development for Region 6.

Goldcorp Invitational creates meaningful support for Special Olympics BC

The **2016 Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament** was a great success again this year, attracting 250 of Vancouver's corporate and business elite to hit the green at Northview Golf & Country Club in support of Special Olympics BC.

2016 marked the 10th year with Goldcorp as lead sponsor of this significant fundraising event, and President & CEO David Garofalo reminded the tournament participants what a difference they make with their generous sponsorship and donations.

"What you're doing today is very meaningful," Garofalo said. "It'll perpetuate the good things that Special Olympics BC does here in the province and in the community. I'm honoured to be involved today."

Held on June 21, 2016, this fully stocked golf experience included

two simultaneous tournaments followed by an evening of inspiration where participants enjoyed a full dinner, entertainment, live and silent auctions, and a moving speech from parent Sandra Hamel, mother of 2½-year-old Esme, an SOBC – Nanaimo Active Start athlete.

Hamel told the Goldcorp Invitational audience about the important growth that Esme has experienced and enjoyed through her first months in Active Start, and she thanked all the tournament sponsors, participants, and volunteers as well as SOBC coaches.

"If you're here supporting Special Olympics financially or volunteering, I just really want to



Goldcorp President & CEO David Garofalo and SOBC – Surrey athlete Michaela Robinson.



Goldcorp Invitational golfers congratulating SOBC – Surrey athlete Malcolm Borsoi after he sunk a putt for their team.

thank you. We're going to probably come back every year, maybe for 25 years, and we'll be able to tell you lots of stories, but I appreciate just the short time we've been

part of the program [to date]. It has helped our family and helped Esme," said Hamel.

Goldcorp has had a significant impact with Special Olympics athletes and programs with two gifts of \$1 million to SOBC, the first in 2010-2014 and the second for 2014-2018, and much of this funding has supported these important youth programs.

"It's such an important cause, and it makes

such an impact on the lives of the people we try to help," Goldcorp Chairman Ian Telfer said.

We are deeply grateful for the continued support of Goldcorp and the tournament's generous sponsors. ○



The Hamel family with daughter Esme.



JYSK Canada bringing Special Olympics support home

Homeware retailer JYSK has been a great partner of Special Olympics since 2004. In 2016, JYSK has supported our athletes by raising \$100,000 for Special Olympics

Canada through select product sales and Draft an Athlete. We are so grateful to JYSK for their ongoing commitment to Special Olympics! ○

Thank you to the supporters of the 2016 Goldcorp Invitational

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Stories from Special Olympics BC Locals

News from SOBC – 100 Mile House

By Denise Thiessen, Local Coordinator

Greetings from 100 Mile House! We have had a bit of excitement this year as we now have new owners at our bowling alley. They have cleaned up and done a bunch of renovating to the building inside and out. We now have electronic scoring! No more paper and pencils needed, and new shoes for rental! Larry and Sherree are awesome people and we have a lot of fun on Tuesday nights.

We also had two new athletes join us this year. Welcome Josh and Jordan!

We have been busy with fundraising as well lately. We recently finished a very successful raffle! Great prizes were donated by 100 Mile businesses and residents. We host a tree hunt day in December in partnership with Timbermart, where all proceeds from tree sales go to our Local. We also have a Christmas decoration sale. Our athletes get together and create wonderful gifts using Christmas coffee mugs and pine tree branches.

Our best news, however, is that we have one athlete who qualified to compete in golf at the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games in Kamloops, and five athletes who qualified for bowling! We are very proud of our athletes and wish them well. We will definitely be there for the cheering squad!

We also have new owners at our Marmot Ridge Golf Course, and we hope to continue our golf program there in the spring.

In short, we are still a pretty active group and all enjoy being a part of Special Olympics! ○

Story from SOBC – Coquitlam

By Sheila Hogan, Local Coordinator

Pictured here are athletes Tricia Duff and Nasheena Virani. Nasheena had a little stumble at a 5-pin bowling practice a few weeks ago, and since then Trisha has held her hand walking up and back on the lane for each of her turns. Teamwork! ○



Snapshots from SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook

Submitted by Missy Besanger, PR Coordinator

The group photo is from the Special Olympics BC – Kimberley/Cranbrook 30th anniversary celebration and Law Enforcement Torch Run event, and the other picture is of our three amazing athletes who are going to the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria: Jonathan Robins, Erin Thom, and Roxana Podrasky. ○



News from SOBC – Langley

The Special Olympics BC – Langley Athletes Council is very active and ensures that our events are published. Here are a few articles they've had published in the Aldergrove Star.

Walkathon raises \$6,000 for Special Olympics: On May 15 the weather held up well for the participants who took part in the fifth annual SOBC – Langley Walkathon Fundraiser

at McLeod Athletic Park. The money that was raised will go towards uniforms, equipment, tournaments, and whatever else is needed for the sports that SOBC – Langley offers. The total money raised was estimated at \$6,000 and still counting. The athletes, coaches, and volunteers thank everyone who donated money to this year's walkathon.



Township of Langley Mayor Jack Froese with Township Councillor Blair Whitmarsh leading the way at the start of the fifth annual SOBC – Langley Walkathon Fundraiser.

Bocce at Special Olympics: May 28 was a very wet rainy day for the participants that took part in the Bocce Regional Qualifier for Region 3 at Willoughby Community Park in Langley. Top teams from this Regional Qualifier qualified to compete against top teams from different Regions at the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games. Communities that took part were Langley, Surrey, Coquitlam, Abbotsford, Ridge Meadows, and Chilliwack.



Christopher Lakusta

SOBC – Langley athlete Jas Nagra thinks of a play before he rolls the ball to get it close to the pallina in a bocce game.

Snapshot from SOBC – Nelson



Brooke McConnell

Special Olympics BC – Nelson athlete Payton is a participant in the great local youth programs.

Torch Run: On May 31, the 2016 Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics BC came to Langley. The run started and finished at the Langley RCMP detachment. The Law Enforcement Torch Run is a global movement that raises vital funds and awareness for Special Olympics. SOBC – Langley athletes involved in the LETR run were Chris Lakusta, Joshua Low, Jaykob Low, Christine Magnusson, Nicole Vandeveld, and Andrea Zonneveld. *To read more about the BC Law Enforcement Torch Run, please turn to page 30.* ○

News from SOBC – Quesnel

By Rick Prosk, Program Coordinator

2016 was a successful year for Special Olympics BC – Quesnel. A definite highlight was our athletes' success at the 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games. It was the first time ANY Quesnel athletes had qualified to attend, and ALL eight athletes came home with medals.

Cory Melnychuk won bronze in cross country skiing, and Cherie Swaan and Danny Dodgson medalled in snowshoeing, with Cherie winning a silver medal and Danny winning silver and bronze medals. The highlight was our curling team, which went undefeated to win the gold medal. Congratulations to Glenda Melnychuk, Alfred Schotel, Travis Burt, Martin Scriver and Dean Cake...

Other firsts for us this year included hosting our first alpine ski meet at Troll Resort, and hosting Regional Qualifiers for soccer and golf. Both were well attended, the largest events of their kind held so far in the north.

Quesnel has 13 sport programs (alpine skiing, basketball, bowling, Club Fit, cross country skiing, curling, floor hockey, golf, rhythmic gymnastics, snowshoeing, soccer, swimming, and track and field). Seven of the 13 are summer sports, and in 2016, we attended

Regional Qualifiers in all of them. For our basketball, golf, and track programs, this was our first time at a qualifier.

Forty of our 60 athletes attended at least one qualifier, and many then had to choose which sport they'd compete in at the 2017 SOBC Summer Games as they qualified to compete in more than one sport. As of December 2016, our regional team contribution stood at 27! We have two swimmers, two track athletes, and three bowlers, who qualified to compete in the 2017 Provincial Games, as well as 20 soccer players set to compete as Quesnel Fury I and Fury II. They will be joined in Kamloops by nine coaches.

Another first for SOBC – Quesnel took place in December as our recently resurrected floor hockey team travelled to Prince George to play for the first time since 2007. In January 2017, we will co-host, along with the Quesnel School District, a "Try-It Day" for students aged 11 to 18, in an effort to boost our profile with the community's youth. Along with Troll Ski Resort, we will host a "Special Olympics Day" in January to introduce (or re-introduce) athletes to the sport of alpine skiing.

SOBC – Quesnel continues to support our community as we in turn are supported. We raise money for the Salvation Army and Relay for Life. Our five-year Relay contribution now stands at more than \$18,500. For five years, we have also run a successful ticket raffle, in conjunction with Quesnel Pipes and Drums. Last year, all 1,500 tickets were sold!

Our athlete committee now has eight members. It has assisted the Local Committee in revising our dress code and developing an electronics policy, and will serve as an excellent advisory group. ○



SOBC – Quesnel's proud members of Team BC 2016.



The big Quesnel contingent that qualified to compete in the 2017 SOBC Summer Games.

Year-end report from SOBC – Sunshine Coast

By Mike Oswald, Athlete Reporter

Here is 2016 all neatly wrapped up; it was a year of many achievements and many firsts on our beautiful Sunshine Coast.

On the way to a swim meet in Coquitlam, the team had a chance meeting with BC Lions wide receiver Emmanuel Arceneaux. He took time to take a photo with everyone and even posted it on his Facebook page!

Swimmers Michael Beckman and Genny Verge travelled to Abbotsford for the 2016 BC Summer Games. Both brought home multiple medals and they, along with Micheal Oswald, Paul Davis, Christel Jensen, and Lindsay Pearson, will be travelling to Kamloops for the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games in Kamloops.

The Athletics Regional Qualifier in Langley saw Amber Maher, Bruce Stuart, Genny Verge, and Micheal Oswald showing excellence in their events. Amber Maher also brought home a first-place medal in shot put at the 2016 BC Games. She and Bruce Stuart will be representing the Coast in Kamloops in July 2017.

The Golf Regional Qualifier for Region 5 was once again held on the Coast and organized by Head Coach Chuck Bertrand. Gus Vaughn will be the SOBC –

Sunshine Coast athlete showing his skills in Kamloops.

The Douglas College women's basketball team returned to host a skills camp for the Sechelt and Gibsons teams. They helped them practice skills of shooting, passing, and dribbling. Later in the spring, the local RCMP played the Sechelt team in a fun game.

Our local RCMP members are true

supporters of our cause. They have found the time to interact and play alongside athletes in basketball, soccer, and floor hockey so far – although we haven't got 'em into the pool yet!

We were all pleasantly surprised to see rhythmic gymnastics athletes Linsey Davidson, Theresa Presley, and Amanda Boghean on the first page of the SOBC August e-newsletter. The team has worked hard this year to learn all new routines and Linsey Davidson qualified to go to Provincial Games.

Our bocce team attended their very first Regional Qualifier this year, won in their division, and will see team members Amber Fenton, Wes Harrison, Candice Garrett, and Darleen Nelson on their way to Provincial Games in summer 2017.

The Coast curling team was thrilled to not only attend their usual bonspiel in January but also to host their very first one locally. Teams from Langley and Powell River joined in the fun and indicated they would like to see this happen again.

Finally in softball, the Ravens hosted a fun game locally, travelled to Port Coquitlam for another, and even qualified as a team to participate in the 2017 SOBC Games – but so



Selfie starring SOBC – Sunshine Coast athletes bound for the 2017 Provincial Games with Regional Coordinator Darren Inouye.

many of their members had already qualified in other sports they could not make up a team. It shows just how great the drive and determination is in so many of our athletes.

As always, none of this would be possible without the contributions of time and effort by the Special Olympics volunteers. Over the years, coaches leave and others take over the reins. Some even come back again because they miss us so much... Some are nominated for special awards; some take the time to attend extra training and performance camps with athletes in tow, bringing home new ideas on how to educate and strengthen their athletes and other coaches. But most of them just show up to every practice every week, rain or shine, to help us be the best we can.

Many thanks to our community for helping out in so many other ways: donations of volunteer time to make food for an event, selling tickets for a fundraiser, money from community individuals and groups, and items that we could not afford to purchase on our own. We couldn't do it without you. Volunteers rule! ○

Bonspiel recap from SOBC – Victoria

By Dave Bodie, Head Coach, SOBC – Victoria curling

On Saturday January 23, Special Olympics BC – Victoria held a Region 6 bonspiel at the Glen Meadows Curling Club in North Saanich. The bonspiel was attended by six teams from Victoria, two from Nanaimo, one from



Members of the Victoria Five rink enjoying the Region 6 bonspiel hosted by SOBC – Victoria.

Oceanside (Parksville Qualicum), two from Port Alberni, one from Comox Valley, two from Campbell River, one from Powell River, and a combined Victoria/Port Alberni team.

Included in these teams were the BC Islanders and the Sunshine Coast Curlers, two teams that are part of Team BC's

More snapshots from Regional Qualifiers



The terrific soccer teams that competed in the Soccer Regional Qualifier hosted by SOBC – Quesnel in June 2016.



The great Region 8 athletes and coaches who participated in the Golf Regional Qualifier hosted in June 2016.

curling contingent going to the 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador. The bonspiel also included curlers playing for other Team BC teams, and it provided an opportunity for some of the Region 6 coaches going to the National Games to meet and talk about the upcoming event.

Because of the distances that a number of teams had to travel, the need to work around a ferry schedule, and the need to get into the games quickly, a modified scoring format was adopted in place of the normal divisioning system. The participating teams made this a keenly contested bonspiel.

After all the rocks had been thrown, swept and counted, all the ends tallied, and all the wins, ties, and losses noted, Nanaimo One came out on top, followed very closely by

Victoria One, Nanaimo Two, Port Alberni B, Victoria Four, Campbell River Rock Stars, Victoria Two, Team BC Islanders, Campbell River Rock Solid, Victoria Six, Victoria Three, Team BC Sunshine Coast Curlers, Oceanside, Victoria/Port Alberni, Victoria Five, and Port Alberni A respectively.

The competition was so close that one or two ends in the three games played by each team could have made the difference between first and last, but that's curling – a game of angles and inches to the end!

A great time was had by all and we look forward to doing it again next year. Special thanks goes out to Region 6 Coordinator Jean Tetarenko, whose enthusiasm to learn about the sport of curling and willingness to do whatever was required to get everyone and everything together made the tournament a great success. If we could just get her to stop calling the sheets lanes... ○



SPORTS CELEBRITIES FESTIVAL

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Langley athlete Matthew Williams and Sportsnet Central host Caroline Cameron, the event's outstanding Masters of Ceremonies.



