



A message of hope, a message of victory

2017 will go into the history books as an inspiring and impactful year for Special Olympics BC. Nearly 1,200 athletes with intellectual disabilities inspired everyone watching as they competed in the largest Special Olympics BC Games to date. Our year-round programs and fundraising support continued to grow and strengthen, changing more lives through the power and joy of sport, and changing the way the world sees people with intellectual disabilities. We launched a new strategic plan that will help SOBC continue to grow and increase the impact of our game-changing movement with a strong vision for the next four years and many more to come.

2018 will offer an opportunity to look back at this movement's five decades of joy, courage, and empowerment, and look forward to inspire new generations to see the dignity and ability in all of us. The first Special Olympics Games were held in Chicago in July 1968, opening minds and hearts to a new era of seeing the abilities of individuals with intellectual disabilities and showing them the respect and inclusion they deserve. Now what was once a one-day competition to celebrate ability has become the global Special Olympics movement changing the world through sport every day.

As Eunice Kennedy Shriver told Special Olympics World Games competitors in 1987, "By your presence, you send a message to every village, every city, and every nation. A message of hope, a message of victory. ... The days of separation and segregation are over."

Read on to find out more about our life-changing movement and how everyone can get involved to make a difference through the power of sport. ○



*Zack Thibeault
and Daniel
Batson in flight
at the 2017 SOBC
Summer Games.*

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SOBC's vision, mission, and values

The vision, mission, and values of our organization play a key role in helping us make decisions, improve the experience of all involved, and reduce risk.

- Vision: where we aspire to be in the future
- Mission: helping define what our organization is, and isn't
- Values: our desired culture

In an effort to align Special Olympics programs in Canada, common vision, mission, and values statements have been developed. Many SOBC members answered surveys in 2016 that helped develop the values statements. The vision is from Special Olympics International's documents, and the mission is a shortened version of what we have used for years.

Vision:

Our vision is that sport will open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities all across British Columbia.

Mission:

Special Olympics BC is dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities through sport.

Values:

- Inclusion: We foster inclusive communities.
- Diversity: We honour what is unique in each individual.
- Empowerment: We create opportunities to pursue full potential.
- Respect: We operate in an environment of cooperation, collaboration and dignity.
- Excellence: We elevate standards and performance.

It is essential for us all to be aligned if we are to continue offering exceptional opportunities for athletes, families, volunteers, and donors, and if we are to reduce our risk. All programs, from the community level to the national level, should now use the approved vision, values, and mission statements.

These statements and SOBC's updated key messages can be found on the SOBC website in the Resources section on the PR Manual & Resources page, along with further brand and communications resources. ○

Thank you!

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

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SOBC Regional Conference participants show that 'together there are no limits'

Special Olympics BC – Kimberley/Cranbrook coach Lisa Ruigrok says the 2017 SOBC Region 1 and 2 Conference was a lot of fun and a great opportunity to develop her skills. As a new coach, she says the event helped her create valuable connections with other volunteers and learn more about SOBC and how it supports its athletes.

"I have never been prouder to be part of an organization!" Ruigrok says. "I feel even though I do not have the experience, I have the resources now to make me more successful as a coach."

Many SOBC volunteers came together in 2017 to learn from knowledgeable speakers, take part in team-building activities, and share insights and techniques at **SOBC Regional Conferences**. More than 40 volunteers attended the Region 1 and 2 Conference, which took place in Kelowna from May 12 to 14, and more than 30 volunteers participated in the Region 6 Conference held at Camp Qwanoes on Vancouver Island from April 7 to 9.

Region 6 Coordinator Jean Tetarenko played a critical role in organizing her Region's conference, and based it around the theme "Together there are no limits."

"Our Region 6 volunteers give so much," Tetarenko says. "We view the conference as a weekend for them – where they can hopefully gain tangible information, share their expertise, and in turn meet other coaches and Local Committee volunteers from across the Region and of course have fun."

Region 1 Coordinator Sheila Hawton and Region 2 Coordinator Sheila Paynter played important roles in organizing their conference. Hawton says the event allowed coaches and Local Committee volunteers from the two regions to share ideas, and she has received some great feedback from attendees.

Big thanks to all the presenters and attendees who shared their knowledge and experiences at these Regional Conferences, and to the wonderful Regional Coordinators! ○



Volunteers made connections and developed their skills at the Region 1 and 2 Conference in Kelowna.



Region 6 volunteers took part in great discussions and fun team-building games at their Regional Conference held at Camp Qwanoes on Vancouver Island.

SOBC introduces 2017-2020 strategic plan

Special Olympics BC is proud to be an accredited Chapter of the growing global Special Olympics movement, now including more than 4.9 million athletes in 172 countries. In 2016, Special Olympics International launched the organization's new 2016-2020 Global Strategic Plan built around clear, important goals:

- **Goal 1:** Improve opportunities for athletes to perform at their best
- **Goal 2:** Build positive attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities
- **Support goal:** Build capacity by generating more resources and leadership

The Global Strategic Plan was developed with a vision of having strong shared goals, with flexibility for local customization of strategies and tactics to achieve those goals. Special Olympics Canada and Special

Olympics BC have developed strategic plans for 2017-2020 built around the same goals as the global plan, but employing shared strategies that will be the best fit for our country and our province.

Special Olympics BC's new **2017-2020 strategic plan** includes tactics and targets specific to our province, all geared toward achieving the goals shared by Special Olympics programs throughout the globe, using strategies shared by Special Olympics programs across Canada.

At its core, Special Olympics is a sports organization that uses the power of sport as a catalyst for social change. Through sport, we challenge society. By drawing attention to the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities, we break down misperceptions and tackle negative attitudes. By highlighting

how the needs of people with intellectual disabilities are not being met, we expose inequity and exclusion. The focus for Special Olympics BC therefore needs to be bringing more athletes to the movement and providing high-quality sport experiences that help create positive attitudes and bring about permanent change towards inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.

Across British Columbia, Special Olympics has an incredible number of hardworking athletes, volunteers, and staff who are the engine of our movement. Together we achieved success in many aspects of the last strategic cycle, and we look forward to continued growth and development together in 2017-2020.

To read the full plan, visit specialolympics.bc.ca. ○

Sports Celebrities Festival helps make the impossible possible

The **2017 Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Wheaton Precious Metals** starred Special Olympics BC athletes centre stage alongside the entire Vancouver Canucks roster and leading B.C. sports celebrities, while raising vital funds for the Canucks for Kids Fund and SOBC.

Special Olympics BC – Vancouver athlete Alex Pang captivated the sold-out crowd as he shared the journey of his impressive development. As a child, Pang said, he had no words and found it difficult to interact with others, and also had low muscle tone and struggled with balance and walking in a straight line. After 10 years as a Special Olympics athlete, the 19-year-old Pang is now a three-time Special Olympics World Games competitor in both figure skating and basketball who feels like he can accomplish anything and has learned that he loves public speaking.

“This feeling of belonging and confidence has allowed me to excel in many areas of my life.”

— Alex Pang

Through his hard work in Special Olympics and throughout his life, he has become a successful athlete and gained confidence for his future.

“Through Special Olympics, I have found a place where I feel I belong, and where I know my strength will shine through and be celebrated. Because of Special Olympics, I have had a chance to receive world-class training to make me the best athlete I can be. Because of Special Olympics, I know I have multiple pathways in life that I can choose from and will succeed in whatever I choose to do,” Pang said.

Held on November 2 at the Vancouver Convention Centre, the 19th annual gala brought together more than 650 supporters along with SOBC athletes, the whole Vancouver Canucks roster, and other top sports celebrities for a meaningful and fun evening. This inspiring and interactive event



BC Lion Solomon Elimimian, Canucks alumni Jyrki Lumme and Dave Babych, and BC Lion Craig Roh at the 2017 Sports Celebrities Festival.

raised more than \$425,000 in net funds, and to date has raised more than \$4.8 million for SOBC and the Canucks for Kids Fund.

Pang spoke alongside Vancouver Canucks SCF ambassador Brandon Sutter, who shared his personal perspective on the powerful impact of Special Olympics. Sutter’s cousin Chris and close family friend Mikey are Special Olympics athletes.

“Through Christopher and Mikey, I’ve seen firsthand how important Special Olympics is to these athletes. The confidence and friendships that are built are so meaningful and last a lifetime. Now I’m lucky to add Alex to my list of friends and athletes who inspire me,” Sutter said.

Pang’s moving speech shared his appreciation of the outstanding coaching that he has experienced with Special Olympics as well as the growth of confidence and lessons of self-discovery.

“At every level of Special Olympics, I’ve felt like I truly belong. Everyone there – from the athletes, to the coaches and the rest of the support team – accepts me for who I am. I really believe this is something everyone should experience in their lives. When I’m in Special Olympics, I feel like I can accomplish anything!” Pang said. “This feeling



RCMP Corporal Marlies Dick (left) and Palladio Jewellers President Jason Bosa (right) presented the Rolex to the lucky raffle winner, Cindy Watson, accompanied by her brother Mike.



Canuck Ben Hutton and SOBC – Ridge Meadows athlete Richard Niesman enjoyed the Heads & Tails game, playing for the limited-edition silver bar donated by Wheaton Precious Metals.



Canucks SCF ambassador Brandon Sutter and SOBC athlete speaker Alexander Pang rocked the mic.



Canuck Sam Gagner and SOBC – Abbotsford athlete Austin Johnston took the grip and grin to the next level.



Canada Soccer Women’s National Soccer Team captain Christine Sinclair and coach John Herdman delighted the audience with their panel on the power of sport.

of belonging and confidence has allowed me to excel in many areas of my life. I’ve gained the confidence to go study at college and hopefully land a job that allows me to help others like myself. Special Olympics has given me the confidence to make what once seemed impossible, possible.”

The Sports Celebrities Festival is one of a small handful of required full-team events for the Vancouver Canucks, which is a powerful



SOBC – Langley athlete Christian Burton and Sportsnet650 Starting Lineup host James Cybulski excelled as the event’s Masters of Ceremonies.

symbol of respect for Special Olympics athletes. It’s a thrill to have the entire Canucks roster participating in the event, with each player paired with Special Olympics athletes for the evening.

“We’re as excited as they are,” Sutter said told Breakfast Television’s Riaz Meghji.

The event’s roster of celebrities also included legendary Canucks alumni Dave Babych, Jyrki Lumme, and Kirk McLean as well as coaches and management, BC Lions Manny Arceneaux, Solomon Elimimian, Marco Iannuzzi, and Craig Roh, and Canada Soccer Women’s National Soccer Team captain Christine Sinclair and coach John Herdman who participated in an inspiring panel discussion



Canuck Brock Boeser and SOBC – Surrey athlete Melissa Semke took aim in the always-inspiring Parade of Athletes.

about the power of sport and all things women’s soccer in Canada.

The event also featured Sportsnet650 Starting Lineup host James Cybulski teaming up with SOBC – Langley athlete Christian Burton to serve as the engaging Masters of Ceremonies, plus appearances by Canucks broadcaster John Shorthouse and Canadian comedy icon Brent Butt.

Another highlight of the evening was the moving speech by Tina Chiao speaking about her son Andrew’s empowering experiences with the Canucks Autism Network.

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

Wheaton Precious Metals

Wheaton Precious Metals (formerly Silver Wheaton) has been the presenting sponsor of the Sports Celebrities Festival since 2006,



helping raise over \$4.8 million to date for Special Olympics BC and the Canucks for Kids Fund. Wheaton Precious Metals CEO Randy Smallwood also generously supports SOBC as Board Chair, and took the time to serve as Honorary General Manager for Team BC at the 2016 Special Olympics Canada Games in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. We are so grateful for Wheaton Precious Metals’ dedication to Special Olympics BC and thank them for being an important and steadfast supporter of our work. ○

Thank you to the supporters of the 2017 Sports Celebrities Festival

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Vancouver Canucks
Vancouver Canucks Alumni
Vancouver Convention Centre West
Vancouver Whitecaps FC
And all of the celebrities who generously took the time to attend

Great competition development on the go

The 2016-17 sport season included a range of new **competition development** opportunities, seeking to provide experience and education to new Special Olympics BC athletes and coaches.

In November 2016, SOBC – Comox Valley hosted a development swim competition with a focus on teaching athletes the ins and outs of attending a swim competition, which was well received by everyone involved. The swim event was followed up by a development powerlifting competition that was hosted by the Mount Waddington Local, which saw athletes and coaches take part in a mock competition where each athlete went through their lifts and were then provided constructive feedback on each lift to improve their overall performance.

The action did not stop there! In December, January, and February, Prince George, Kelowna, and Vernon hosted floor hockey, basketball, and powerlifting meets respectively, where the focus was again about learning and developing game skills as opposed to ribbons or medals! The floor



All smiles at SOBC's inaugural indoor bocce tournament.

hockey event with SOBC – Prince George and Quesnel showcased the revival of floor hockey in the north for the first time in many years, and the basketball tournament in Kelowna was the first-ever event in the Okanagan for this fast-growing sport.

In March, SOBC broke new ground by hosting the first indoor bocce tournament in the province. The tournament saw teams from Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Coquitlam, and

Ridge Meadows attend the one-day competition, which also included a nutrition session for athletes and coach development session as part of the event.

Despite the fact that the balls ran a bit fast on the super-smooth surface and the venue temperature dipped, a fun time was had by all athletes and coaches. When the smoke cleared, host team Coquitlam 1 took home the first-place ribbons.

SOBC is hoping to run the event again in 2018 and will expand the team numbers in order to provide more bocce teams with an earlier start to the season.

The other hope is that indoor bocce can also help programs around the province have full seasons despite any snow lingering late in springtime. To borrow indoor bocce ball kits, please contact SOBC's Joanie Hayes by email at jhayes@specialolympics.bc.ca or by phone at 604-616-1342 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free.

All of these events are part of SOBC's continuing goal of providing athletes and coaches with the tools necessary to enjoy and excel in a competition environment. ○

Second annual Luke Willson 12 North Sports Classic a hit

Special Olympics BC was grateful to be one of the beneficiaries of the second annual **Luke Willson 12 North Sports Classic**, a multi-sport extravaganza held in Burnaby, Langley, Vancouver, and Haida Gwaii from June 23 to 28.

The 12 North Sports Classic included a 12-hole golf tournament, where SOBC – Langley athlete Christian Burton kicked off the day by speaking at The Redwoods Golf Course.

Later that evening, SOBC – Vancouver athlete Mathew Schmiing shared his SOBC stories and gratitude with participants at the Yale Saloon, where 32 teams drafted fantasy players to compete in a season-long NFL fantasy football league and enjoyed a tailgate-themed barbecue dinner.

The following day, Willson was joined by Seattle Seahawks 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.

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 The Lodge at Hippa Island.

The Luke Willson 12 North Sports Classic benefitted Special Olympics BC,

the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program, 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! ○



SOBC – Vancouver athlete Mathew Schmiing and Luke Willson.

New Car Dealers change lives with SOBC

B.C.'s New Car Dealers have been helping Special Olympics BC change lives through the power of sport for 33 years. The **2017 New Car Dealers Foundation of BC / Special Olympics Auction** raised \$178,000, bringing the three-decade total to just under \$4.7 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's auction included a much-appreciated milestone: Dealers donated the most cash pledges to date, helping ensure vital support for the charities. The 2017 auction included 282 popular prizes in the following categories: Automotive and Business, Food and Wine, Lifestyle, Media, and Sport and Travel.

At the 2017 Vancouver International Auto Show Gala, Special Olympics BC – Coquitlam athlete Adam Advocaat shared his gratitude for the support of the New Car Dealers.

"Special Olympics relies on its sponsors like the New Car Dealers Association, and fundraising events such as the Auction, in order to give athletes experiences like the ones I have had," Advocaat said. "Without this support, the world for people like me would be very different in ways that I don't even want to imagine."

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 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.

Special thanks to the Auction Committee:

Manse Binkley, *Harmony Honda & Harmony Acura*
Doug Bower, *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*

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

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, and Joe Mitchell of Carter Auto Family.