Sports Celebrities Festival part of something special

The 2016 **Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Silver Wheaton** turned the spotlight on the abilities of Special Olympics BC athletes and the power of sport, while raising vital funds for the Canucks for Kids Fund and SOBC.

As SOBC athlete speaker Frances Collison told the crowd, "In Special Olympics, people see Frances first, not Down syndrome with its challenges. They see Frances Collison and what she is capable of! Special Olympics unites and strengthens every one of us in this room."

Held on November 21 at the Vancouver Convention Centre, the 18th annual gala brought together more than 650 supporters along with SOBC athletes, the entire Vancouver Canucks roster, and other

top B.C. sports celebrities for a meaningful and fun evening. This inspiring and interactive event has raised more than

\$4 million to date for SOBC and the Canucks for Kids Fund.

SOBC – Creston athlete Collison and Vancouver Canucks SCF ambassador Brandon Sutter brought the audience to their feet with their moving remarks. Sutter's cousin Chris and close family friend Mikey are Special Olympics athletes.

"Through Chris and Mikey I have seen firsthand how important Special Olympics is. The confidence and friendships that are built are so meaningful, and I'm very proud to be part of this special event tonight," Sutter said, before introducing Collison as a recent addition "to my list of athletes who inspire me."

Collison spoke powerfully about the fun, friends, and fame that Special Olympics has brought to her life, along with a healthy lifestyle and increased confidence and skills.

"When other people, who have the same disability as I have, see me doing Special Olympics sports that they think are impossible for them to do, they see hope. They hope that someday, they will be able to do that sport too, just like I do!" Collison said. "I think this happens for Brandon Sutter too. Lots of young hockey players look up to him and want



Canuck Loui Eriksson and SOBC – Abbotsford powerlifter Jamie Robinson flex for the cameras.



Canucks Jayson Megna and Michael Chaput working the SCF games room with SOBC – Langley athlete Nicole VandeVelde.



Canucks SCF ambassador Brandon Sutter and SOBC athlete speaker Frances Collison nail their parade pose.

to play hockey just like he does. We are role models both in our own way! This makes me feel proud. I feel so lucky to be part of something so special!"

The Sports Celebrities Festival is one of a small handful of mandatory events for the Vancouver Canucks, which is a powerful symbol of respect for Special Olympics athletes. It was a privilege to have the entire Canucks roster once again participating in the event, with each player paired with Special Olympics

athletes for the evening. The current players were joined by noted Canucks alumni Jyrki Lumme and Kirk McLean as well as coaches and management.

The event's roster of celebrities also included Olympic rowing medallists Gabe Bergen, Will Crothers, Lindsay Jennerich, and Patricia Obee; Olympic soccer medal-winning goalkeeper Stephanie Labbé and coach John Herdman; Olympic BMX racer Tory Nyhaug;



Vancouver Police Department Constable Cam Mackay presented the Rolex to the lucky winner of the Palladio Jewellers Raffle.

Lions alumni Angus Reid and Jamie Taras.

The backing of the Canucks and all the participating celebrities sends a strong message of inclusion and dignity for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The generosity and kindness from all of the event's celebrities, sponsors, and participants is truly inspiring.

The event also featured Sportsnet Central host Caroline Cameron teaming up with SOBC – Langley athlete Matthew Williams to



Olympic rowers Will Crothers, Patricia Obee, Lindsay Jennerich, and Gabe Bergen were part of the star-studded night.

Paralympic champion and B.C. Minister for Social Development and Social Innovation Michelle Stilwell; Vancouver Whitecaps FC midfielder Ben McKendry and President Bob Lenarduzzi; and BC

serve as the stellar Masters of Ceremonies, and Canucks broadcaster Joey Kenward helped highlight the evening's celebrities. Canadian comedy icon Brent Butt cracked up the audience with his standup set and joined Kenward to moderate a Canucks Hockey Hotstove that gave direct access into the minds of the Canucks leadership group, with President of Hockey Operations Trevor Linden, General Manager Jim Benning, and Head Coach Willie Desjardins kindly taking the stage.

Throughout the night, guests bid on auctions and enjoyed games and activities while mingling with the celebrities, and TSN Radio Vancouver conducted live broadcasting from the event.

We thank all of the Sports Celebrities Festival sponsors, attendees, and supporters who give so generously each year. ◯



Canuck Brendan Gaunce and SOBC – Chilliwack athlete Melinda Franson all smiles for the cheering crowd.



Canuck Ben Hutton, SOBC – Vancouver athlete Mathew Schmiing, and SCF Organizing Committee member Fiona Keller of Macquarie Mortgages made it to the finals of the Heads & Tails game.

Photos by Jeff Vinnick-Vancouver Canucks

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And all of the celebrities who generously took the time to attend

Dedication and enthusiasm bring Special Olympics back to Williams Lake

Inspired by ongoing enthusiasm from former athletes, Williams Lake volunteers have dedicated themselves to bringing Special Olympics back to their community.

Special Olympics BC – Williams Lake began offering programs in 1982, but the Region 8 Local moved into hiatus in recent years due to challenges finding volunteers. Now a new group of champions are generously giving their time to revive the Local and re-establish programs for the athletes who have many fond Special Olympics memories and a desire and need for these programs.

Program Coordinator Susan Means said the local individuals with intellectual disabilities who have participated in Special Olympics have so many warm memories of the fun and empowering experiences. Registrar Laura Klassen works with a group of self-advocates who got the ball rolling to revive the Local; their interest helped inspire the formation of a new SOBC – Williams Lake Executive Committee who are kindly dedicating themselves to establishing new programs.

"[The athletes] still have memories of when they used to do this. Quite often in their



The Williams Lake soccer team at the Regional Qualifier hosted by SOBC – Quesnel.

homes they still have pictures or newspaper clippings and photo albums," Means said. "They loved it, and it was nice to see how happy it made them. I hope we can come up to that standard or even exceed it in the future."

The new SOBC – Williams Lake organizers

spent the first season getting organized, recruiting athletes and volunteers, and launching two new programs for training opportunities. Williams Lake now offers four programs: 5-pin bowling, Club Fit, snowshoeing, and soccer. ○

Checking in with great SOBC Locals new or revived in the last five years

SOBC – Mackenzie has now completed its second full year running programs, with 16 awesome athletes involved. Mackenzie started up with 5-pin bowling and added aquatics



SOBC – Mount Waddington hosting their first powerlifting competition!

and golf in 2016. They also had the joy of sending an athlete to the Regional Qualifiers in Quesnel this year.

SOBC – Merritt has some very dedicated volunteers supporting their enthusiastic athletes! They run 5-pin bowling, Club Fit, and swimming programs in their community, and hosted their first functional testing session for the Club Fit athletes in January.

SOBC – Mount Waddington offers bowling and swimming in Port Hardy as well as powerlifting in

Port McNeill. They recently hosted their first powerlifting competition and had athletes attending Regional Qualifiers for the first time this year. There is no doubt we are going to see more great things happening in these communities!

SOBC – Revelstoke is growing every day and are currently running 5-pin bowling, alpine skiing, bocce, and Club Fit, as well as Active Start and FUNdamentals. They are excited to be expanding the number of registered athletes and volunteers as well as gaining recognition in the community.

SOBC – Salmon Arm has more than 20 athletes in three core sport programs: basketball, bocce, and Club Fit. They recently added their first youth-specific program, FUNdamentals. The athletes have the support of phenomenal volunteers and great community organizations and partners, and attended their first Regional Qualifier competition for summer sports this year. ○

CrossFitters conquer CF|24 for Special Olympics

A day really made a difference on October 22 as participants stepped up to the **CrossFit 24** challenge for Special Olympics.

Working in teams of three to six, CrossFitters across Canada completed one high-intensity workout every hour for 24 hours to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics. In B.C., CrossFit gyms CrossFit North Okanagan, Raincity Athletics, and CrossFit Uncivilized took part in the event, holding an all-night “CrossFit slumber party” for the dedicated teams.

Gyms were joined by local Special Olympics athletes who took part in some of the workouts and helped to cheer on teams. At CrossFit Uncivilized, SOBC – Vancouver athletes Miranda Orth and Mathew Schmiing shared their Special Olympics experiences and helped pump up the participants. “It’s really fun, people are really getting their fitness



going,” Orth said.

For Schmiing, the experience was “a huge thrill – this is the first time for me doing CrossFit, it’s quite a thrill and good exercise.”

At Raincity Athletics, SOBC – Vancouver athletes Alexander Pang and Alison Rodrigues took the time to talk with the participants and join in the workouts once again this year. “The workout was good, and it was nice to work out with some people I met last year!” Rodrigues said.

SOBC – Vernon athlete speaker Stacy Madden helped provide inspiration to kick off the day, encouraging the CrossFitters to “do your best!”

The event has raised a record-breaking \$165,000 for Special Olympics across Canada. Thank you to all the CrossFit gyms, teams, and supporters who worked so hard to make the day a success! ○

motionball Marathon of Sport inspires sportsmanship and successful fundraising

The 2016 **motionball** Marathon of Sport events in B.C. hit new heights in their support of Special Olympics, as these inclusive and inspiring days of sport and sportsmanship in Vancouver and Kelowna set new fundraising records and the teams of young professionals joined forces with SOBC athletes for a tidal wave of high fives and fun.

Now in its 10th year, **motionball** Marathon of Sport Vancouver saw 21 teams of young professionals and 31 local SOBC athletes come

together for another amazing day at EA Sports on June 4, raising a record-breaking \$82,000 net in support of the Special Olympics Canada Foundation.

One week later, the 2016 Marathon of Sport Kelowna presented by Interior Savings brought together 22 teams and 25 SOBC athletes, raising more than \$70,000 net for the Special Olympics Canada Foundation.

“We do it for the [SOBC] athletes,” Kelowna Marathon of Sport Co-Director Donnie Ungaro told Castanet.net. “They are very heartfelt, genuine and amazing people.”

The hallmark of the **motionball** Marathon of Sport is the remarkable spirit of inclusion and camaraderie shared by the teams of young professionals and Special Olympics athletes who come together for the super-fun day of sport. SOBC – Kelowna parent Fiona Lindquist wrote to the Lake Country Calendar to comment on the power of that experience for her daughter.

“Beyond the fun and humour, this young soul was amazingly blessed by the experience and all the encouragement and respect that she received throughout the entire day. While being humoured to tears, I was completely overwhelmed by



motionball Marathon of Sport Vancouver's Team Vega with their trophy!

your kindness and team spirit to create such a beautiful day for her and the other athletes.”

Our heartfelt thanks to the volunteer organizers who log countless hours to make these events possible. Michael Blondé of Hootsuite and Mike McClenahan of BBD are the dedicated Co-Directors who run the Marathon of Sport Vancouver, teaming up with Wendell Harlow of EA Outreach and Rosa Mattia of EA Sports to make this amazing experience possible.

In Kelowna, Ungaro and Derek Fuhr do a phenomenal job as Co-Directors dedicated to engaging the young professionals in their community and ensuring a supportive experience for the SOBC athletes.

motionball is a not-for-profit whose mandate is to introduce the next generation of donors, volunteers and sponsors to the Special Olympics movement through integrated social and sporting events. Since inception in 2002, **motionball** has donated over \$6 million to the Special Olympics Canada Foundation. ○



Marathon of Sport Kelowna Team New Wave with SOBC – Kelowna athlete Will Richardson (centre).

Howie Meeker named to SOBC Hall of Fame

After more than 40 years of generously giving his time and influential support to help Special Olympics throughout Canada, B.C., and Campbell River, legendary hockey player, coach, and broadcaster **Howie Meeker** was inducted into the Special Olympics BC Hall of Fame.

Meeker received his induction plaque at the successful annual fundraiser that bears his name, the SOBC – Campbell River Howie Meeker Golf Classic held in August.

The SOBC Hall of Fame recognizes significant, long-lasting contributions that individuals and groups have made to our organization and movement. Induction into the Hall of Fame celebrates the most outstanding achievements and contributions, and is one of the highest honours bestowed within the SOBC organization.

With his influential and generous advocacy work throughout Canada and B.C., Meeker has helped change the way our province and country see individuals with intellectual disabilities over the last 40 years. He has also been a vital supporter

“Howie Meeker is very deserving of this recognition based on his more than 40 years of supporting Special Olympics in Canada and B.C., and more than 28 years of backing SOBC – Campbell River with the Howie Meeker Charity Golf Classic.”

— Dan Howe, SOBC President & CEO

of SOBC – Campbell River athletes and programs over the last 28 years, championing them and lending his name and time to their annual golf tournament that has raised more than \$750,000.

“Howie Meeker is very deserving of this recognition based on his more than 40 years of supporting Special Olympics in Canada and B.C., and more than 28 years of backing SOBC – Campbell River with the Howie Meeker Charity Golf Classic. We couldn’t be more proud of his involvement with us and excited to honour him in this



Howie Meeker receiving his induction plaque from SOBC Director Colin MacKinnon.

way,” SOBC President & CEO Dan Howe said.

A four-time Stanley Cup winner with the Toronto Maple Leafs and a member of the Hockey Hall of Fame, Meeker was inducted into the Order of Canada in May 2011. Meeker served in World War II before winning four Cups and the Calder Trophy with the Leafs. He went on to expand his renown as a Member of Parliament, a hockey coach, and a noted broadcaster with a 30-year career. He is now 92 years old and lives in Parksville with his wife Leah; both are both big-hearted supporters of Special Olympics and serve as patrons of the B.C. Guide Dog Services.

“I’m very, very excited to become a member of the Special Olympics BC Hall of

Fame,” Meeker says. “Over the last 45 years, people involved in this wonderful operation at every level coast to coast have made the experience something extra special in our lives, Leah and I. Much of our appreciation of what we have, and how lucky we are to have it, comes from the Special Olympics athletes.”

“Howie is much loved by our Special Olympics athletes here in Campbell River, as they all know how important he is to their being able to participate in as many sports as they do here,” says longtime SOBC – Campbell River volunteer Harvey Hunter, who is himself a 2008 SOBC Hall of Fame Inductee in the Builder (Local) category. ○

Champions stand up for respect against the R-word

On the eighth annual **Spread the Word to End the Word** awareness day, people from around the world took a stand to promote respect and to put an end to the hurtful and dehumanizing use of the R-word. Special Olympics BC members and supporters rallied in their communities and online to help make the world a more inclusive place.

Held on March 2 in 2016, the Spread the Word to End the Word awareness day is part of a year-round campaign that asks people to pledge to stop saying the R-word and to use respectful, people-first language. In 2017, the R-word awareness day will be March 1.

SOBC – Abbotsford coach and SOBC Youth Activation Council member Roshan Gosal, along with fellow youth volunteers and SOBC athletes, have shown inspiring leadership in promoting respect and inclusion in Abbotsford.

Last year, they ran a highly successful campaign in local schools where nearly 2,000 people signed the pledge.

This year, Gosal and fellow volunteers built on last year's success and inspired 3,878 people to take the pledge, far exceeding their goal of 3,000 people.

Gosal says he can see the campaign is changing attitudes and students have responded very positively to his message of inclusion.

"They all listen and it's really nice. They stand there and we tell them what it's about, and they are always enthusiastic when we tell them. We also have athletes with us, so it gives them an image of what they are doing and who they are helping. And the athletes are always so happy when they sign," Gosal said in an interview with Country 107.1.

On Spread the Word to End the Word awareness day, SOBC and our supporters shared messages of respect and understanding

through social media. Together, we shared inspiring messages of inclusion to almost 340,000 combined followers. Many people and organizations in the province, including the BC

Lions, helped spread the word through retweets.

Youth volunteers around the province have championed the cause in their

schools, leading to amazing displays of respect and inclusion. Leadership students at L.V. Rogers Secondary School in Nelson inspired 218 people to pledge respect by running pledge booths during lunch hours and sharing the campaign's message through school TV announcements and presentations to classes. The students plan to continue raising awareness by speaking to students at elementary schools in their community.

"I think it's important that people are aware of what having an intellectual disability really



L.V. Rogers Secondary School leadership students Maddie Sternloff, Sydney Zimmer, Noelle Wang, Kyra Burkart, Darian Voisard, Allie Zondervan, and Camille Gebhart with Spread the Word to End the Word pledges.



"I think it's important that people are aware of what having an intellectual disability really means, and that people with intellectual disabilities are capable of doing basically everything anyone else can do..."



SOBC – Nelson athlete Nick Toner and Jessica Benson of the Selkirk College Classroom & Community Support Worker program at the Spread the Word to End the Word booth.

Youth Activation Council making waves

Special Olympics BC **Youth Activation Council** members are busy raising awareness throughout the province, spearheading initiatives such as R-word events (read more at left/below) and organizing local events supporting Special Olympics and respect and inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities.



Above: Roshan Gosal, SOBC – Abbotsford coach and YAC member (front row second from left) with local athletes and volunteers and Mayor Henry Braun pledging to end the R-word. Above right: Ava Ready, SOBC – Vernon volunteer and YAC member, who championed Special Olympics in 2016 with a series of grade assemblies at Vernon Secondary School.



means, and that people with intellectual disabilities are capable of doing basically everything anyone else can do. Also, they deserve the same respect as everyone else. I think people aren't aware of how hurtful the R-word can actually be, and how it can affect people," said Maddie Sternloff, a student in the leadership class.

Also in March, students in the Selkirk College Classroom & Community Support Worker program advocated respect with a Spread the Word to End the Word booth at their annual Celebration of Diverse Ability. The students collected well over 200 pledges. SOBC athletes from Trail, Castlegar, Nelson, and Grand Forks attended the event, and SOBC – Castlegar also hosted a booth.

In November, enthusiastic St Thomas More Collegiate students promoted respect and encouraged pledging to end the R-word in an inspiring week of advocacy led by the school's Justice and Life team.

Thanks to everyone who is helping raise awareness and promoting respect on the Spread the Word to End the Word awareness day and all year round! To pledge to end the R-word, or find out more about the campaign, visit r-word.org.



Golf Golden Retrievers are a hole in one

In 2016, Special Olympics BC received a generous donation of **Golf Golden Retrievers** to help athletes on the course and support our golfing events. Golden Retrievers are specially designed tools to help retrieve golf balls, and have been very useful at SOBC competitions and tournaments.

This kind donation was made by Lloyd and Nel Carmichael, who are regular listeners of Michael Campbell's "Money Talks" radio show and heard him speaking about Special Olympics. They hoped their donation would be put to good use helping our athletes on the course and supporting our fundraising events. Our thanks to the Carmichaels for their generosity!



Golfers at the Goldcorp Invitational received Golden Retriever to help them on the course.

WOLSELEY Canada

Wolseley Canada has been a valued partner of Special Olympics since 2004. In 2015, Wolseley became the official sponsor of the Special Olympics Canada Draft an Athlete national program helping athletes to experience the joy of competing in National and World Games.

Special Olympics Canada is delighted that Wolseley has confirmed they will continue their work with SOC and the Draft an Athlete program.

Fun and inclusive season of Regional Qualifiers a big success

Special Olympics BC – Invermere athlete Andrew Galligan said participating in a Regional Qualifier for the first time was a “fun and satisfying” experience.

Galligan said he was “surprised and honoured” when his coach asked him to compete at the Aquatics Regional Qualifier for Region 1 hosted by SOBC – Kimberley/ Cranbrook. While Galligan said he was a little nervous at first, he set many personal bests at the event and said it was a great feeling to swim while the crowd cheered him on.

In the 2016 season of summer-sport **Regional Qualifiers** SOBC athletes competed in 50 events across the province – the most in SOBC history! Locals around the province hosted exciting competitions in 5- and 10-pin bowling, athletics, basketball, bocce, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming.

With the support of dedicated volunteers and coaches, SOBC athletes gave their all as they thrilled spectators, created friendships, and competed to qualify for the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games.

The first Rhythmic Gymnastics Regional Qualifier held in Kelowna was an emotional experience for SOBC – Kelowna coach Kailey Owens.

Owens, the Head Coach of SOBC – Kelowna’s rhythmic gymnastics team, said athletes from her Local did an amazing job at the qualifier in May, and exceeded all of her expectations. She said the athletes were so proud of themselves



Callum Maclagan of SOBC – Campbell River competes in bench press at the British Columbia Powerlifting Association Winter Open/Powerlifting Regional Qualifier.

each time they finished a routine that it brought her, along with some fellow coaches and parents, to tears.

The SOBC – Williams Lake soccer team participated in a competition for the first time in June’s Soccer Regional Qualifier for Region 8 hosted by SOBC – Quesnel. The SOBC – Williams Lake Local recently started back up after going on hiatus for a couple of years. Due to demand from athletes, SOBC – Williams Lake introduced a soccer program this season.

Craig Hilker and Kelvin Parent coached the SOBC – Williams Lake team at the Soccer Regional Qualifier.

Hilker said the event had a great atmosphere, and it gave Williams Lake players a lot of opportunities to socialize with athletes from different communities.

What Hilker remembers most about the qualifier is how much fun it was for the team, and seeing the athletes’ smiling faces.

“It makes me somewhat emotional thinking about how much fun they all had. We are all looking forward to next year,” Hilker said.

Athletes competing at the Basketball Regional Qualifier

hosted by SOBC – Campbell River were also part of a major milestone.

“This was the first Basketball Regional Qualifier to take place on Vancouver Island,” SOBC Region 6 Coordinator Jean Tetarenko said. “As stated to everyone present, they

were part of making history for basketball within Region 6.”

A total of five teams participated in the great event in February, with players representing SOBC – Campbell River, Victoria, Nanaimo, and Port Alberni.



The Athletics Regional Qualifier for Regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 hosted by SOBC – Langley was the biggest athletics qualifier in SOBC history.

Tetarenko is excited about the progress basketball has made on the Island and sees a lot of potential for the future. She hopes the Regional Qualifier in Campbell River will serve as another big step in basketball’s ongoing growth in the region and the province.

“I coached for one season with Victoria’s program and seeing the development within the athletes in just a few years is incredible. And this is evident across the region. This is a real testament not only to the hard work of the athletes, but also to the high calibre of the coaches,” Tetarenko said.

SOBC would like to thank all the amazing coaches, volunteers, and supporters who made this season of summer-sport Regional Qualifiers a huge success. Congratulations to all the athletes who competed with pride and achieved so much! ○



Athletes from SOBC – Burns Lake, Smithers, and Terrace lit up the lanes in March’s 5-Pin Bowling Regional Qualifier for Region 7 in Smithers.

Sobeys helping fuel Special Olympics athletes with Better Food Fund partnership

This year we celebrated an expansion of the national partnership between Special Olympics Canada and Sobeys Inc., taking their significant support of Special Olympics coast to coast through the **Sobeys Better Food Fund**.

Over the next three years, Special Olympics and Sobeys will work together to promote the health and wellbeing of athletes through initiatives that will educate and empower athletes, their families, coaches, and volunteers to eat better, feel better, do better.

To help celebrate the expanded partnership, SOBC – Victoria athletes visited the Sobeys office in Saanichton to meet the staff and share the joy of Special Olympics. “It was a great opportunity to have the athletes and volunteers here and meet them, they were all so very enthusiastic and willing to share their experiences at Special Olympics. Our staff really engaged and totally enjoyed the morning,” said Vivian Chenard, Community Relations Manager at Sobeys.

Special Olympics Canada and Sobeys will be working together to make healthy food and proper nutrition a priority in Special



Eat better.
Feel better.
Do better.

Olympics programs across the country. Sobeys employees will also be able to volunteer to lead nutrition sessions for SOBC athletes in Victoria and the Lower Mainland, and selected stores across the province will be leading Better Food Experiences store tours for athletes, coaches, and caregivers.

Proudly Canadian, with headquarters in Stellarton, Nova Scotia, Sobeys has been serving the food shopping needs of Canadians for 109 years. Sobeys owns or franchises approximately 1,500 stores in all 10 provinces under retail banners that include Sobeys, Safeway, IGA, Foodland, FreshCo, Thrifty Foods, and Lawton's Drug Stores as well as more than 380 retail fuel locations. ◦



SOBC – Victoria athletes met with Sobeys staff in Saanichton to celebrate the Better Food Fund partnership.

Coaches develop skills at SOBC Coaching Summit

More than 50 Special Olympics BC coaches representing almost 40 Locals came together for the **SOBC Coaching Summit** in October.

Highlights from the weekend included a SportMedBC module on concussion management, veteran SOBC coaches discussing how tools and information at the

conference have benefited SOBC athletes, and SOBC Board of Directors member Michael Campbell speaking about SOBC's mandate of providing top-quality coaching for athletes.

Our sincere thanks to Sport Canada for funding the event and for their strong support of SOBC coaches! ◦



Dedicated SOBC coaches at the 2016 Coaching Summit in Richmond.

Signature Authentics seals their support for Special Olympics

Signature Authentics supports Special Olympics across the country and right here in British Columbia, with funds generated from sealed-bid auctions in this province going to Special Olympics BC initiatives. Signature Authentics operates in 75 locations throughout the province.

Signature Authentics started in 1993, primarily as an art publisher and distributor. With the success of the Toronto sports franchises at that time, SA created and distributed limited editions of authentically autographed Blue Jays and Maple Leafs art prints. Now, with more than 20 years in the industry and having had the privilege to work with sports icons like Wayne Gretzky, Maurice Richard, Gordie Howe, and many more, Signature Authentics has become one of the most respected names in the sports memorabilia and marketing business.

Our thanks to Signature Authentics for their support, and to all those who bid in their sealed auctions. ◦



Easel Auction Partners

New Car Dealers driving support for SOBC

B.C.'s New Car Dealers have been helping Special Olympics BC change lives through the power of sport for 32 years. The **2016 New Car Dealers Foundation of BC / Special Olympics Auction** raised \$187,000, bringing the three-decade total to just under \$4.6 million in support of SOBC and the work of the New Car Dealers Foundation.

The auction is an annual online fundraising event open to the New Car Dealers Association of BC membership and their families, partners, suppliers and/or sponsors, Special Olympics BC partners, suppliers and/or sponsors, and donors to the auction.

This year saw donors generously give the greatest number of items yet, with 281 sought-after prizes in the following categories: Automotive and Business, Food and Wine, Lifestyle, Media, and Sport and Travel. The 2016 auction also experienced growth in the important cash pledges from New Car Dealers as well as related businesses and supporters, as this year's cash pledges were greater than in 2015.

"Special Olympics transforms lives through the joy of sport every day. In B.C., there are more than 4,600 athletes empowering themselves through year-round Special Olympics programs in 57 communities. We change lives and we change minds about all that individuals with intellectual disabilities can do, creating social change. But we couldn't do it without the support of B.C.'s New Car Dealers, and our sincere thanks go out to all who gave so generously to this year's auction," SOBC President & CEO Dan Howe said.

The event is powered by a dedicated committee comprised of volunteer members working with SOBC and New Car Dealers Foundation staff. The volunteer members have given countless hours to the auction in order

Special thanks to the Auction Committee:

Manse Binkley, *Harmony Honda & Harmony Acura*

Doug Bower, *The Vancouver Sun & The Province*

Marnie Carter, *Carter Auto Family*

John Chesman

Christina Hadley, *Special Olympics BC*

Dan Howe, *Special Olympics BC*

Pam Keith, *Dueck Auto Group*

Joe Mitchell, *Carter Auto Family*

John Wynia, *Harbourview Volkswagen*

and to all the other dealers who made cash pledges, solicited auction items and bid on items.

to support the charities. They generously seek out auction items, encourage bidding, and provide strong guidance and insights that have made the event succeed and grow over the years.

The current volunteer auction committee members are Manse Binkley of Harmony Honda and Harmony Acura, Doug Bower of the Vancouver Sun and The Province, Marnie Carter of Carter Auto Family, John Chesman, Pamela Keith of Dueck Auto Group, Joe Mitchell of Carter Auto Family, and John Wynia of Harbourview Volkswagen.

The funds raised by the auction help SOBC transform lives and support the work of the New Car Dealers Foundation. The Foundation awards CarCareerBC education

grants to eligible students in B.C. who wish to pursue post-secondary education or training leading to a career in the automotive industry. CarCareerBC grants provide financial support towards the cost of tuition and books for recipients enrolled in applicable apprenticeship, training, or education.

SOBC and the New Car Dealers Foundation extend sincere thanks to everyone who supported the 2016 auction, and look forward to continued success in 2017. To get involved, please contact Christina Hadley, SOBC Vice President, Fund Development & Communications, at **604-737-3073** / toll-free at **1-888-854-2276** / or by email at chadley@specialolympics.bc.ca.