The funds raised by the auction help Special Olympics BC 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.

Special Olympics BC and the New Car Dealers Foundation extend sincere thanks to everyone who supported the 2017 auction, and look forward to further growth in 2018. To get involved, please contact Christina Hadley, SOBC Vice President, Fund Development & Communications, at 604-737-3073 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free / chadley@specialolympics.bc.ca.

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THANK YOU TO THOSE DEALERS WHO SUPPORTED THE AUCTION WITH A CASH PLEDGE OR BY DONATING AUCTION ITEMS




































Sobeys support helps fuel Special Olympics athletes

Through a national partnership with Special Olympics Canada, support from the **Sobeys Inc. Better Food Fund** is helping athletes with intellectual disabilities across the country eat better, feel better, and do better.

In 2017, Sobeys supported Special Olympics programs in Canada through their launch of a new soup flavour in February. Twenty-five cents from the sale of each tub of Creamy Mexican-Style Black Bean Chipotle Soup was donated to Special Olympics Canada, helping provide sport and competition opportunities for Special Olympics athletes throughout the country.

A valued Platinum Sponsor of the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games, Sobeys Better Food Fund Inc. helped SOBC athletes from across the province come together for this empowering and life-changing experience in Kamloops. Renee Hopfner, Sobeys Inc. Director, Community Development, took the time to serve as Games Honorary General Manager and speak at the Opening Ceremony. "I can't wait to cheer you on! My heart is so full tonight, you inspire all of us!" Hopfner told the athletes in her opening remarks.



SOBC – Vancouver athletes Allan Hunter, Robyn Rauh, and Sarah Brown helped celebrate the launch of Sobeys' new soup flavour in Vancouver.

Special Olympics Canada and Sobeys are working together to make healthy food and proper nutrition a priority in Special Olympics programs across the country. In 2018, Sobeys employees will 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 110 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. ○



**Eat better.
Feel better.
Do better.**

SOBC golfers succeed at 2017 SO North America Golf Championship

Two Special Olympics BC golfers, Abbotsford's Austin Johnston and Kelowna's Ryan Courtemanche, did our province proud competing in the 2017 Special Olympics North America Golf Championship held June 26 to 28 at Willows Run Golf Complex in Redmond, Washington.

Courtemanche and Johnston were among more than 230 golfers and coaches from across the U.S. and Canada who played in individual and team competitions on 9- and 18-hole courses, as well as individual skills competitions. In Level 4 individual nine-hole play, both Johnston and Courtemanche ended up in the same division and drove to first and fourth place, respectively.

The SOBC athletes both had a tough first day but bounced back on the second day of play, leading SOBC – Sunshine Coast coach Chuck Bertrand to proudly call them "the comeback kids!"

Johnston shot a 57 on the first day and felt that nerves were something of a factor as he got started. But he quickly settled in and took great care with his club selection, leading to shooting 50 in the second round. Courtemanche also shot 50 in the second round. Fifty was the best single-round score by any Level 4 golfer in the tournament.

Johnston capped the championship by



SOBC's Ryan Courtemanche (left) and Austin Johnston (second from right) on the podium at the SONA Golf Championship.

shooting 56 on the final day, earning him a tie for first place in Level 4 Division 3.

Courtemanche shot 59 on the first day and then regrouped for 50 in his second round. "I said yesterday is done, today is a new day, and I brought my A game," he said. "My drives were right on, making clutch shots." He finished with another round of 59 to claim fourth place in Level 4 Division 3. ○



Raising awareness at World Outlook Financial Conference

Since 1990, the **World Outlook Financial Conference** has been bringing 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 2017 WOFC was held on February 3 and 4 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 2018 WOFC will be held on February 2 and 3 in Vancouver. Our thanks to conference founder Michael Campbell for the event's amazing support of Special Olympics.

Please see moneytalks.net/events/world-outlook-conference-2018.html for more information. ○

2017 SOBC Summer Games athletes shone in Kamloops

Nearly 1,200 individuals with intellectual disabilities gave their all in 11 sports and inspired everyone watching at the **2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games**, held in Kamloops July 6 to 8. These were SOBC's largest Provincial Games to date and a thrilling display of the true power and joy of sport.

After earning their spots in the 2017 SOBC Games through 2016 Regional Qualifiers, the competitors from more than 50 communities throughout B.C. and the Yukon trained hard with their year-round Special Olympics programs in their hometowns to be ready to be at their best in Kamloops. They delivered outstanding performances in Canada's Tournament Capital, showing their abilities and determination, and helping change the way the world sees individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Supported by more than 350 volunteer coaches and mission staff, the athletes competed in 5- and 10-pin bowling, athletics, basketball, bocce, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming. They experienced a very warm welcome from the Kamloops community, thanks in particular to the generous sponsors and the nearly 800 volunteers who helped make the Games possible.

"I want to thank Kamloops for having these Games," said SOBC – Richmond basketball player and SOBC Board of Directors member Vincent Li. "The venues were good and all the buses were really good. I noticed everyone was really excited for the Games and the volunteers were really enthusiastic. All the volunteers here in Kamloops were amazing, each and every one."

The Games saw more than 2,100 medals awarded to deserving athletes, used 256 buses over the weekend to transport the Regional teams, and served more than 14,000 meals thanks to Canuel Caterers.

"We're so grateful to Kamloops and the 2017 SOBC Games Organizing Committee for creating a truly outstanding experience for our athletes," SOBC Vice President, Sport, Lois McNary said. "We know Kamloops volunteers are called upon frequently for events, but they truly rose to the occasion in support of Special Olympics and made our 2017 Provincial Games so empowering and exciting for all involved."

Competing in Provincial Games is a huge thrill in itself for the athletes, many of whom had their first opportunity ever to travel with a team, and thrived on the chances to challenge themselves to attain and exceed their athletic

goals. In addition, top performers in Kamloops qualified for spots on the Team BC 2018 Training Squad for the upcoming 2018 Special Olympics Canada Bowling Championships in Prince Edward Island and 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games in Nova Scotia – read more on page 14.

"I've been waiting over 20 years to get to Provincial Games for swimming, and I finally got here and I got my first gold medal! It felt awesome, like all of my hard work for the last year had paid off, and it just makes me want to work even more and even harder in practice to get here again!" said swimmer Emily Beauchamp of Special Olympics BC – Oceanside, now a Nanaimo resident. "Special Olympics is more than just an organization for people with intellectual disabilities, it's a huge part of our lives. ... A lot of the lessons we learn in Special Olympics help us in our daily life as well."

SOBC – Nanaimo athlete Alex Williams competed in shot put, long jump, and the 100m and 200m races at Provincial Games. He says Special Olympics is like a family and he really enjoyed meeting new people in Kamloops. "Making new friends is like making new family members," he says. "It makes me feel happy."





The Region 7 team enjoying the amazing atmosphere at the 2017 SOBC Games Opening Ceremony.

SOBC – Fort St. John rhythmic gymnast Britni Renaud enjoyed her first Provincial Games experience. She said it took the team 14 hours to get to Kamloops but “it was worth it.” She was glad to be performing and “doing my best.”

Many of the volunteers commented on how much they enjoyed being part of the event and being around Special Olympics athletes. Athletics volunteer Stephen said, “I have never listened to so many stories from the athletes or shared so many laughs. Whether it was a first- or eighth-

place finish, they made it a point to stop by and share. The athletes do embrace their oath. I don’t think that I high-fived, hugged, or fist bumped as many people in my entire life than I did while greeting the athletes, coaches, and support staff as they unloaded off their buses and entered the Sandman Centre for the Opening Ceremony.

“This weekend was an experience that I will never forget!”