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Dueck Auto Group puts support into high gear with Classic and Custom Car Shows



Dueck Auto Group

Each summer, Dueck Auto Group hosts a series of Classic and Custom Car Shows to benefit Special Olympics BC, and 2016 was their most successful year yet. The events were supported by SOBC athletes, who did a great job presenting awards to car owners and selling raffle tickets. The shows kicked off in June with the Dueck Richmond Father's Day Pancake Breakfast Show and Shine, which partnered with Riverside Corvette Club to host 100 classic

cars of all makes and models. On July 10, Dueck Downtown had nearly 60 vehicles register for their fourth annual car show, and Dueck on Marine saw an amazing 200 cars take part in August. The shows raised nearly \$5000 for Special Olympics BC and were fun-filled days out with great cars, music, and a barbecue for attendees. We are so grateful to Dueck Auto Group for organizing these events and supporting SOBC! ○

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Give the gift of "Yes I can"

"Special Olympics is my way of showing the world that 'Yes I can.' I strive to show the world that, despite my disability, I can do anything any typical person can do."

– Adam Advocaat, SOBC – Coquitlam

Special Olympics BC helps over 4,600 athletes in B.C. show the world what they can do. You can help enrich lives, build confidence, and give the gift of "Yes I can" with a donation to SOBC.

Donate online, by phone, or by cheque to the address below. You can request that your donation supports a specific Local of your choice.

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Home Hardware builds support for Special Olympics athletes

Special Olympics BC is grateful for the generous support of **Home Hardware**, which helps enrich the lives of more than 4,600 athletes across the province and thousands more across the country. Home Hardware has been a National Partner of Special Olympics Canada since 2000, and their generous funding is supplemented by marketing support such as mentions in TV commercials.

Home Hardware is the National Sponsor of two of SOBC's most successful and prestigious annual fundraising events: the Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament supporting SOBC and the Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Silver Wheaton benefitting SOBC and the Canucks for Kids Fund.

SOBC is extremely grateful for the year-round support of Home Hardware. ○



LETR members set the pace with great events across the province

The Lower Mainland's law enforcement finest came together with Special Olympics BC athletes from May 31 to June 3 as the **Law Enforcement Torch Run for SOBC** swept through communities from Mission to the North Shore, raising vital funds and awareness.

Around 330 law enforcement members from a range of agencies and 45 Special Olympics athletes took part in the annual four-day run for SOBC.

"The athletes we support are near and dear to our hearts," said Superintendent Murray Power, Officer in Charge of the Langley RCMP, who welcomed Torch Run participants at his detachment. "They bring their emotion, their effort, and they are inspirational not only to us but to all the citizens of Langley and around British Columbia. We want to continue to throw our support behind the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics."

The core Torch Run team joined local law enforcement members and SOBC athletes as they carried the Flame of Hope through Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Langley, Surrey, White Rock, Burnaby, Vancouver, North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Mission, Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Port Moody, Coquitlam, New Westminster, Richmond, Delta, and Ladner.

Participating agencies included the Abbotsford, Delta, New Westminster, Port Moody, Vancouver, and West Vancouver police departments, RCMP detachments throughout the Lower Mainland, the RCMP's Pacific Region Training Centre, Canada Border Services Agency, the Justice Institute of British



Nanaimo



Richmond



White Rock

Columbia, and Metro Vancouver Transit Police.

In June, law enforcement titans teamed up with local Special Olympics athletes for inspiring Torch Run events on Vancouver Island. In Greater Victoria, members of the Saanich Police Department, Central Saanich Police Service, Victoria Police Department, Oak Bay Police Department, and Canadian Armed Forces came together with SOBC – Victoria athletes for an annual five-kilometre walk/run along the Galloping Goose Trail. The sixth annual Nanaimo Torch Run saw runners and walkers gather at Maffeo Sutton Park and take off on a five-kilometre route along the city's waterfront. Nanaimo RCMP staged the successful event with SOBC – Nanaimo athletes and other community members, including the Military Police.

In September, Cranbrook RCMP members and SOBC athletes joined members of their community for the Cranbrook Torch Run, which was followed by a barbecue celebrating SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook's 30th anniversary. In October, more than 50 participants came out for the great Golden Torch Run, which was organized by the Golden RCMP and included the B.C. Conservation Officer Service.

From February 26 to March 1, VPD



Golden

Constable Cam Mackay had the honour of joining a national team of law enforcement runners in the **2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games LETR Final Leg**, carrying the Flame of Hope across Newfoundland and Labrador and into the National Games Opening Ceremony.

Oak Bay Police Department Constable Sheri Lucas and SOBC – Coquitlam athlete Mandy Manzardo will help kick off the **2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games** as part of the Final Leg Team in Austria.

Many BC LETR members presented ribbons at **SOBC Regional Qualifiers** across the province in 2016. ○



West Vancouver Police Department Constable Jeff Wood awards a ribbon at the Athletics Regional Qualifier for Regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 in Langley.

LETR recap

Special Olympics BC would like to thank the various agencies who organized events in 2016 to raise funds and awareness.

The Delta Police Department hosted their successful annual 50/50 draw at a **Vancouver Giants hockey game** in March.

In April, Metro Vancouver Transit Police, Burnaby RCMP, West Vancouver Police Department, and Concord Security Corporation rode hard and raised \$3,500 in the **Cycle for a Cause** at Metropolis at Metrotown, and the Mission RCMP and SOBC – Mission athletes and volunteers raised \$1,336 in their first Cycle for a Cause fundraiser.

April also saw Oak Bay, Saanich, and Victoria police departments and the Central Saanich Police Service raise more than \$6,000 at the annual **Free the Fuzz** roof sit.

In its third year, the **Metro Vancouver Transit Police Golf Tournament** in May raised just over \$16,700.

The Abbotsford Police Department hosted their annual **Challenge Run** in June. Many community members came out to take part and support this family-oriented event for SOBC.

In September, the LETR was delighted to be part of the **New Westminster Police Charity Golf Tournament** for the first time.

Vancouver Police Department Inspector Joanne Wild won the international LETR movement's 2016 **John Carion Award** at September's 2016 LETR International Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. The 2017 conference will be held in Nashville, Tennessee.



VPD Insp. Wild receives a John Carion Award at the 2016 LETR International Conference.



Greater Victoria law enforcement and SOBC – Victoria athletes, volunteers, and supporters at Free the Fuzz.



SOBC – Delta athletes Brad Smith and Scott Fattedad perform a ceremonial puck drop for a cheering crowd at a Vancouver Giants game.



Law enforcement and SOBC supporters work up a sweat at the Cycle for a Cause at Metropolis at Metrotown.

Prince George RCMP, Prince George Fire Rescue, BC Corrections, and B.C. Sheriff Services teamed up with SOBC – Prince George athletes and the Prince George Cougars for the **LETR Skate** in November.

Delta Police Department Constable Grayson Smith released his new children's book *There's a Norseman in the Classroom!*. Two dollars from the sale of every copy goes to benefit SOBC. Pick up a copy of the book at pepperminttoast.com.

Metro Vancouver Transit Police and the Vancouver and Victoria police departments held successful **overtime drives** this year, raising funds through donations of banked time to support SOBC programs.

We also thank the many agencies who held raffles, hosted barbecues, and sold T-shirts this year to raise funds for SOBC. ○

First Vancouver Polar Plunge for SOBC makes a big splash

The sun shone but the sea was frigid as brave souls got bold and cold at the first-ever **Polar Plunge for Special Olympics BC** in Vancouver.

The 2016 Polar Plunge drew 90 Plungers to get freezin' for a reason at Kitsilano Beach in March. Participants raised more than \$30,000 to support SOBC.

The Polar Plunge, staged in partnership with the BC Law Enforcement Torch Run, saw 40 members of the Vancouver, Abbotsford, and West Vancouver police departments, Metro Vancouver Transit Police, and Canada Border Services Agency take the Plunge alongside teams, businesses, and individuals looking for a festive but chilly time.

"Once the teeth stopped chattering, we realized how much fun this was and how much money we were able to raise for Special Olympics," VPD Superintendent Howard Chow said. "The costumes, the hard work from the planning committee, and the support from the public and law enforcement community all contributed to the event's incredible success. Thank you to everyone for taking part. I hope to see everyone shivering beside me at the second annual Polar Plunge!"



Law enforcement leads the Plunge.



VPD Inspector Joanne Wild and SOBC – Surrey athlete Michaela Robinson chillin' at the Polar Plunge.



BC Lions quarterback Travis Lulay gets bold and cold.



Team Dueck and other Plungers show their spirit at Kits Beach.

The VPD took the prize for top law enforcement fundraising team, while Team Dueck was the top fundraising team, and Greg Keith of Dueck Auto Group was the top individual fundraiser.

BC Lions quarterback Travis Lulay, a longtime Special Olympics supporter, and national women's soccer team players Emily Zurrer and Selenia Iacchelli got in the game to plunge. Sportsnet Central host Caroline Cameron emceed the action, and City Television and OMNI Television generously supported the event as Media Sponsors. Michelle Collens, Manager, Sport Hosting, City of Vancouver attended the event as a representative of the City of Vancouver, which provided the perfect venue at scenic Kits Beach.

SOBC Treasurer Colin Yakashiro came out to plunge with his team of colleagues from Grant Thornton, the Purple Polar Bears.

"We've got about 10 people coming from our office from all different backgrounds," Yakashiro said before taking the Plunge. "We thought it would be a great way to team build and raise some money for Special Olympics. It's going to be a great day."

A dozen colourful characters in the costume contest posed onstage for a cheering crowd. Keen-eyed judges VPD Chief Adam Palmer, SOBC Board of Directors member Michael Campbell, and SOBC – Vancouver athlete Sheryl Spurr voted Jamie Pitblado of the BC Lions Football Club and Amy Jorgensen, dressed as a Felion cheerleader and a lucha libre wrestler respectively, as the best-dressed Plungers.

At the call to plunge, spectators crowded the shore as the law enforcement contingent, fully dressed, assembled behind VPD bagpiper Constable Cal Davis for a ceremonial send-off. VPD Chief Adam Palmer, APD Chief Bob Rich and Deputy Chief Mike Serr, Transit Police Deputy Chief and BC LETR Executive member

Barry Kross, and WVPD Deputy Chief Shane Barber led the charge into frigid waters. Close on the heels of law enforcement came a cast of superheroes, celebrities, and kooky characters running, splashing, and laughing in the chilly water.

Guests of all ages had fun checking out police department operations vehicles, along with the VPD mounted, marine, and canine units on display. Teams of VPD cadets and SOBC athletes roved the beach raising awareness and accepting donations.

Thanks to Nordstrom, CN, and the Vancouver Police Credit Union for generously supporting the Polar Plunge with donations, and to everyone who helped make the inaugural Plunge in Vancouver such a great success.

We are thrilled to welcome Westminster Savings Credit Union as the Presenting Sponsor for the 2017 Polar Plunge coming March 4! To find out more or to register, visit plunge4specialolympics.com.

Park'N Fly Vancouver helps Special Olympics athletes soar

Park'N Fly Vancouver has a long history of providing cost-effective and well-supported parking for Vancouver International Airport passengers, and for many years they have also given generously to help Special Olympics athletes thrive.

Park'N Fly Vancouver has supported Special Olympics BC by donating auction items for fundraising events and providing parking for staff and key volunteers when travelling for SOBC. The company also makes a point of hiring SO athletes and people with disabilities.

They offer a range of parking and transportation services and solutions at Vancouver International Airport, including wheelchair-accessible transportation between their lots and the airport.

Park'N Fly Vancouver extends a special discount offer to members of the SOBC community, giving lower-than-web rates for business and leisure travel. Quote the number 787911 when you contact Park'N Fly to receive the SOBC discount. ○



PARK'N FLY
AIRPORT PARKING
Park happy

SOBC flies high with Pacific Coastal Airlines

For staff, volunteers, and athletes of Special Olympics BC, the cost of flying to an event or function could be a real barrier. Fortunately for us, we have the generous support of **Pacific Coastal Airlines**.



Throughout the year, Pacific Coastal Airlines provides air travel for our athletes, coaches, and volunteers to attend events all over the province, including Performance Program camps and Athlete Leadership conferences.

Quentin Smith, President and CEO of Pacific Coastal Airlines, has supported SOBC for many years. He has attended our fundraising events in person and provided significant support by donating highly valued travel packages as auction items.

SOBC is honoured, proud, and grateful to be supported by Quentin and Pacific Coastal Airlines.

Pacific Coastal Airlines was founded almost 30 years ago and provides regular schedule, charter, and cargo services to 65-plus destinations in B.C. Make sure to check out their schedule if you're flying to a community they serve. ○

Staples campaign inspires support nationwide

It was another successful year for **Staples Canada's annual Give a Toonie Share a Dream** campaign in support of Special Olympics athletes across Canada.

The 2016 campaign, which took place from May 7 to June 5, raised more than \$550,000 nationwide. During this important campaign, Special Olympics athletes and volunteers join Staples staff in stores to invite customers to donate at the till or online.

SOBC – Prince George athlete Barbie Conway said staff at the Staples store in Prince

possible, recruiting volunteers, helping to organize events, and coordinating shifts for athletes helping out at the store.

SOBC – Surrey athlete Michaela Robinson, a Staples employee herself, volunteered multiple times per week in stores in her community and further showed her generosity by donating to Staples' ongoing fundraising efforts a signed Vancouver Canucks hockey stick she had won in a raffle, and a voucher for four rounds of golf.

In addition to the successful campaign, the annual **Staples Canada/Special Olympics BC**



Victoria

George did a great job of putting on events, including barbecues and a bake sale, that were exciting for SOBC athletes and a lot of fun for everyone who attended. Conway played a critical role in supporting the campaign by volunteering in the store whenever



Burnaby



Penticton

Softball Tournament in July saw 16 Special Olympics BC athletes team up with Staples employees for a fun and friendly day-long tournament at the Riverway Sports Complex in Burnaby.

This year marks Staples Canada and Special Olympics Canada's 20th year of partnership. Over the last two decades, the Give a Toonie Share a Dream campaign has raised more than \$7 million for Canada's Special Olympics athletes, including more than \$750,000 for SOBC athletes.

Our heartfelt thanks to Staples Canada staff and customers, and to all the athletes and volunteers across the province who give their time and energy to support Special Olympics! ○

SOBC Leadership Council

Comprised of the Regional Coordinators representing the eight SOBC Regions and respected leaders in the SOBC sport world, the council serves as the link between community and regional programs and the Board of Directors of Special Olympics BC. This group plays an important role in helping chart the course of SOBC sport program development, strategic plans, policies, and resources.

Leadership Chair:

- Patty Wheeldon

Regional Coordinators:

- Sheila Hawton (Region 1)
- Sheila Paynter (Region 2)
- Donna Bilous (Region 3)
- Natalie D'Angelo (Region 4)
- Darren Inouye (Region 5)
- Jean Tetarenko (Region 6)
- Nicole Zacharias (Region 7)
- Tracy Heartt (Region 8)

Members:

- Deanna Levchuk
- James Sutherland
- Matthew Williams

SOBC Leadership Council update

Special Olympics BC's **Leadership Council** provides vital guidance for our organization and movement, and benefits significantly from the efforts of these valued volunteers.

We were glad to begin 2016 with the addition of new Region 4 Coordinator Natalie D'Angelo, a former staff member making a welcome return to SOBC. D'Angelo was a valued SOBC staff member from 2005 to 2007, serving as Manager, Program Development, and Manager, Volunteer Development. In her roles, she made a difference through her work in community development, volunteer management, Athlete Leadership programs, and more.

We are so grateful that former Region 4 Coordinator Barb Tull did not leave SOBC entirely, as she stayed involved with the sport that is her passion, rhythmic gymnastics. Tull has been involved with SOBC for 26 years and has been a remarkable source of leadership, support, guidance, and compassion throughout her involvement. She is a great champion of Special Olympics athletes, a hardworking volunteer, and a valued visionary and friend.

In April, we welcomed Tracy Heartt back into the role of Regional Coordinator for Region 8, and gave big thanks to Sandra Galletti for her

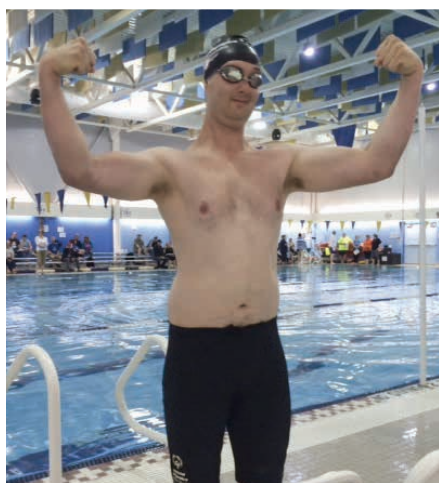
years of dedicated service in the position.

Heartt gave her time and enthusiasm to Special Olympics since 1992. She came back into the Regional Coordinator role fresh off her second stint as the SOBC – Dawson Creek Local Coordinator, where she returned to SOBC after taking four years off while she finished school. Prior to that, Heartt served a six-year stint as Region 8's Regional Coordinator, which was preceded by her first time as Local Coordinator for Dawson Creek, beginning back in January 1992.

Galletti has been a dedicated and valued SOBC volunteer since 1998, and she was nominated for the SOBC President's Award in 2015 in recognition of her many and varied contributions. She began as the Regional Coordinator for Region 7, and remained on the Leadership Council after moving to Prince George, when she took on the Region 8 position.

Galletti is admired for her dedication to ensuring athletes and coaches are heard and understood, her strong organizational and management skills, her passion for competition and events, her tireless work, and her positive attitude. ○

Functional testing inspires fitness and success



SOBC – Castlegar athlete Liam Donnelly is a dedicated swimmer who takes pride in his health.

Special Olympics BC – Castlegar athlete Liam Donnelly says attending an SOBC **functional testing session** in June helped him improve his athletic performance, become healthier, and build confidence.

"I learned so much in one day," Donnelly said. "It was so much fun – I had a blast!"

In functional testing, athletes participate in exercises that measure fitness and test their foundational movements. These sessions are used to evaluate an athlete's fitness level and motivate and guide training. Functional testing also helps athletes track their progress and provides coaches with feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of their training programs.



SOBC athletes take part in a functional testing session in Vancouver.

A dedicated swimmer, Donnelly's hard work in the pool led to great results during the functional testing session in June. Donnelly said seeing what he can accomplish at the functional testing session has inspired him to train

harder and take pride in his health.

"I have never felt as strongly attached to my whole fitness as I do now," he said.

Donnelly keeps the sheet with his functional testing results in his room and says it reminds him of everything he has accomplished.

"To me it is more than a piece of paper, it is proof that I have done this and got this far at everything I have done," he said.

Donnelly says functional testing sessions are important because they motivate athletes to get off the couch, lead healthy lifestyles, and feel good about themselves. Donnelly said insights from the testing have changed the way he trains, which has led to improvements in his balance, performance in the pool, and health.

He strongly encourages other SOBC athletes to take part in functional testing.

"It's such a great program – it can help so many athletes better succeed!" he said.

Going forward, Donnelly said he would love to participate in another functional testing session, and wants to achieve even better results.

"If I could, I would do one every week," he said. ○

Marvellous progress with SOBC Performance Program

“Truly marvellous” growth and gains were observed in Special Olympics BC coaches and athletes through the **Performance Program** in the 2015-16 sport season, which was the fourth year of operation for this groundbreaking initiative.

SOBC’s Performance Program is a long-term plan for enhancing the skills and performance of coaches and through them, all SOBC athletes. The program is not just for elite athletes – it’s for coaches who are open to new training techniques and athletes who are committed to training. Participating coaches and athletes take the skills that they learn back to their local programs to benefit all athletes, not just a few.

The 2015-16 sport season saw SOBC host 24 Performance Program camps and expand into supporting all 18 SOBC sports; meanwhile, participating coaches and athletes demonstrated many improvements in their abilities and impact on others.

SOBC – Kelowna’s David Wilkinson served as a Team BC 2016 snowshoeing coach and has participated in Performance Program camps. Even though this was just his first National Games, Wilkinson was selected to be a Special Olympics Team Canada 2017 snowshoeing coach, a particularly exciting achievement since his son Tony also qualified for a spot on the team as a competitor.

Wilkinson said the Performance Program provides interaction with experts and fellow coaches that have helped him develop more drills and coaching techniques that he has been able to work into his local program. In addition, he said, the hands-on instruction helps athletes really build their skills with sport-specific techniques, and feel happy with their success in the improvements they can see.

“I really do think it’s a valuable thing,” Wilkinson said, noting the great successes

observed between the Performance camps and the 2016 National Games, where all of the Team BC snowshoers posted personal-best performances.

Jacques Thibault, the internationally recognized sport performance expert who has helped SOBC build the program, noted that significant gains have been observed, and the leadership and abilities of SOBC coaches and athletes are very inspiring.

“Lots of progress has been observed since the Performance Program started four years ago, but what is happening now is truly marvellous. The level of expertise of our athletes, coaches, and administrators is always improving, providing leadership that inspires excellence in health and sport for all,” said Thibault. “I am grateful to have the chance to work with such amazing people.”

The goal of the Performance Program is to elevate everyone’s level of sport and performance by providing training and tools to participating coaches and athletes so they can share them with everyone in their home communities. We believe that by giving coaches better resources and tools, they can then train athletes better, who in turn raise the level of competition making everyone’s performance level rise.

The program involves three components:

- **by-invitation camps** where athletes and coaches from all over the province work with sport-specific experts and sport science experts to help develop their skills and knowledge and give them tools to share;
- **functional testing sessions** that provide



Swimmers and coaches thank RBC Foundation for their support at an SOBC Aquatics Performance Camp held at Simon Fraser University.



Coaches and athletes work to elevate their performance at September’s SOBC Athletics Performance Camp in Burnaby.

direct feedback on where the athletes are in their fitness and how they can improve, helping motivate the athletes and guide training; and

- **coach-only camps and summits** where coaches come together to learn from experts, share their experience with others, and collaborate on ideas.

The vision for 2016-17 is to have a similar number of Performance Program camps as in the last sport year, and continue supporting all sports. Work in winter sports will continue, at least at the same level as the previous year, and there will also be an increased focus on preparing all of B.C. for the 2017 SOBC Summer Games and 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games.

Significant support from the Government of Canada, a \$20,000 grant from RBC Foundation, and the ongoing generosity of SOBC’s provincial partners help make the Performance Program opportunities possible.

For more information and stories, please visit specialolympics.bc.ca/performance-program or contact James Marchand, Sport Coordinator – Performance, by email at jmarchand@specialolympics.bc.ca or by phone at 604-616-1342 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free. ○

SOBC Performance Program supported by

Canada 



RBC Foundation®



Above: Athletes and coaches thank the Government of Canada at an SOBC Speed Skating Performance Camp. Above right: SOBC – Comox Valley’s Randy James leads coaches through floor hockey drills at November’s SOBC Team Sport Performance Camp.



SOBC athletes, volunteers, and supporters honoured locally and nationally

We're very pleased to congratulate and celebrate Special Olympics members and supporters who were recognized in 2016 with awards for their significant contributions to Special Olympics, sport, and community!

- Heartfelt congratulations to all the winners of the Special Olympics Canada 2016 National Awards, including Female Athlete of the Year **Shelly Poland** of SOBC – Golden and Male Coach of the Year **Garth Vickers** of SOBC – Kelowna. Sincere congrats also to former BC Law Enforcement Torch Run Executive Council member **Rick Taylor**, winner of the Rob Plunkett LETR Award.



National Female Athlete of the Year Shelly Poland of SOBC – Golden (right) celebrating with Special Olympics Canada Champions Network Co-Chair and Olympic champion Catriona Le May Doan.

- SOBC – Campbell River athlete **Jesse Shade** was honoured with one of the inaugural Premier's Awards for Aboriginal Youth Excellence in Sport for his outstanding achievements in swimming and basketball.
- Warm congratulations to SOBC – Burnaby Local Coordinator **Ron Hammell**, a 24-year SOBC volunteer who received the 2016 Sport BC Presidents' Award for SOBC.
- Two longtime coaches won prestigious community recognition at the City of Kelowna's 2015 Civic and Community Awards. **Lorena Mead** received the Sarah Donalds Treadgold Memorial Woman of the Year Award for her outstanding contributions to the city of Kelowna,

and **Dennis Richardson** earned the Bob Giordano Memorial Award for his significant contributions to Kelowna through voluntary service to amateur sport.

- The **SOBC – Mission soccer team** who earned a fourth-place finish at the 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games was honoured by their community as the winner of the District of Mission's 2016 Against the Odds Achievement Award.
- Special Olympics Canada pioneer **Dr. Frank Hayden** was named one of seven Class of 2016 inductees to Canada's Sports Hall of Fame as a Builder. His groundbreaking research and transformative work helped build the Special Olympics movement and change lives.
- SOBC – Richmond athletes **Magnus Batara** and **Nicky Chow** and coach **Meghan Jamieson** were celebrated by their community as winners in the 17th annual Richmond Sports Awards. Batara earned the inaugural Richmond News Sportsperson of the Year Award for his outstanding performance at the 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games; Chow received the 2016 Richmond Sports Awards Special Olympics Athlete prize in recognition of his impressive achievements in speed skating, as well as his accomplishments and strong improvement in basketball and soccer; Jamieson won the Richmond Sports Award for outstanding achievement by an Adult Female Athlete due to her excellence in judo.



Jesse Shade receiving a Premier's Award for Aboriginal Youth Excellence in Sport from Premier Christy Clark.



National Male Coach of the Year Garth Vickers of SOBC – Kelowna (right) with Special Olympics Canada pioneer Dr. Frank Hayden.

- Outstanding SOBC volunteers **Jeannie Cramer**, **Tom Norton**, **Shelagh Schmidt**, and **Margot Tubman** received the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers for their remarkable efforts and impact.
- SOBC – Abbotsford coach and SOBC Youth Activation Council member **Roshan Gosal** earned a Peace Medallion in the Young Social Change Leader category at the YMCA of Greater Vancouver's 2016 Power of Peace Awards.
- On the Sunshine Coast, Local Coordinator **Pat Stuart** was honoured alongside fellow outstanding local citizens at the 2016 Celebration of Excellence.
- A talented and hardworking athlete, SOBC – Burnaby's **Katie Little** was named by the Coquitlam Sports Hall of Fame as one of the 2015 Wall of Fame inductees.
- We are pleased to celebrate **Dan Howe**, Special Olympics BC's President & CEO, who in 2016 marked 30 years as SOBC staff. Thank you for all your remarkable work and dedication to Special Olympics!

Congratulations to these deserving winners, and to all of the members of the SOBC family who have been recognized in their own communities this year whom we may have missed! We love to hear about and celebrate your achievements – please forward stories to: megan@specialolympics.bc.ca. ○

Tom Norton named Special Olympics North America Coach of the Year

The excellence and dedication of Special Olympics British Columbia coach Tom Norton have earned international recognition, as the Abbotsford-based volunteer was honoured in January 2016 as **Special Olympics North America's 2015 Coach of the Year**.

"Tom's dedication and efforts are totally focused on the athletes and what he can do to bring out the best in them – he has spurred on his athletes to achieve things they never thought possible," said Annette Lynch, Senior Manager, Coaching Excellence & Sport Education, Special Olympics North America.

Norton, who has been a volunteer SOBC – Abbotsford coach for the last 10 years, truly embodies Special Olympics' commitment to providing every athlete with the quality coaching they deserve. Norton has been involved in Special

Olympics for more than 25 years, first as a member of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics and for the last 10 years as an SOBC coach.

He has been an outstanding coach at the local level, as a member of nine regional and provincial teams (for both Special Olympics and mainstream Games) and two Special Olympics national teams (in 2011 and 2015), and as a local training coach for athletes going to Special Olympics Provincial and National Games.

Norton was presented with the Special Olympics North America Coach of the Year award in a surprise ceremony on January 9 at an SOBC Athletics Performance Camp, where he was surrounded by fellow volunteer coaches dedicated to helping athletes with intellectual disabilities excel on and off the fields of play. Norton said it was "absolutely overwhelming" to win the Special Olympics North America award. ○



Special Olympics North America 2015 Coach of the Year Tom Norton.

Confidence and skills developed at in-line skate sessions

This year, athletes around the province took a big first step towards joining an SOBC skating or skiing program – without even setting foot on a rink or a slope.

Trying any kind of skating or skiing for the first time can be an intimidating experience. To help more athletes overcome hurdles and join these sports, SOBC has introduced a **Learn to Skate** program, supported by Special Olympics Canada, that looks to help athletes and coaches build confidence and skills through in-line skating workshops. These workshops help to improve core strength, leg strength, and balance, and they are a great preparation not only for speed skating or figure skating, but alpine skiing and cross-country skiing too.

From there, the program provides participants with opportunities to continue developing

their skills, and ultimately join an SOBC-sanctioned program in one of these sports.