Find full results, photos, and info at specialolympics.bc.ca/2017-sobc-summer-games ○

Photos below:

- 1: Region 6 golfer Scott Jones of Victoria mastering his grip with a grin at the Kamloops Golf & Country Club.
- 2: Joy on the field of play with Region 2 athlete Steven Walter-Schwebbach of Vernon.
- 3: Region 1 ballplayer Lucien Gravelle of the Kootenay Mavericks sprinting for home plate.
- 4: Region 3 athletes Joanne Bunnin and Lisa Newell of Chilliwack celebrate their success in powerlifting.
- 5: SOBC – Campbell River and Salmon Arm athletes giving their all in bocce competition.
- 6: All smiles in SOBC Games 10-pin bowling competition.
- 7: SOBC – Richmond’s Andrew Weale and SOBC – Surrey’s Scott Stewart soaring on the basketball court.
- 8: Region 3 athlete Malcolm Borsoi of Surrey leading the pack in the close-fought 3000m final.
- 9: Region 1 athlete Robert Tarko of SOBC – Trail and the 5-pin bowling competitors lit up the lanes in Kamloops.
- 10: Region 4 rhythmic gymnast Katherine Burns of Burnaby performing with pride in the Sandman Centre.
- 11: Region 3 swimmer Kayla Willms of Coquitlam powering through the lanes at Brocklehurst Pool.
- 12: The soccer action at McArthur Island Park was fast and furious including this clash between Regions 4 and 8.



8



10



11



9



12

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- SunRype

Draft an Athlete Donors:

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Celebrating 50 years of changing the game

Since 1968, Special Olympics has been changing attitudes about the talents of people with intellectual disabilities. Since 1968, Special Olympics has been changing the world!

In 2018, Special Olympics programs worldwide will be celebrating 50 years of creating a more inclusive, welcoming world for all.

The spark that became today's Special Olympics movement ignited at the first 1968 International Summer Games in Chicago, which involved athletes with intellectual disabilities from the U.S. and Canada. Five decades later, Special Olympics International will be returning to Chicago to launch the year-long global **Special Olympics 50th Anniversary** celebrations in July 2018.

Events planned for July 2018 in Chicago include the first-ever Special Olympics Unified Cup and a star-studded Global Day of Inclusion where the public can join the fun alongside Special Olympics athletes. There will also be the ceremonial lighting of the Special Olympics Eternal Flame of Hope, which will symbolize our burning passion for inclusion and justice for people with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics BC will celebrate the anniversary in the movement in our province – stay tuned for details to come throughout 2018!

In 2017, the global Special Olympics movement celebrated the eighth annual Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day on July 20. Members of the Special Olympics family and supporters worldwide honoured Mrs. Shriver's legacy of changing the game through inclusion, and shared how they #ChooseToInclude in their communities.

Previously hosted in September, Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day has moved to July 20 to coincide with the date of the first-ever Special Olympics Games in Chicago in 1968, and moving forward the event will be celebrated on that date.

On July 12, the Special Olympics founder was posthumously honoured with the prestigious Arthur Ashe Courage Award at ESPN's 25th ESPYS. Former First Lady Michelle Obama voiced a moving tribute to Mrs. Shriver, and Special Olympics Chairman Tim Shriver accepted the award on his mother's behalf alongside Special Olympics athletes, while calling out the work that still needs to be done for equality toward people with intellectual disabilities.

Everyone is welcome to join us as we play together, learn from each other, and chart an inspiring course for the future! ○

SOBC athletes impressed at 2017 Canada Games

Special Olympics BC athletes made a big impression in the pool and on the track at the **2017 Canada Summer Games** in Winnipeg July 28 to August 13, showing their abilities as they competed alongside more than 4,000 young athletes from all across the nation.

After racing hard in the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games in Kamloops, four SOBC track athletes and four swimmers headed to Winnipeg to join Team BC for the 2017 Canada Games. The SOBC athletes were part of the provincial team alongside athletes who from generic and Para sport streams; in competition, the SOBC athletes went head to head with Special Olympics athletes from across the country in SO divisions, showcasing their skills in front of this big national sporting crowd.

“It’s nice to meet new people and meet different athletes. It’s really good.”

— *Malcolm Borsoi*

SOBC – Campbell River’s Jesse Shade set the tempo in swimming, winning five gold medals and smashing two Canada Games records for Special Olympics athletes with his times in 50m and 100m backstroke. On the track, SOBC – Surrey’s Malcolm Borsoi earned two medals in two events, sprinting to 200m gold with a Canada Games-record time and a 100m silver.

On the athletics side, SOBC – Quesnel’s Brock Terlesky, SOBC – Surrey’s Melissa



SOBC – Burnaby’s April Armstrong powering past 2017 Canada Games competitors.

Semke, and SOBC – Burnaby’s April Armstrong also shone in their 100m and 200m sprints, each achieving at least one personal-best time in their heats or races.

In the pool, Shade was joined by SOBC – Cowichan Valley’s Mikyla Carlow, Cameron Chambers of SOBC – Kamloops, and Genny Verge of SOBC – Sunshine Coast, all of whom won multiple medals and delivered strong performances.

“I am thanking everyone. This wouldn’t happen without all the volunteers and their hours and hours of time,” Shade told Team BC. Describing what contributed to his success in Winnipeg, Shade said, “Train hard and go hard and work hard. ... The person I have to thank the most is my mum for waking me up at five in the morning, just to take me to practice.”

Speaking with his hometown SOBC – Surrey coach Deborah Carter, Borsoi said, “I have seven

amazing coaches to train me so it’s all of our medals. I got more in me, I believe, to show you and the rest of Canada.”

Of the Canada Games experience, he said, “It’s nice to meet new people and meet different athletes. It’s really good.”

Big thanks to SOBC coaches Angela Behn of Nanaimo, Aaron Leontowich of Kamloops, and Cathy Verge of Sunshine Coast who provided outstanding support and encouragement to the SOBC athletes in the Canada Games experience, as well as to all of the hometown coaches who helped them achieve their best in national competition!

The Special Olympics athletes also turned heads among their many teammates from generic sport. North Vancouver swimmer Raben Dommann, who won eight medals including five golds, was watching and cheering as Shade won his fifth gold medal.

“That guy is amazing,” Dommann said. “I love it so much. I’ve never trained with Special Olympics or Para athletes before. It’s really cool. Every time I watch them race, I get so pumped up, for my next race. It’s incredible.” ○



Cameron Chambers of SOBC – Kamloops going for broke in Canada Games breaststroke racing.

Engaging and fun opportunities with SOBC youth programs

Akiho Matsunaga said her six-year-old son Soskay had a wonderful experience in Special Olympics BC – Whistler Valley’s **youth program**. Matsunaga said the Active Start/FUNDamentals program was a lot of fun and she could see Soskay’s physical skills improve every week. At the end of each session Soskay would say, “More!” in American Sign Language.

At first, Matsunaga was hesitant to sign up Soskay for SOBC – Whistler Valley’s program, because she was worried he would have trouble following instructions. Matsunaga was delighted to see Soskay was having fun right from the first class, and he could fully participate in all of the activities.

“It was huge for us!” she said.

There are now 110 SOBC Active Start, FUNDamentals, and Sport Start programs running in communities around B.C., providing children with intellectual disabilities ages two to 18 with opportunities to develop motor, sport, and social skills in a fun and supportive environment.

To build awareness of and participation in our youth programs and ongoing Special Olympics programs, SOBC now actively looks to work with school districts to help educate teachers, support staff, families, and the students themselves as to what we have



Soskay Matsunaga having a blast in SOBC – Whistler Valley’s Active Start/FUNDamentals program.



The terrific teams in the inaugural SOBC Vancouver Island 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament!

to offer. In order to ensure that students with intellectual disabilities are aware of all the sporting opportunities available to them through Special Olympics in their local community, we host “try-it days.” In addition, we are building school sport programs and competitions that put Special Olympics opportunities right in schools.

During SOBC try-it days in schools, students participate in a variety of sports and sports skills in a rotating format. The stations are led by existing Special Olympics coaches from the SOBC Local and volunteers from the schools, including fellow students. In 2017, terrific try-it days were hosted in Quesnel, Penticton, and the South Okanagan, with inspiring participation by students from multiple area schools and much-appreciated support and leadership from the participating school districts and local SOBC volunteers.

On Vancouver Island, 2016 try-it days turned into an enduring partnership with new SOBC school sport competitions in basketball and athletics in 2017.

In the spring, Comox Valley and Nanaimo student-athletes with intellectual disabilities took centre stage in the inaugural **SOBC Vancouver Island 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament**, marking an exciting and

inspirational beginning to SOBC school sport competition!

After weeks of training, the participating student-athletes from Comox’s G.P. Vanier and Mark R. Isfeld Secondary Schools and Nanaimo’s Dover Bay and Wellington Secondary Schools hit the court in Vanier ready to compete and give their all in the round-robin tournament. The five teams impressed with their tireless play, abilities, and enthusiasm, and their sportsmanship was second to none. The Vanier gym was rocking with cheering spectators and even the Isfeld and Vanier mascots joining the fun!

The student-athletes wore their school jerseys and did their schools proud. While all received ribbons for their outstanding participation, at the end of the day the tournament champion plaque went home with Nanaimo’s team of combined student-athletes from Dover Bay and Wellington.

Isfeld student-athlete Logan Kalnicki said he felt the tournament was “pretty amazing.” He and his teammates practiced twice a week in preparation for the event, and had fun practicing their skills including dribbling and shooting.

Vanier Teaching Staff member Krista Ogilvie said that the materials, encouragement, and support provided by Special Olympics BC made

Youth programs supported by





Participants enjoying the Special Olympics try-it day in Quesnel.

it a pleasure to participate, and she commended the participating students.

"It was such a joy to watch the players achieve a goal. To see our students demonstrate persistence, teamwork, commitment, leadership, and sportsmanship was thrilling. I am so happy for them. I believe they felt 'a part' of a school culture more than ever before," Ogilvie wrote in a comment after the tournament. "I am overwhelmed at the positive response from parents, teachers, support staff, and admin. I am inspired to the extreme and can't wait till next year!!"

The action continued on June 7 with the inaugural **SOBC School District 68 School Sport Competition Track Meet**, where 66 students from Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools took to the track for a terrific day of racing. It was wonderful to see this many athletes out and there were many impressive performances, including some surprise breakouts that thrilled observers.

In the Lower Mainland, the SOBC Youth Sports Day, a standalone try-it day open to all community members, brought together 58 children with intellectual disabilities ages two to 12 at St. Thomas More Collegiate on May 13. At this annual event, a wide range of families new to Special Olympics are able to experience the fun and engaging activities that are part of SOBC's youth programming. Youth Sports Day also gives current SOBC athletes a chance to participate in a great day of sports with friends.

Sincere thanks to Goldcorp, the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, Tim Hortons, the Samuel Family Foundation, The Slight Family Foundation, the GoodLife Kids Foundation, and The Hamber Foundation for supporting SOBC's youth programs and opportunities throughout B.C., and to the ParticipACTION 150 Play List for supporting the SOBC Try-It Day in Penticton and SOBC Vancouver Island 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament! ○

Government of Canada funding helps provide life-changing opportunities

The **Government of Canada** has been an important supporter of Special Olympics Canada and Special Olympics BC, providing significant funds to develop new and existing sport programs and competitive opportunities. Without this 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, in addition to their ongoing support of SOBC's Performance Program and youth programs, the federal government supported the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games. Here, more than 1,200 Special Olympics athletes from across the province and the Yukon came together in Kamloops to compete with determination and pride in SOBC's largest Provincial Games to date.

The Government of Canada also funds training and travel expenses for athletes, coaches, and mission staff to travel to National and World Games, giving athletes the life-changing experience of representing their home at these high-level competitions.

SOBC Athlete Leadership programs, Leadership Summits, and Coaching Summits receive support from the Government of Canada, allowing individuals throughout the Special Olympics BC community to come together to take part in networking opportunities and listen to inspiring expert speakers. Participants at these events come away with new tools and ideas to take back to their grassroots communities.

With the help of federal government funding, SOBC has strengthened our sport programs by developing tools and resources



Vancouver athlete Sheryl Spurr and rhythmic gymnastics coach Jennifer Fyfe shared SOBC stories and gratitude with Minister of Justice and Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould.

to support coaches and athletes. Support from the Government of Canada has also helped SOBC create new sport opportunities across the province, giving athletes the chance to train and compete in a variety of sports within their home communities.

SOBC is extremely grateful for the support of the Government of Canada. If you have a moment, please thank your local Member of Parliament for this support as it truly makes a difference. ○

Canada

Team BC 2018 Training Squad getting set to shine on the east coast

Excitement is building as members of the **Team BC 2018 Training Squad** begin their journey to the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Bowling Championships in Prince Edward Island May 14 to 20, and the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, from July 29 to August 5.

These dedicated and deserving individuals have qualified for their spots on the provincial training squad based on their performances in the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games in Kamloops.

Team BC 2018 Training Squad members will be working hard to be at their best competing at the national level. The 5- and 10-pin bowlers will bravely compete in the National Bowling Championships in PEI, and the



team members in the nine other SOBC summer sports will show their skills in the National Summer Games in Nova Scotia.

Out east, the athletes in 10-pin bowling, athletics, basketball, bocce, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming will compete for the opportunity to represent Canada at the 2019 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Abu Dhabi. (5-pin bowling is not offered at the World Games level.) The World Games will be held March 14 to 21, 2019, and will mark the first time the Special Olympics World Games have been

hosted in the Middle East-North Africa region.

On October 21 and 22, 82 Team BC 2018 coaches and mission staff members started their countdown to the east coast by coming together in Richmond for the Team BC 2018 Coach and Mission Staff Summit. This two-day event charged up the Team BC spirit and gave coaches and mission staff an important opportunity to plan how they will help the athletes do their best in competition at the national level.

Follow Team BC 2018's journey: www.soteambc2018.ca 2018 Special Olympics Canada Bowling Championships Information: www.specialolympics.ca/2018-bowling 2018 Special Olympics Canada Games Information: www.so2018.ca ○

ROSTER

5-PIN BOWLING

Athletes	SOBC Local
Alanna Kay	Cowichan Valley
Ashleigh Cummings	Keremeos
Beth Hoffman	Quesnel
Bob Brimacombe	South Okanagan
Chris Johnson	Dawson Creek
Dawn Mills	Port Alberni
Devlin Atwill	Mission
Eldon Carter	Quesnel
Evan Curr	Quesnel
Jessica Lehtonen	Keremeos
Kaitlyn Nemeth	South Okanagan
Ken Rudd	Port Alberni
Ken Tassie	Port Alberni
Krista Grzybowski	Cowichan Valley
Lauren Jernigan	Mission
Liam Barry	Mission
Linda Cade	Comox Valley
Louisa Johnny	Port Alberni
Meghan Burnett	Mission
Megyn Rees	Mission
Melanie McMaster	Oceanside
Michael Cook	Castlegar
Michael Maher	Mission
Michael Ryder	Dawson Creek
Mylynda Peebles	Mission
Nicholas Mitchell	Comox Valley
Peter Fenneman	Dawson Creek
Randy Bates	Comox Valley
Rob Mcconachie	Mission
Robbie Hall	Cowichan Valley
Robert Tarko	Trail
Ronnie Collington	Dawson Creek
Russel Reist	Mission
Shea Velestuk	Mission
Thomas Bell	Castlegar
Trevor Carter	Comox Valley
Wayne Bierbaum	South Okanagan
Wayne Jones	Castlegar
Willy Waffle	Dawson Creek
Wyatt Turney	Fort St. John

Coaches

Cheryl Cumiford	Mission
Debbie McCooley	Comox Valley
Ellen Martz	Quesnel
Jack Walsh	Dawson Creek
Jacob Plett	Trail
Jean Scholefield	Cowichan Valley
Linda Golightly	Mission
Patricia Krieger	South Okanagan

10-PIN BOWLING

Athletes	SOBC Local
Amanda Littlejohn	Burnaby
Dale Ramsden	Kelowna
Dennis Lynch	Nanaimo
Dennis McLeod	Nanaimo
Dini Antonio	North Shore
Gabe Young	Campbell River
Linda Renner	Prince George
Lucia Busto	Vancouver
Michael Harris	Prince George
Nicholas LeBlanc	Surrey
Patrick Reid	Victoria
Rachel Peers	Kelowna
Richard Niesman	Ridge Meadows
Russell Morfitt	Victoria
Tanya Steinhausen	Victoria
Yvonne LeRuyet	Prince George

Coaches

Brandon Ngai	Vancouver
Bryan LeBlanc	Surrey
Doris Montgomery	Nanaimo
T.J. Fleming	Summerland



Soccer coaches Julie McIntyre, Jim McIntyre, Annabel Stanley, and mission staff Donna Bilous at the Team BC 2018 Coach and Mission Staff Summit.