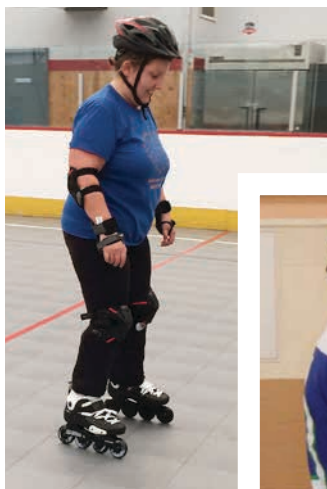
SOBC Learn to Skate sessions have been held throughout B.C., starting in early 2016 with Vernon, Prince George, and Nelson. There athletes received world-class instruction from former Olympic speed skater

Jacques Thibault and in-line skating expert Dallas Kurtz.

"I would have to say, amazing sessions were happening," Kurtz said. "From athletes and coaches standing for the first time, to them skating backwards and doing cool balancing tricks on skates, personal building and learning was happening with everyone."

More than 60 athletes have taken part in the Learn to Skate program within its first year. With more athletes building their confidence and skills in skating and skiing sports, SOBC has seen enrollment numbers rise and hopes to expand competition opportunities to various regions across the province.

For more information about Learn to Skate programs, please contact Shawn Fevens at sfevens@specialolympics.bc.ca or 604-737-3055. ○



Learn to Skate session in Kelowna.



Learn to Skate session in Vernon.

Dennis Richardson

Horizon-expanding opportunities with SOBC youth programs

When Sandra Hamel first registered her daughter Esme for Special Olympics BC – Nanaimo’s **Active Start** program, she thought it might be a fun thing to do. Very quickly Esme showed that participating in Special Olympics youth programs definitely is fun, but it’s also full of exciting benefits that develop through the fun activities and warm environment.

Throughout her first weeks in her local Active Start program, 2½-year-old Esme consistently exceeded expectations. The facilitators taught games and Esme was able to follow the directions, though she had not previously shown she could do so. They started kicking balls in the program, and even though it seemed a bit early for Esme to be able to accomplish that skill, a few days later her mother saw her balancing on one leg and making the kick motion.

“The program challenges her, but in a really good way,” Sandra Hamel said. “We’ve seen a lot of benefits that we didn’t anticipate, and we love seeing her grow so much. ... I’m always so excited at the end of the night because I do see something new every night.”

There are now 101 SOBC Active Start, **FUNDamentals**, and **Sport Start** programs running in communities around the province, where children with intellectual disabilities ages two to 18 have the opportunity to learn vital motor, sport, and social skills in a fun and welcoming environment.



Isaac Loponen had a wonderful time with his parents at Youth Sports Day.

Many children with intellectual disabilities feel left behind or isolated in traditional sport and activity programs. Special Olympics is the place where they belong and thrive,



Great times for young athletes in the SOBC – Kelowna FUNDamentals program.

demonstrating significant skill developments while having a wonderful time in a safe learning environment.

New SOBC youth programs have recently started in locations such as Cowichan Valley, Kitimat, Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Salmon Arm, Surrey, and Victoria. There are now more than 1,335 children and youth with intellectual disabilities ages two to 21 involved in SOBC programs around the province.

SOBC also actively works with schools to connect with their youth with intellectual disabilities and let them know about all the opportunities open to them with Special Olympics, including traditional and Sport Start programs.

In 2016, Nanaimo, Campbell River, and Grand Forks schools helped their students engage with Special Olympics through fun try-it days. The Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools District 68 staff first teamed up with SOBC in 2015 to host a series of four try-it days where students from all seven high schools had opportunities to sample a wide range of sports offered by SOBC – Nanaimo, as well as a Club Fit and healthy living station.

After last year’s try-it days, at least six students were able to jump right into participation in SOBC – Nanaimo programs, including golf. Many of the try-it day participants were surprised to find out that SOBC – Nanaimo offers golf, and it proved quite popular. Enthusiasm at the try-it days and interest from the community also led to the

creation of SOBC – Nanaimo’s new basketball program! The Nanaimo schools brought back the try-it days in 2016, and Campbell River and Grand Forks introduced similar events this year to benefit their students with intellectual disabilities.

In addition to building awareness of the range of sports, the try-it days helped show Special Olympics is for individuals with intellectual disabilities of all ages, not just adults. More school-based opportunities are coming in 2017, including the launch of try-it days in Quesnel and a school competition program on the Island.

In May, children with intellectual disabilities ages two to 12 had an opportunity to give our youth programs a try at SOBC’s **2016 Youth Sports Day**. The event saw more than 40 children take part in an amazing day of sports and smiles at Burnaby North Secondary School. At this annual event, families who are new to Special Olympics are able to experience the fun and engaging activities that are a regular



Fun for all in SOBC – Richmond’s youth programs.

part of SOBC’s youth programming. Youth Sports Day also gives current SOBC athletes a chance to participate in a great day of activities with friends.

Our thanks to Goldcorp, the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, Tim Hortons, Variety - The Children’s Charity, the Samuel Family Foundation, The Slaughter Family Foundation, and the Eric Hamber Foundation for their significant support of youth programs and athlete development throughout B.C. ○

— Youth programs supported by —



Building skills and sharing perspectives with Athlete Leadership programs

Special Olympics BC recognizes how important it is that leadership comes from within, and that is why we create the social space that allows athletes to form a strong and lasting community and feel empowered to speak out on behalf of their peers and themselves.

Through SOBC **Athlete Leadership** programs, athletes develop the skills and abilities to take leadership positions in a number of roles including public speaking, sitting on Local Committees, assisting with fundraising, and as acting peer mentors at sport programs. This year, leadership skills, public-speaking abilities, health advocacy, and dialogue were enhanced as 39 talented athletes from 15 communities participated in Special Olympics BC Athlete Leadership programs in Richmond in the first weekend of April.

Twenty-five athletes built their public-speaking skills in the Athlete Speakers Bureau 1 and 2 courses, supported by mentors from their home communities who will help them in their ongoing opportunities to give speeches and share their stories. These advocates help raise awareness and support for Special Olympics and for individuals with intellectual disabilities, showcasing their great abilities and achievements.

"Because of Special Olympics, I am more fit and healthy than before. I feel included in my community because without Special Olympics, I would have few friends, few opportunities, and few chances to travel and meet new people," SOBC – Vernon athlete Justin Sigal said in his Athlete Speakers Bureau 1 speech.

A further 14 athletes participated in the Governance course, where they discussed key issues affecting athletes and programs and brought valuable ideas into play. They provided great insights and worked on their abilities to foster dialogue, which will help them as they

work with their home communities to share important athlete perspectives.

The Athlete Speakers Bureau 2 and Governance participants also completed training to become certified Sun Safety Health Heroes. As part of our new Healthy



*SOBC – Oceanside athlete
Shayne Blandin*

Communities initiatives, SOBC is introducing Health Heroes training for athletes who wish to equip themselves to help educate their peers about best practices for healthy living.

Congratulations and thanks to all the participants! We look forward to hearing more about these athletes and welcoming more leaders into the program going forward.

To learn more about Athlete Leadership programs taking place in your community, please contact **Michelle Cruickshank** at mcruickshank@specialolympics.bc.ca or **250-208-5402**. ○



*SOBC – Vancouver athlete
Mathew Schmiing*

WORLD OUTLOOK
FINANCIAL CONFERENCE

Raising awareness at World Outlook Financial Conference

Since 1990, the **World Outlook Financial Conference** has been bringing together top-quality financial analysts together with sophisticated Canadian investors to share world-class information and analysis. Their goals are simple: "We want to protect attendees from profound financial instability encompassing the world. And we want to make them money."

The 2016 WOFC was held on January 29 and 30 in Vancouver. We are grateful that Special Olympics BC once again had a presence at the conference, accepting donations from attendees and sharing stories of our athletes and programs.

The 2017 WOFC will be held on February 3 and 4 in Vancouver. Our thanks to conference founder Michael Campbell for the event's amazing support of Special Olympics.

Please see <http://moneytalks.net/events/world-outlook-conference-2017.html> for more information. ○

Knights of Columbus provide strong support for Special Olympics

The **Knights of Columbus** and Special Olympics have a long-standing and important relationship, dating all the way back to the founding of Special Olympics in 1968. Today they continue to be a valued international partner and a source of great support here in B.C. Members of the Knights of Columbus do a great deal to assist people with intellectual disabilities, including volunteering and running fundraising campaigns to support Special Olympics BC.

We greatly appreciate support from the Knights of Columbus, and we look forward to making a difference together for many years to come. ○



SOBC Board of Directors

Special Olympics BC is very grateful to have outstanding leadership and support from our **Board of Directors**. We strongly appreciate their contributions and dedication to ensuring the ongoing quality and value of the organization.

At SOBC's September 2016 AGM, we welcomed a number of Directors into new executive roles, and we are grateful that they have taken on these important leadership positions. Randy Smallwood of Silver Wheaton was elected as Board Chair, and Ted Hirst of Canaccord Genuity moved into the role of Vice Chair. Pamela Keith of Dueck Auto Group is Past Chair, while Money Talks host Michael Campbell and Colin Yakashiro of Grant Thornton are graciously continuing to serve as Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

SOBC is also excited to welcome three new Directors who were elected at the 2016 AGM: Vincent Li, Brent Bergeron, and Eamonn Percy. An SOBC – Richmond

athlete, Li has been involved with Special Olympics for 11 years as a valued athlete and volunteer at fundraising events, and he is the co-Athlete Representative on the SOBC – Richmond Local Committee.

Bergeron is the Executive Vice President of Corporate Affairs and Sustainability of Goldcorp, one of SOBC's valued provincial partners. Percy is the founder and President of the leading business improvement firm The Percy Group Capital + Business Advisors.

We bid thank you and farewell to Victor de Bonis, COO of Canucks Sports & Entertainment, who has stepped down from the Board of Directors after two years of service. SOBC also thanks Chuck Jeannes, former Goldcorp President and CEO, who stepped down from the Board after his retirement in February 2016. We are grateful for their valued contributions and dedication to Special Olympics.

Our sincere thanks to all of the members of the Board of Directors who so generously give their time to strengthen SOBC. ○



**Special
Olympics**
British Columbia

Chair: Randy Smallwood
Past Chair: Pamela Keith
Vice Chair: Ted Hirst
Secretary: Michael Campbell
Treasurer: Colin Yakashiro
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Michael Coyle
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Vincent Li
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Colin MacKinnon
Eamonn Percy
Murray Shapiro
Patty Wheeldon

SOBC in the spotlight at Luke Willson 12 North Sports Classic

Special Olympics BC was very grateful to be a beneficiary of the inaugural **Luke Willson 12 North Sports Classic**, a multi-sport extravaganza held in Tsawwassen, Vancouver, Burnaby, and Haida Gwaii from June 24 to 29.



The 12 North Classic included a nine-hole golf tournament. SOBC – Delta athlete Chelsea Kaake (pictured with Willson) kicked off the Sports Classic by speaking at the Tsawwassen Springs Golf Course.

Later that evening, 32 teams competed in a season long fantasy football competition to win great prizes and enjoyed a tailgate themed barbecue dinner at the Yale Saloon.

The following day, Willson was joined by Seattle teammates and other special guests to host a youth football camp and celebrity flag football game at Swangard Stadium, helping to inspire the next generation of young football players while also raising funds and awareness for charity beneficiaries.

The Luke Willson Youth Football Camp was open to players ages eight to 18. The non-contact camp consisted of drills and stations, lunch, a t-shirt, swag bag, and a photo with Willson followed by a Q&A with professional players and coaches.

Following the youth camp, the 12 North Celebrity Flag Football Game, featuring "General Managers" Willson and Vancouver Canucks forward Jake Virtanen, took place

at Swangard Stadium. Willson and Virtanen assembled their respective teams consisting of professional football players, alumni, hockey players, and celebrities and media personalities from Vancouver and Seattle.

SOBC – Vancouver athletes Alexander Pang and Annabelle Davis were also part of the events, with Pang speaking at the NFL Fantasy Football Draft and Davis supporting at the Youth Football Camp at Swangard Stadium. All the athletes impressed the many participants and celebrities involved in the events with their speaking skills and sport accomplishments!

The festivities wrapped up with the 12 North Fishing Tournament in Haida Gwaii. Guests were drafted to one of four celebrity "captains" teams and enjoyed the breathtaking beauty and rugged backdrop of Englefield Bay Lodge.

The Luke Willson 12 North Sports Classic benefitted Special Olympics BC, the Pacific Salmon Foundation, and provided grants for youth football players.

Our thanks to Luke Willson and everyone who participated and supported to make all of the events so successful! ○

Volunteers share stories and create connections at Regional Conferences

Even though it was Super Bowl Sunday, even though it was the B.C. Family Day long weekend, 60 terrific Region 3 and 4 volunteers came together on February 7 to learn and rejuvenate at their **Special Olympics BC Regional Conference**.

The participants were from every Region 3 and 4 Local, giving a wonderful turnout and range of perspectives. Presentations included a great panel on coaching, an informative session on Special Olympics divisioning led by

presentations, and engage in fun team-building activities, all while enjoying the beautiful oceanside scenery.

“Regional Conferences connect Locals and they connect people,” Region 6 Coordinator Jean Tetarenko said. “We don’t always acknowledge that we are all leaders. Conferences like this one give us an opportunity to explore that, to step away from our programs and connect with people who share the same passion for Special Olympics



Region 1 and 2 Conference participants came together to share ideas and learn from knowledgeable and passionate speakers at their Regional Conference.

SOBC Manager, Sport Shawn Fevens, SOBC – Campbell River volunteer George MacLagan’s inspiring talk about volunteering and recruitment, and SOBC Vice President, Sport Lois McNary’s energizing keynote address about SOBC’s development and why she is inspired to be still in the game after 33 years with Special Olympics.

The event’s location, the RCMP headquarters in Surrey, provided a unique setting and atmosphere that helped spark outside-the-box thinking, as did the structure of the presentations and lunch hour with an expo on Special Olympics topics.

In April, Region 6 volunteers went to camp to develop their skills, create connections, and share inspiring stories at their Regional Conference.

Held at Camp Qwanoes on Vancouver Island, the conference saw more than 40 volunteers from eight Locals take part in informative training sessions, attend inspiring



Region 6 Conference participants at beautiful Camp Qwanoes.



Region 7 and 8 volunteers take part in a fun and informative Club Fit session.

that we do. You learn, you connect, and you have fun in the process.”

More than 40 dedicated Region 1 and 2 volunteers came together for their Regional Conference at the beautiful Pines Bible Camp in Grand Forks. The fun and informative conference, which ran from April 30 to May 1, presented coaches and administrative volunteers from the two regions with a rare opportunity to get together to discuss their experiences, ask each other questions, and share successful strategies.