ATHLETICS

Athletes

April Armstrong	SOBC Local	Burnaby
Arianna Phillips		Nanaimo
Ashley Adie		Campbell River
Bruce Stuart		Sunshine Coast
George Doykov		North Shore
Hazen Meade		Campbell River
Jake Hooper		Comox Valley
Jeremy Goh		Burnaby
Jesse Thibeault		Surrey
Kayley Olund		Surrey
Kellie Robertson		Surrey
Kristina Tammak		North Shore
Kurtis Reid		Delta
Lauren Phillely		North Shore
Malcolm Borsoi		Surrey
Max Porcher		Comox Valley
Maxtin Lengyel		Port Alberni
Melissa Semke		Surrey
Michael Savage		Langley
Ryland Mallari		Surrey
Samantha Mayer		Kelowna
Sash Barbour		Nanaimo
Sean Casey		Coquitlam
Sheryl Jakubowski		Fort St. John
Simon Phipps		Nanaimo
Tamika Broere		North Shore
Thomas McHugh		Quesnel
Zack Thibeault		Surrey

Coaches

Aleila Miller	SOBC Local	Smithers
Angela Behn		Nanaimo
Brendon Schmidt		Langley
Chris Vanderwel		Richmond
Molly Evanshen		North Shore
Peter De Marchi		Burnaby
Randy James		Comox Valley
Tom Norton		Abbotsford

BASKETBALL

Athletes

Aaron Dixon	SOBC Local	Kelowna
Ashley Phillips		Vernon
Erin Murphy		Vernon
Ethan Sun		Kelowna
Gary Pollen		Vernon
Katelyn Oliver		Vernon
Nathan Luoma		Campbell River
Terrance Haimila		Kamloops
Tessa Allwood		Salmon Arm
Ty Flukinger		Kamloops
Alastair Singh		Langley
Alexander Singh		Langley
Carson Buzdegan		Langley
Chris Beugh		Langley
Kailyn Potomak		Langley
Karl Beugh		Langley
Kyle Litfin		Langley
Matthew Williams		Langley
Sean Annan		Langley
Trevin Martel		Chilliwack

Coaches

Donny Gillanders	SOBC Local	Richmond
Geoff Uttley		Surrey
Leah Briault		Kamloops
Bill Williams		Langley
Peter Potomak		Langley
Rob Martel		Langley

BOCCE

Athletes

Ben Willms	SOBC Local	Kelowna
Carina Chu		Salmon Arm
Katarina Gerhardt		Kelowna
Kathleen Nelson		Salmon Arm
Nick Anchikoski		Salmon Arm

Robert Carate		Langley
Tim Bruenig		Kelowna
Tony Wilkinson		Kelowna
Tristan Harms-Popham		Salmon Arm

Coaches

Ann Jorgensen	SOBC Local	Campbell River
David Wilkinson		Kelowna
Ray Huson		Penticton

GOLF

Athletes

Austin Johnston	SOBC Local	Abbotsford
David Simon		Kamloops
Erin Thom		Kimberley/Cranbrook
Gus Vaughan		Nanaimo
Jason Mills		Nanaimo
Jason Muldoon		Langley
Kyle Grummett		Kelowna
Nick Farrel		Victoria
Yves Moskaluke		Nanaimo

Coaches

Darren Lane	SOBC Local	Sunshine Coast
David Forrester		Nanaimo
Don Bruneau		Coquitlam
Greg Ross		Victoria
Jason Yan		Victoria
John Matthews		Kelowna
Lynn Harsisen		Victoria
Misty Pagliaro		Kimberley/Cranbrook
Rhonda Chandler		Trail
Willie Collins		North Shore

POWERLIFTING

Athletes

Callum Maclagan	SOBC Local	Campbell River
Daniel Thomas		Vancouver
Ken Windsor		Burnaby
Sarah Brown		Vancouver
Todd Moore		Abbotsford

Coaches

Emma Woo	SOBC Local	Surrey
George Maclagan		Campbell River

RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS

Athletes

Alex Edwards	SOBC Local	Burnaby
Alexandra Magee		Kelowna
Becki Allen		Delta
Brittany Scruton		Victoria
Christina Tomingas		Burnaby
Danielle Cavenaile		Prince George
Danielle Juilfs		North Shore
Darcie Muzychka		Prince George
Desiree Grubell		Victoria
Joanna Morris		Kelowna
Katherine Burns		Burnaby
Michaela Samsonoff		Prince George
Mykaela Stewart		Fort St. John
Robyn Styles		Abbotsford
Tiana Kirkegaard		Delta

Coaches

Dolma Tsundu	SOBC Local	Burnaby
Jennifer Fyfe		Vancouver
Michelle Cooper		Victoria
Rachel Lam		Fort St. John

SOCCER

Athletes

Andrew McIntyre	SOBC Local	Kelowna
Brock Terlesky		Quesnel
Chris Harrington		Kelowna
Danny Sperling		Kelowna
Francis Stanley		Kelowna
Glen McIntyre		Kelowna
Jay Megyesi		Vernon
Jonathan MacDonald		Kelowna
Josh Larson		Kelowna

Nicholas Sekella		Kelowna
Peter Brousseau		Kelowna
William Moodie		Kelowna

Coaches

Annabel Stanley	SOBC Local	Kelowna
Julie McIntyre		Kelowna
Jim McIntyre		Kelowna

SOFTBALL

Athletes

Alison Rodrigues	SOBC Local	Vancouver
Amanda Boghean		Sunshine Coast
Brad LaForce		Coquitlam
Chris Walker		Sunshine Coast
Dallas Stager		Vancouver
Donald Pruger		Coquitlam
Edward Ng		Vancouver
Greg Jung		Vancouver
John Chen		Vancouver
Joshua French		Abbotsford
Josiah Lam		Vancouver
Kelly Reaburn		Vancouver
Lisa Anne Hunter		Vancouver
Simone Vanon		Vancouver
Vishnu Lai		Vancouver
Adam Irwin-Gunn		Victoria
Andrew Geddes		Port Alberni
Brandy Knight		Victoria
Brienne Megson		Victoria
Danny Pace		Victoria
Derick Muir		Victoria
Jeff Martin		Victoria
Joe Richards		Victoria
Kevin Danchella		Victoria
Leslie Calder		Victoria
Mark Hamblett		Victoria
Mary Emmond		Victoria
Matt Deforge		Port Alberni
Robert Calder		Victoria
Sabrina Anton		Victoria
Terry Daniels		Comox Valley

Coaches

Anita Hui	SOBC Local	Vancouver
Dan Jung		Vancouver
Maegan Montemayor		Vancouver
Bruce Marshall		Kelowna
Bruce Watkins		Abbotsford
Nicole Bracewell		Victoria

SWIMMING

Athletes

Alberto Holz	SOBC Local	South Okanagan
Alene Elgaard		Burnaby
Aly White		Victoria
Amanda Schleppe		Penticton
Bonnie-Jean Shade		Campbell River
Cameron Chambers		Kelowna
Cheyenne Furlong-Goos		Victoria

MISSION STAFF

Leslie Thornley	SOBC staff	Chef de Mission
Michelle Cruickshank	SOBC staff	Team Manager
Arthur Pangilinan	Vancouver	Mission Staff
Caitlin Woods-Rotering	SOBC staff	Mission Staff - Communications
Charlene Flood	SOBC staff	Mission Staff
Darren Inouye	Region 5 Coordinator	Mission Staff
Diala El-Zammar		Mission Staff - Medical
Donna Bilous	Region 3 Coordinator	Mission Staff
Jean Tetarenko	Region 6 Coordinator	Mission Staff
Mark Schnurr	Coquitlam	Mission Staff
Patty Wheeldon	Leadership Chair	Mission Staff
Sheila Paynter	Region 2 Coordinator	Mission Staff
Steve Oliver	Dawson Creek	Mission Staff
Tina Giesbrecht	Burns Lake	Mission Staff
Tracy Heartt	Region 8 Coordinator	Mission Staff