This year’s conference included a session on autism, which volunteers who attended the 2015 Region 1 and 2 Conference had requested.

“The session on autism was very illuminating,” Region 2 Coordinator Sheila Paynter said. “We saw the world through someone else’s eyes and it really helped explain some of the situations we have faced with athletes in the past.”

Dedicated Region 7 and 8 volunteers learned how to strengthen their Locals and better serve SOBC athletes at their Regional Conference.

Held at École Heather Park Elementary in Prince George from September 30 to October 2, the conference was a great opportunity for volunteers to get together and share ideas.

During the conference, skilled SOBC – Prince George coach Kim Kokesch led the almost 30 attendees in a Club Fit session. Through the session, volunteers learned how the Club Fit program can help SOBC athletes achieve their fitness goals and motivate athletes of all abilities. ○

Celebrity champions change the world with Special Olympics

Special Olympics is an inspiring movement of athletes, families, coaches, volunteers, sponsors, and celebrities coming together with the common goal of improving the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and inspiring everyone to open their hearts to a wider world of human talents and potential.

When high-profile supporters stand up as champions of our athletes and movement, it makes a difference. Special Olympics BC is fortunate to have many champions from the world of professional and amateur sports who give their time to support our movement and advocate our athletes and cause.

They attend the Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Silver Wheaton to show their support for Special Olympics; they give their time to provincial and local events to interact with our athletes and community; they lend their voices to calls for awareness of Special Olympics and respect and support for athletes. They make a difference by setting an example for a more inclusive, respectful world.

Legendary broadcasters **Howie Meeker** and **Bernie Pascall** have long led the way in setting this example of inspiration, part of a powerful tradition of support for Special Olympics



Vancouver Canucks staff enjoyed volunteering with SOBC athletes on their annual Live 2 Give day.

from the hockey world that helped establish our movement in Canada. (Read more about Meeker's induction into the SOBC Hall of Fame on page 23.)

The **Vancouver Canucks** generously help SOBC with their significant full-team participation in the annual Sports Celebrities Festival in support of SOBC and the Canucks for Kids Fund. Their generosity towards Special Olympics continues year-round, as they provide ticket donations so athletes and coaches get to attend games, offer assistance from their

players and coaching staff for training and development events, and give SOBC access to autographed memorabilia that creates key fundraising opportunities for SOBC provincially and at the local level. They never hesitate to support Special Olympics athletes by cheering for them and raising awareness in their online channels.

For the second straight year, Canucks staff jumped at the chance to work with SOBC athletes on their annual Live 2 Give day, where all staff spend a day volunteering with Lower Mainland charities. Enthusiastic and encouraging Canucks staff members ran a functional testing session to help SOBC athletes track their fitness, strength, and progress.

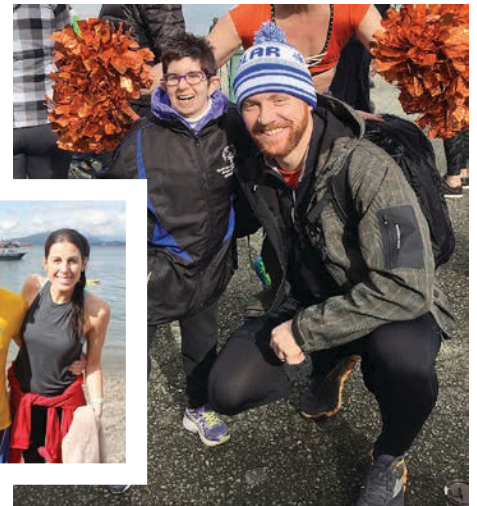
The **BC Lions Football Club** is a long-standing supporter of Special Olympics and their players are great champions who attend events such as the Sports Celebrities Festival. Many players and leaders have enthusiastically

gotten further involved, like quarterback **Travis Lulay** who has been an incredible champion of Special Olympics throughout his years in B.C. and beyond.

Lulay gives significant support to Special Olympics through his participation in events and awareness-raising in interviews and social media. In 2016, Lulay even braved the cold of English Bay in March to support Special Olympics, as he

participated in the first Vancouver Polar Plunge for Special Olympics BC. National soccer team players **Emily Zurrer** and **Selenia Iacchelli** joined him in taking the Plunge to benefit Special Olympics.

Vancouver Whitecaps FC generously donates unique autographed memorabilia for fundraising and gets their players and icons involved in Special Olympics events. They are quick to kindly help raise awareness in their web and social media channels and offer encouragement to SOBC athletes.



Inset: National soccer team players Selenia Iacchelli (left) and Emily Zurrer (right) took the Plunge alongside President & CEO Dan Howe. Above: Surrey athlete Michaela Robinson and BC Lions quarterback Travis Lulay were all smiles at the 2016 Polar Plunge for Special Olympics BC.

2015-16 Provincial Champions:

- **Wally Buono** – BC Lions General Manager
- **Ashleigh DeMerit (McIvor)** – Olympic and world ski cross champion
- **Jay DeMerit** – retired Whitecaps FC defender
- **Chris Higgins** – NHL player
- **Marco Iannuzzi** – BC Lions receiver
- **Trevor Linden** – Vancouver Canucks President of Hockey Operations
- **Travis Lulay** – BC Lions quarterback
- **Howie Meeker** – hockey legend
- **Cathy Priestner Allinger** – Olympic speed skating medallist, 2014 National Games Chair
- **Angus Reid** – retired BC Lions centre
- **Carl Valentine** – Whitecaps FC club ambassador

In addition, many stars and sports organizations elsewhere in Vancouver and in communities around B.C. generously give their time and support to SOBC Locals. We are so grateful to these champions for raising awareness and support in their communities as well.

Our sincere thanks to all of these valued supporters who back Special Olympics athletes and lead the way with their examples of respect and dignity! ○

UFC joins forces with Special Olympics BC

UFC made a financial contribution to Special Olympics British Columbia this year through its corporate social responsibility initiative, We Are All Fighters. Symbolizing how everyone fights every day to overcome challenges large and small, We Are All Fighters celebrates the fighter in all of us and is designed to make a meaningful impact in communities where UFC events are held.

In support of the contribution, UFC hosted an introductory mixed martial arts workout for Special Olympics athletes at DCS Fitness & Martial Arts. No.1-ranked flyweight contender Joseph Benavidez, No.2-ranked welterweight contender Stephen Thompson, and The Ultimate Fighter Nations winner and UFC middleweight Elias Theodorou instructed

Special Olympics athletes on martial arts technique, and discussed the discipline, honour, and respect required to succeed in sport.

Our thanks to UFC for supporting Special Olympics! ○



SOBC athletes attended an introductory mixed martial arts workout led by UFC competitors.

Staff update

2016 has been a year of exciting changes for the Special Olympics BC staff team!

We started the year by welcoming Fundraising Coordinator Meg Ishida to SOBC as part of an internship in January. We are delighted that Meg is now staying on with SOBC long-term in her new role.

In February, we welcomed Communications Coordinator Michael Obendoerfer to the team, who has brought excellent communications experience and his passion for sports to the position. We bid farewell to Emma Woo in March, as she embarked on a great opportunity to further her dream of attending medical school.

The fundraising department sent their fond wishes to Carolyn McCarthy in April, who left for a great opportunity managing educational events. Charlotte Taylor was excited to step into the role of liaison to the BC Law Enforcement Torch Run, and continues to support Locals in their fundraising initiatives.

In May, James Marchand joined us as Performance Program Coordinator, bringing a background in behavioural neuroscience and volunteer experience with the Canucks Autism Network to the program team. Fundraising and Communications Coordinator Eliot James left

SOBC for new adventures over the summer, and we wish her well in her exciting travels.

September brought us two new team members, as Caitlin Woods-Rotering stepped into the role of Fundraising & Communications Coordinator and Ashten Staffen started as Health and Sport Science Coordinator. Caitlin recently returned home to B.C. from the U.K., and brought her experience working in fundraising abroad to the position. Ashten is also a returning B.C. native, and has a strong background in health, fitness, exercise physiology, and sport nutrition to bring to the team.

Beginning January 3, 2017, Lori Cruddas takes on the role of Manager, Community Development for northern B.C. She brings more than 15 years of experience in developing and growing programs for social service and health organizations throughout the north.

Our best wishes have gone with Morgan Hunter and Charlene Flood as they have moved on to new adventures, Morgan in Victoria and Charlene in Prince George. Happily, both have stayed involved with SOBC, Morgan as a Health and Sport Science Consultant and Charlene as a volunteer with SOBC – Prince George. ○

Endowment funds create lasting support for Special Olympics

We are so grateful for support received through endowment funds, which create opportunities with Special Olympics BC in perpetuity. In 2013, the **John M. Sims Fund** was initiated by friends of John Sims, a longtime Special Olympics BC Board of Directors member and champion of Special Olympics. This fund, as well as the **Gordon Walker Fund**, the **Howard Carter Fund**, and the **Marge McNary Fund**, will continue to provide important support for Special Olympics BC for many years to come.

For more information on these funds or how to create an endowment fund for SOBC, please visit our website at specialolympics.bc.ca or contact Dan Howe at 604-737-3079 or dhowe@specialolympics.bc.ca.

To make a donation to an endowment fund:

- **Online:** Donation form at specialolympics.bc.ca (Please check the Tribute option, select the "In Tribute Of" button, and enter the name of the fund).
- **By phone:** 604-737-3180 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free
- **By mail:** [Name of Fund]
c/o Special Olympics BC, #210 – 3701
Hastings Street, Burnaby, BC V5C 2H6

Thank you!

Special Olympics BC thanks the following individuals, foundations, corporations for their generous donations throughout the year to assist us in supporting SOBC athletes.

Individual donors

- Michael Campbell
- Ted Hirst

Foundations

- Essential Needs Foundation
- Hamber Foundation
- Lewis Family Foundation
- Prairie Lily Fund
- RBC Foundation

In-kind donations

- Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP
- Dueck Auto Group
- Group 5 Design Associates Ltd.

Energy, inclusion highlights of BC Winter and Summer Games

BC Games give Special Olympics BC athletes the opportunity to compete alongside up-and-coming young mainstream athletes and para-sport peers, creating empowering experiences in both sport and social spheres. At July's **Abbotsford 2016 BC Summer Games**, there were many inspiring examples of inclusion for the 39 participating SOBC swimming and track and field athletes, such as the connections sparked by SOBC – Prince George swimmer Sam Russell.

The engaging Russell enjoyed socializing with swimmers from around the province – many of whom came to the SOBC team throughout the competition to have their photos taken with him. He said he had a great time making new friends and talking about swimming, track and field, golf, rugby, and football.

There were “such nice people here – new friends, and my family,” said Russell, who was supported by a cheering section of supportive family.

“It’s surreal,” SOBC – Campbell River swimmer Ashley Adie said of the BC Games experience. “It’s a higher level of competition ... and the energy is explosive. And everyone is so encouraging.”

Beyond the social and inclusion opportunities, the SOBC athletes competed with determination and pride in the BC Games Special Olympics divisions, supported by their dedicated SOBC coaches from around the province.

Leading the way on the results sheets were SOBC – Victoria swimmer Aly White, who powered to an impressive nine gold medals, along with SOBC – Kamloops swimmer Cameron Chambers, who raced to five gold medals, and SOBC – Surrey track and field athletes Malcolm Borsoi, who earned four gold and two silver as well as gold with the relay team, and Melissa Semke, winner of four gold medals and one bronze plus relay gold.

The competitors also did everyone proud by putting up many personal-best performances. In track and field, Borsoi logged three PBs and Semke added another two, while Surrey’s Thomas Rak notched two and Ethan Mountain added one. The swimmers added a strong haul of PBs in the pool as well.

BC Games SOBC athletics Head Coach Deborah Carter of SOBC – Surrey said the team was “phenomenal on and off the field,” and they came home with “hardware well deserved, complete with smiles and good memories.”

Fifty-eight SOBC basketball players and 10 figure skaters got to experience the thrill of competition and make new friends at the **Penticton 2016 BC Winter Games** in February.

SOBC – Quesnel’s Brock Terlesky got a lot out of playing for the Cariboo-North East Zone 8 squad. Since many players on Terlesky’s team were not from his Local, he says the event was a great opportunity to mingle with other SOBC athletes.

“Eventually I pulled away from my social anxiety and I got used to the other athletes and got friendly with them,” Terlesky said.

The Penticton 2016 BC Winter Games marked the second time SOBC basketball players competed at BC Games, and the debut of the Special Olympics figure skating event.

In the Special Olympics Women Level 2 figure skating event, SOBC – Surrey athlete Jennifer Utendale captured the gold medal, SOBC – Victoria athlete Desiree Grubell earned

silver, and SOBC – Coquitlam’s Tracy Laberge claimed bronze.

SOBC – Victoria skater Emily Walzak won the gold medal in the Special Olympics Women Level 3 event, with SOBC – Port Alberni’s



Langley's Jessi-lynn Gordon heads for home in the 400m race at the Abbotsford 2016 BC Summer Games.



SOBC – Langley athlete Michael Savage and Surrey's Malcolm Borsoi finished the 100m sprint in 12.42 and 12.43 seconds, respectively.

Kimberly Giesbrecht securing silver, and SOBC – Surrey's Krista Milne bringing home bronze.

“The biggest thing is just getting the chance to compete and show your program to the world and getting a chance to just do what you love,” Walzak said in an interview for BC Games TV, powered by viaSport British Columbia.

In the Special Olympics Men Level 2 event, SOBC – Vancouver athlete Eric Pahima won the gold medal and SOBC – Port Alberni’s Matthew MacDonald picked up silver. SOBC – Richmond’s Matthew Lai captured the gold medal in the Special Olympics Men Level 3 event.

After two days of intense competition in basketball, the Vancouver-Coastal Zone 5 team and the Zone 8 team emerged as the top two squads. In the championship game, the Zone 5 team mounted a thrilling comeback to win the gold medal 25-19 on the final day of the tournament.

“Everyone was playing really hard and focused on winning the game,” said SOBC – North Shore athlete Tyrone Liebenberg, a player on the Zone 5 team. “It was a really proud moment and it was amazing when the final buzzer went and we saw that we won.”

In the bronze-medal game, the Fraser River Zone 4 team overcame the Fraser Valley Zone 3 team in an extremely tight 29-28 finish.

Congrats and thanks to all the SOBC athletes and coaches and to BC Games organizers and volunteers! ○



SOBC figure skaters performed with pride as they debuted their event at the Penticton 2016 BC Winter Games.