Chris Paulson		Castlegar
Colton Cale		Kitimat
Courtenay Rekis		Cowichan Valley
Cullen Yee		Richmond
Dallas Gilchrist		Kamloops
Dawn Hadler		Salt Spring Island
Debbie McNaughton		Salt Spring Island
Eddie Stotesbury		Kamloops
Genny Verge		Sunshine Coast
James Bergen		Kelowna
Jamie Taylor		Abbotsford
Jason Chang		Surrey
Jennifer King		Langley
Jess Hansen		Terrace
Jesse Shade		Campbell River
Joey Lemp		Vernon
John Canning		Surrey
Josh Low		Langley
Kayla Willms		Coquitlam
Kaylee Richter		Smithers
Kelsey Simpson		Victoria
Kelsey Wyse		Kelowna
Kendall Salanski		Kimberley/Cranbrook
Kristina Ettema		Surrey
Magnus Batara		Richmond
Maria Schmitke		Kelowna
Melinda Mills		Nanaimo
Michael Gibson		Oceanside
Mikyla Carlow		Cowichan Valley
Natasha Brayshaw		Ridge Meadows
Paul Aubuchon		Campbell River
Ramon Siytangco		Vancouver
Ron Greenhorn		Nanaimo
Sean Beddows		Surrey
Shameera Rosal		Kelowna
Shinji Matthews		Kamloops
Stacey Kohler		Surrey
Stephanie Rogers		Sunshine Coast
Stuart Hawton		Trail
Terri Carelius		Victoria
Tiffany Bjornal		Penticton
Tolan Lloyd-Walters		South Okanagan
Tracy Laberge		Coquitlam

Coaches

Aaron Leontowich	SOBC Local	Kamloops
Cathy Verge		Sunshine Coast
Christiana Durfeld		Whistler Valley
Dawn Taylor		Prince George
Gale Jones		Smithers
Marc Fisher		Ridge Meadows
Megan Pilla		Castlegar
Melissa Furlotte		Powell River
Nikki Apps		Comox Valley
Penny Coyle		Kimberley/Cranbrook
Sandy Ott		Campbell River
Shane McLeod		Kelowna
Wilson Wong		Vancouver

Goldcorp Invitational changes lives with Special Olympics BC

The **2017 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.

Now in its 11th year, the Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament has raised more than \$2.1 million for Special Olympics BC and helped make a difference to athletes with intellectual disabilities like Langley's Matthew Williams, a 2017 World Games medallist and co-emcee at this year's event.

Williams told the crowd of nearly 250 golfers that when he was younger, he felt angry and frustrated at not being able to keep up with his mainstream sports program. "Then I found Special Olympics. Everyone was so encouraging, friendly, supportive, and most importantly, let me be myself without being judged by others," he said. "Now, I am a basketball player and speed skater who has competed at provincial, national and world levels.

"Special Olympics has changed my life, and it has changed the way the world sees people with intellectual disabilities. Thank you so



Goldcorp President & CEO David Garofalo and SOBC – Langley athlete Christian Burton.

much to all of you here tonight, your support helps make all this possible."

Goldcorp has been the tournament's title sponsor for over a decade, and is a significant ongoing partner of SOBC dedicated to bringing opportunities into the lives of children, youth, and adults with intellectual disabilities. Goldcorp has helped enrich lives

across B.C. through two gifts of \$1 million to SOBC, the first in 2010-2014 and the second for 2014-2018.

Goldcorp President & CEO David Garofalo reminded participants just how important their support is, as Special Olympics helps athletes to develop nutrition and life skills as well as athletic skills to help them be competitive in

sport and in life. Garofalo also thanked the many sponsors involved in the event, whose donations help ensure as much support from the event as possible goes to Special Olympics athletes.

"I'm delighted that we're joined by many good sponsors who contributed to hole sponsorships, and also contributed to this event to cover the costs so we get as many dollars as possible back to Special Olympics," Garofalo said.

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



SOBC athletes such as Delta's Scott Fattedad (pictured) were a great help supporting the event.



Goldcorp Invitational chair Michael Campbell and SOBC athlete and co-emcee Matthew Williams.

Thank you to the supporters of the 2017 Goldcorp Invitational

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- Brent Bergeron, *Goldcorp*
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- Christine Marks, *Goldcorp*
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Changing the game for athlete health

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®



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



All smiles at the Healthy Athletes screenings at the 2017 SOBC Games.



Incredible volunteers in Fort St. John (pictured) and around the province give their time to make a difference through Special Olympics Healthy Athletes screenings.

networks and other local partners who can support the health and wellbeing of Special Olympics athletes year-round.

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 below).

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.

Highlights from 2017 include:

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 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.

After the events, participants now receive followup cards to help ensure they will be able to connect with the appointments and services they need.

In 2017, SOBC hosted Healthy Athletes Screening Days in Fort St. John and Nanaimo with nearly 100 participants, as well as more

than 340 screenings at the 2017 SOBC Summer Games in Kamloops.

The incredible support of dedicated volunteer health professionals and generous sponsors made it possible to provide these important and fun events, giving valuable health information, referrals, and tools to individuals with intellectual disabilities from around the province.

Fort St. John volunteer Angela Thompson, who is a registered massage therapist, said she was drawn to help with Healthy Athletes because she volunteered with Special Olympics in high school and remembered "how much fun it was," and also because she was struck by the "statistics of how many people with intellectual disabilities did not have access to health services in their communities."

"As a Massage Therapist in Fort St. John, I realized that I don't have many patients with disabilities. I felt it was important to meet the athletes and the caregivers in my community and I hope that when they are in need they will feel comfortable contacting me."

Data from B.C. Healthy Athletes screenings from 2011 to September 2016 shows the significant needs and unaddressed issues among our province's athletes, including:

- More than 93.3 per cent of athletes screened had balance and flexibility issues identified, while 81.9 per cent had strength problems identified;
- 73.7 per cent had gingival signs;
- 63.1 per cent had gait abnormalities;
- 46.9 per cent needed a new eyesight prescription;
- 37.8 per cent had blocked or partially blocked ear canals; and
- 35.6 per cent are obese.

These statistics are all comparable to or higher than the global population of individuals with intellectual disabilities who participated in Healthy Athletes screenings between 2011 and September 2016.

Trying to identify and combat these issues, since 2011 SOBC has delivered more than 3,249 Healthy Athletes screenings in six disciplines (not including screenings in the Strong Minds discipline, a recent addition as a Canadian pilot project).



Enjoying the valuable Opening Eyes screenings at the SOBC Healthy Athletes Screening Day in Nanaimo.

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 has been making strides 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 athlete leaders to be health and nutritional advocates for fellow athletes,
- and create Golisano Health Leadership Awards to present to health leaders supporting this important work.

continued on next page

Westminster Savings helps change lives with SOBC

This year, **Westminster Savings Credit Union** kicked off a three-year provincial partnership with Special Olympics BC to celebrate the power and joy of sport.

"At Westminster Savings, we know that active living provides numerous health benefits that enrich the lives and wellbeing of individuals and our communities. We are honoured to embark on this three-year partnership with Special Olympics BC as they help local athletes gain confidence, skills and friendships through sport," Westminster Savings President and CEO Gavin Toy said.

Through this partnership, Westminster Savings serves as Presenting Sponsor of the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics BC. Their support helped the 2017 event raise \$89,000 for SOBC programs, and they even took the icy dive themselves as team "The Plungers."

Westminster Savings also drafted 25 athletes to the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games, helping give them the empowering experience of representing their regions, travelling and competing with their teams, and achieving their goals. They also supported Special Olympics BC's health screenings and programs to change the game for athlete health and help athletes perform their best on and off the playing field.