Tim Hortons announced as Special Olympics Canada Platinum Level National Partner

Tim Hortons is now a Special Olympics Canada Platinum National Partner, proudly joining 25 other partners of the Special Olympics movement in Canada.

"It is an honour to have such an iconic Canadian brand supporting the movement," says Sharon Bollenbach, CEO, Special Olympics Canada.

"Tim Hortons' support will help provide greater resources for Special Olympics in communities across the country so more athletes and families can benefit from the transformative power of sport."

Tim Hortons' support will directly benefit Active Start and FUNdamentals programs across the country, and Tim Hortons will serve as an official sponsor of Special Olympics Team Canada for the 2017



Special Olympics Canada CEO Sharon Bollenbach joined Ontario athletes and Tim Hortons staff to celebrate the new partnership.



Team BC cross country skiing athletes and coaches fuelled up at Tim Hortons during the 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games!

Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria. Tim Hortons will also provide support at the provincial level and for the 2018 National Summer Games taking place in Nova Scotia.

As one of North America's largest quick service restaurants, Tim Hortons will help bring more awareness to Special Olympics in Canada. Through the Tims TV network and other assets, Canadians will learn about the inspiring abilities of those with an intellectual disability and how to get involved in Special Olympics' world-class community and competitive programs across the country. ○

2016 anniversary celebrations for SOBC Locals

SOBC is so fortunate to have incredible athletes and volunteers in 57 communities around the province, and we are continually amazed by the long-standing volunteer dedication that makes programs possible all over B.C.

Each year, SOBC recognizes the Locals who are marking anniversary seasons, a testament to their inspiring ongoing dedication to helping athletes and being part of this incredible movement. We would like to share these anniversary celebrations so everyone can join in recognizing the achievements of these Locals!

In 2016, the following Locals marked anniversary years:

Happy 30th anniversary – est. in 1986

- SOBC – Abbotsford
- SOBC – Comox Valley
- SOBC – Dawson Creek
- SOBC – Fort St. John
- SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook
- SOBC – Nanaimo
- SOBC – Prince George
- SOBC – Prince Rupert
- SOBC – Smithers

Happy 25th anniversary – est. in 1991

- SOBC – Powell River
- SOBC – Trail

Happy 10th anniversary – est. in 2006

- SOBC – South Okanagan

Thank you to all the athletes and volunteers who make their Locals so remarkable, and who make Special Olympics BC such an inspiring, welcoming, empowering, and fun community! ○

Make a difference with your Aeroplan Miles

Special Olympics BC is fortunate to be part of the **Aeroplan Beyond Miles** donation program. We hope our frequent-flyer friends will consider donating Aeroplan Miles to help support Special Olympics. ○

Visit: <https://beyondmiles.aeroplan.com/eng/charity/618>



Changing the game for athlete health

People with intellectual disabilities experience worse health care and access to services than others in their communities. Globally, millions of people with intellectual disabilities lack access to quality health care and experience dramatically higher rates of preventable disease, chronic pain and suffering, and premature death in every country around the world.

In developing and developed countries alike, people with intellectual disabilities are consistently one of the most marginalized population subsets – a status that comes with horrific health outcomes, such as dramatically higher rates of premature death and obesity than the general population.

Special Olympics Health programming is changing the game for athlete health. Our ultimate goal is to create a world where people with and without intellectual disabilities have the same opportunity to be healthy. Internationally, Special Olympics has become the largest public health organization for people with intellectual disabilities.

To address the health disparities our athletes face, Special Olympics is leading a number of integrated and complementary efforts to strengthen the capacity of existing systems of care. Special Olympics Health is integrated into all Special Olympics sports, family, and youth programs, and also strengthens linkages with community care networks and other local partners who can support the health and wellbeing of Special Olympics athletes year-round.

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®



Health Promotion screenings cover nutritional info in fun and interactive ways.

Special Olympics BC's health offerings include Healthy Athletes screenings and year-round health support including Club Fit programs, the information and support offered through provincial programming such as the Performance Program and functional testing, the development of health, fitness, and nutrition resources on the SOBC website, and the new or expanded programming supported by our Special Olympics Healthy Communities grant from the Golisano

Foundation (read more on page 48-49).

SOBC Locals play a critical part in this work by offering Club Fit programs, promoting health events and resources, and encouraging healthy living year-round.

Healthy Athletes screenings

Many individuals with intellectual disabilities have trouble realizing or expressing their health concerns, and many health professionals have not had the opportunity



Welcoming health professionals, like these volunteers in Cranbrook, make the Healthy Athletes experience fun and accessible for all.

to receive specific training, or are not familiar enough with this population, to know the best questions to ask to draw out the issues.

Through Healthy Athletes, health care professionals receive training about the specific health care concerns of people with intellectual disabilities and how to ask the right questions, helping them draw out issues. At the welcoming and fun-filled Healthy Athletes screening events, the practitioners' interactions with Special Olympics athletes lead to referrals back into the health care system that ensure the individuals will get the treatment they need.

SOBC offers Healthy Athletes screenings in events around the province open to all individuals with intellectual disabilities, as well as at Provincial Games. These events are free for all participants. All the screenings are conducted in a fun, friendly environment where athletes feel welcome and at ease. The screenings are conducted using quality equipment and fun tools to make the experience both valuable and enjoyable.

In 2016, SOBC hosted Healthy Athletes Screening Days in North Vancouver (March), Prince George (May), Burnaby (September), and Cranbrook (October).

The incredible support of dedicated volunteer health professionals and generous sponsors made it possible to provide these important and fun events, giving valuable



Carol Yakowchuk

Participants leave Healthy Athletes screenings with tons of free health tools and giveaways, including customized mouthguards.



Testing blood pressure at the Health Promotion screenings in North Vancouver.

health information, referrals, and tools to more than 300 individuals with intellectual disabilities from around the province.

“At [the Healthy Athletes event in North Vancouver] we saw a few athletes that we had seen at previous Healthy Athletes events, and their parents and coaches described to us how much the glasses we provided for them have made a difference in their sport, in their

confidence, and to the overall quality of their lives,” B.C. Opening Eyes Clinical Director Dr. Brad McDougall said.

In a particularly memorable moment for McDougall, a basketball player received glasses that will improve his vision from 20/150 (a level that would not be legal to drive a car without glasses) to nearly 20/20.

“Imagine the difference this could make to



All smiles at the Special Smiles screenings in Prince George.

his performance on the court, as well as to his safety in navigating himself through the city when he is by himself. The impact should be enormous,” McDougall said.

SOBC – Vancouver athlete Robyn Rauh said she has learned a lot through Healthy Athletes events, helping her get healthier, stay healthier, and destress.

“When I’m at Healthy Athletes events, I find out different new things. I enjoy going a lot. It’s a whole new different experience for me,” Rauh said. “It’s a great experience, and I learned a lot.” Among the steps Rauh has taken with the help of Healthy Athletes is using a pamphlet with healthy recipes that she received, and completely giving up drinking pop. ○

continued on next page



The Prince George Fit Families & Friends before heading out on their first weekly walk.

Healthy Community Golisano Foundation grant

In 2016, SOBC was fortunate to receive a three-year major grant from the **Golisano Foundation** to expand year-round health programming, working toward official recognition as a Special Olympics Healthy Community.

With the support of the Healthy Communities grant, the Golisano Foundation, and our ongoing Provincial Partners, SOBC is working to:

- increase the sustainability of health programming and access to followup care,
- improve the health status of athletes by offering health and wellness programming outside of our Healthy Athletes clinics and ensuring at least 20 per cent of athletes are enrolled in a wellness program per year,
- increase the awareness and education of health professionals on treating individuals with intellectual disabilities by developing and implementing education for dental professionals and students,
- create health programming for families and caregivers of athletes,
- train and empower 10 athlete leaders to be health and nutritional advocates for fellow athletes and work with an advisory council for the SOBC health strategy during the Healthy Community project period,
- and create Golisano Health Leadership Awards to present to health leaders supporting this important work. ○

Fit Families & Friends

With the support of the Golisano Foundation Special Olympics Healthy Communities grant, SOBC launched new **Fit Families & Friends** programming in the summer of



Kelowna Fit Families & Friends enjoyed scenic summer walks together.

2016. The inaugural participants in Prince George, Kelowna, and the Sunshine Coast showed wonderful dedication to being active and healthy together, and they had a blast! Together they walked, ran, and hiked more than 2,500 kilometres this summer.

The vision of Fit Families & Friends is to help athletes stay active over the summer months and encourage their families, friends, and supporters to get active with them. At the end of each session, the program volunteer hands out a healthy snack that can be easily made at home, and a corresponding recipe card.

SOBC – Kelowna parent and coach Dennis Richardson said the Fit Families & Friends program worked very well as the participants learned by doing together, and saw the results. They saw they could get out for a walk easily; they tasted the healthy snacks and found they

were great; they had a great time out on their walks together, enjoying the beautiful views and wildlife sightings.

“We checked the step counter and showed them it really adds up, and you can do it,” Richardson wrote in an email. “Yes, it works. I said, ‘Can’t wait until next year!’ And they all said yes as they had fun, and that’s the part that works. Have fun and get healthy is a lifestyle.” ○

Health Heroes

With the support of the Healthy Communities grant, SOBC has initiated **Health Heroes** training for SOBC athletes who wish to equip themselves to help educate their peers about best practices for healthy living. At the April 2016 Athlete Leadership courses, 27 participants in the Athlete Speakers Bureau 2 and Governance completed training to become certified Sun Safety Health Heroes.

These athlete leaders discussed best practices for being outdoors and received tools to share in their communities, helping fellow athletes stay healthy and safe in the sun throughout their spring sports and their active lives outdoors. The participants demonstrated great ideas for how to implement their training at home and enthusiasm to help others.



Health Hero Marinka VanHage sharing sun safety tips and tools.

SOBC – Prince George athlete Marinka VanHage took her tools and knowledge to the Soccer Regional Qualifier for Region 8 hosted by SOBC – Quesnel, where she helped her fellow athletes get up to speed on health info. She shared sun safety advice as well as tools from SOBC such as bracelets that change

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Your donation will help support the life-changing sport programs SOBC offers to more than 4,600 people with intellectual disabilities around the province.

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colour in the sun, reminding about exposure, and chapstick to help prevent sunburned lips.

VanHage filed the following report:

"I spoke to all the athletes and coaches when we got [a group] picture taken. They were listening when I explained about sun safety. I asked them if they knew what to do and then showed them the [educational items I was given].

"Then I went to each team later on and asked if they needed anything. Most of the athletes already had sunscreen and water bottles but a lot of them did not have lip chap so I gave them lip chap. They really liked the bracelets. I think that it was a good idea and I would do it again."

If you'd like to become a Health Hero, please contact Ashten Staffen, SOBC Coordinator, Health & Sport Science, to learn about training opportunities: astaffen@specialolympics.bc.ca / 604-737-3081 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free. ○

Golisano Health Leadership Award

In September 2016, North Vancouver's Carol Yakiwchuk became Canada's first-ever winner of a **Golisano Health Leadership Award**, recognizing her dedicated volunteer work with SOBC and Healthy Athletes to help address the significant health disparities facing individuals with intellectual disabilities.

A dental hygienist and educator with more than 20 years' experience, Yakiwchuk volunteers with SOBC's Healthy Athletes program, serving as one of three provincial Special Smiles Clinical Directors alongside Kelly Blundell and Nancy Vertel.

In her previous role as a dental hygiene instructor at Vancouver Community College, and in her involvement with the British Columbia Dental Hygienists' Association, Yakiwchuk raises awareness among dentists, dental professionals, and students about the health issues facing individuals with intellectual disabilities, and she recruits others to volunteer at SOBC's Healthy Athletes events. These efforts have a wide-reaching impact as they return to regular practice better trained to work with individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Yakiwchuk has also developed an important relationship with Patterson Dental Canada, leading to vital support with resources to give individuals with intellectual disabilities and equipment for screenings.

Thanks to Yakiwchuk's advocacy, Vancouver Community College selected the Special Olympics population as an upcoming recipient in their "Gift from the Heart" program. Through an event in April 2017, a number of Special Olympics BC athletes will receive a full dental exam free of charge at a clinic run by VCC dental hygiene students under the supervision of instructors and dentists.

"Working with the athletes is wonderful," Yakiwchuk said in a 2013 British Columbia Dental Hygienists' Association interview. "We get a chance to talk to them, to teach them about proper oral self-care and, in some cases, provide them with dental treatment that they would not ordinarily be able to receive. From a more global perspective, we are also able to assess this population's oral health status, and evaluate the need for further advocacy based on results of the statistical analysis of



Golisano Foundation Director Ann Costello (left) presents Carol Yakiwchuk with her award.

information collected. I love being there to support these athletes as they strive for their personal best and their smiles make it all worth the work."

Launched in 2016, the Golisano Health Leadership Awards recognize the extensive work of individuals and organizations around the world who are improving the health of people with intellectual disabilities and advancing the year-round health work of Special Olympics. ○

Club Fit

SOBC's **Club Fit** program is raising the bar for physical fitness, and athletes are rising to the challenge and showing measurable benefits from their participation. Club Fit helps athletes of varying skill levels age 14 and up improve their overall health and fitness outside of regular sports training.

The weekly program emphasizes strength

and cardio, and can include nutrition education. SOBC Locals are doing a great job offering Club Fit and building participation around the province, and SOBC is working to support with online resources and encouraging the empowering connections that are growing between instructors.

For more information, please contact Ashten Staffen at astaffen@specialolympics.bc.ca / 604-737-3081 or toll-free at 1-888-854-2276. ○

International pilot project

In 2016, SOBC became one of three Special Olympics Programs part of an international pilot project to build a model for workshops designed to bring together a wide range of people and groups whose work impacts the health of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics can bring together these stakeholders to turn the spotlight on the challenges facing people with intellectual disabilities and spark much-needed discussions on change.

In November 2016, SOBC staff and athlete Robyn Rauh travelled to Washington D.C. for meetings to plan the creation of these workshops and begin work for the events to be hosted in 2017. We are excited about this opportunity to make a difference in important systemic ways to help athlete health. ○

Supporters

Globally, Special Olympics Health is made possible by the vision and support of the Golisano Foundation, and partners such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Lions Clubs International.

Here in B.C., Special Olympics BC's health work is made possible by the Golisano Foundation grant and the ongoing support of our provincial partners and fundraising events, including the leading role of the Government of British Columbia. ○



Learn more
specialolympics.bc.ca/healthy-athletes

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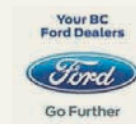
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