We are incredibly grateful to Westminster Savings for being a dedicated supporter of Special Olympics BC. Their energy and commitment has helped change and enrich the lives of athletes with intellectual disabilities, and we look forward to continuing our work together. ○



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Health advocacy by athletes

Special Olympics BC Health Heroes training, supported by the Golisano Foundation Special Olympics Healthy Communities grant, has empowered athletes to become leaders in sharing education about health. At the spring 2016 SOBC Athlete Leadership courses, 27 athletes completed training to become Sun Safety Health Heroes. In spring 2017, another great group of athletes were trained as Health Advocates and Healthy Athletes Screenings Health Heroes, equipping them to spread the word about health and the value of Healthy Athletes screenings.

Athletes are doing a wonderful job of taking on health advocacy roles at events and spreading the word among their peers. SOBC – Vancouver’s Sheryl Spurr ran a popular sun safety booth at the 2017 *motionball* Marathon of Sport Vancouver, SOBC Board of Directors member and SOBC – Richmond athlete Vincent Li was a very effective advocate for sun safety at the 2017 Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament, and SOBC – Kamloops athletes served as health advocates at opportunities during the 2017 SOBC Summer Games.

After completing Health Heroes training in spring 2017, SOBC – Victoria athlete Jennifer Ferrier applied and was selected to become a Special Olympics Health Messenger.

In September 2017, Ferrier travelled with her mentor Kendal Alston, SOBC – Victoria Local Coordinator, to Washington D.C. to join

become “a little bit more fit so they’ll have more energy to do the sports they want to do, and to eat a little bit more healthy.”

In her speech, which is based around Canada’s physical activity guidelines for adults, Ferrier will encourage SOBC – Victoria athletes to improve their fitness to help both their performance in sport and their overall health. She will encourage athletes to take responsibility for getting quality physical activity outside their Special Olympics programs, and to set an example for Special Olympics athletes throughout the province and the world by becoming as fit as possible.

If you’d like to become a Health Hero, please contact SOBC’s Ashten Black to learn about training opportunities: ablack@specialolympics.bc.ca / 604-737-3081 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free.

There may already be a Health Hero in your community – if you would like to work with them, please contact Ashten and SOBC’s Michelle Cruickshank: mcruickshank@specialolympics.bc.ca / 250-208-5402 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free.

Fit Families & Friends

2017 marked the second year of SOBC running Fit Families & Friends programs through the summer months, with the help of the Golisano Foundation Healthy Communities grant. These fun programs are great opportunities for SOBC athletes to get out with their families, friends, and social supports to meet as a group

and exercise together in fun ways while sharing health and nutrition tips, creating an engaging environment to encourage each other and meet health goals together.

Groups meet for weekly walks/hikes or other fun and healthy activities, and together enjoy healthy snacks that can easily be made at home. In summer 2017, popular programs ran in Abbotsford, Kelowna, Kimberley/Cranbrook, Nanaimo/Oceanside, Prince



Health Hero Sheryl Spurr providing tips and tools at the *motionball* Marathon of Sport Vancouver.

George, Sunshine Coast, and Trail.

Many thanks to all the participating volunteers, athletes, and supporters who made these programs so much fun and so helpful for health and fitness!

Champions for Inclusive Health

We can and must address the gaps in our systems to ensure that individuals with intellectual disabilities live longer and healthier lives. We can make a difference and stop letting individuals with intellectual disabilities fall through the cracks and struggle in the shadows. But to do so, key champions of health and people with intellectual disabilities need to work together.

SOBC firmly believes that B.C. has the necessary resources, expertise, and compassion to become a global leader in health services for people with intellectual disabilities. On February 1, we convened the Champions for Inclusive Health meeting, a conversation with senior representatives from more than 40 impactful organizations, to discuss how we can collectively have a profound impact on the health of people with ID.

Athletes Jake Hooper of SOBC – Comox Valley, Paige Norton of SOBC – Abbotsford, and Marinka VanHage of SOBC – Prince George were vital participants in the meeting as they shared their experiences and perspectives alongside coaches/parents Donna Bilous, Region 3 Coordinator, and Wilma VanHage of SOBC – Prince George. Athletes Robyn Rauh of SOBC – Vancouver and Vincent Li provided great support for participants and the event.

Participants came from an important and wide-ranging group of organizations, including provincial government ministries, health authorities, medical professional associations and advocates, intellectual disability support



Health Hero Vincent Li sharing education at the *Goldcorp* Invitational Golf Tournament.

Special Olympics athletes and mentors from all over North America for the Health Messenger training. Ferrier returned home enthusiastic and equipped with an inspiring speech that she can deliver to all SOBC – Victoria sport programs in hopes of helping and encouraging fellow athletes.

“I learned that a lot of Special Olympics athletes are not as fit as they could be,” Ferrier said, and she would like to try to help others



Fit Families & Friends, Oceanside.



Fit Families & Friends, Sunshine Coast.



Fit Families & Friends, Trail.

Practitioner education

Communication challenges are a significant barrier affecting the health of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Many of them have trouble realizing or expressing their health concerns, and many health professionals have not had the opportunity to receive specific training, or are not familiar enough with this population, to know the best questions to ask to draw out the issues.

In addition to the training and experience provided to those who volunteer with Healthy Athletes, SOBC is actively working with B.C. medical schools and health professionals to increase opportunities for communication and exposure to help combat these issues. The response has been enthusiastic.

In 2017, SOBC teamed up with dental hygienist and educator Carol Yakiwchuk, the 2016 SOBC Golisano Health Leadership Award winner, and Camosun College experts to build a series of online dental educational modules, which will strengthen dental hygiene professionals' understanding of the unique challenges experienced by people with intellectual disabilities. These modules will help provide facts on people with intellectual disabilities and their oral care needs, planning and implementing professional dental care, desensitization, and extended support for oral hygiene at home.

In addition, at UBC and the University of Victoria, clubs are being initiated to give students more interactions with people with intellectual disabilities. And increasingly they are considering individuals with intellectual

organizations and advocates, universities and academic researchers, and corporate partners such as Sobeyes.

In the meeting, participants brought important illumination to the issues by sharing their stories, current work, available resources, challenges, and thoughts on the next steps to create change. After many amazing ideas shared, and many expressions of interest to continue to work together on this topic, we have been following up with these champions to continue pursuing change both together and in discipline-specific working groups.

disabilities for opportunities that will further increase student familiarity and comfort, such as UBC inviting SOBC athletes to become volunteer demonstration patients for the UBC Clinical Skills program.

Family Health Forum

In May, SOBC hosted a Family Health Forum in Nanaimo to give families of people with intellectual disabilities direct access to information and connections for health care, social services, and Special Olympics programming. The event also gave health



SOBC – Comox Valley athlete Jake Hooper and fellow participants in the Champions for Inclusive Health meeting share ideas and insights.

care professionals, community leaders, and social service providers opportunities to learn from families about their experiences. Sincere thanks to all the participants who made this a great day of discussion and education!

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 and the generous support of provincial partner Westminster Savings. ○

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specialolympics.bc.ca/healthy-athletes



Celebrating a successful year of fundraising with the BC LETR

Law enforcement champions and Special Olympics BC athletes ran shoulder to shoulder in 2017 as they raised funds and awareness at inspiring **Law Enforcement Torch Run for SOBC** events across the province.

“It is about more than running; people’s lives are affected and we are making a difference for so many people, for so many athletes locally, nationally, and internationally,” said Delta Police Department Inspector Debra McLeod.

On April 30, members of the Central Saanich Police Service, Oak Bay Police Department, Saanich Police Department, and Victoria Police Department joined forces with SOBC – Victoria athletes for a five-kilometre run/walk down the Galloping Goose Trail in the Victoria Torch Run.

June began with more than 100 participants coming out for the Prince George Torch Run on June 6. This fun 3.5-kilometre run/walk featured SOBC – Prince George athletes and Prince George RCMP, Prince George Fire

“It is about more than running; people’s lives are affected and we are making a difference for so many people, for so many athletes locally, nationally, and internationally,”

— Delta Police Department
Inspector Debra McLeod

Rescue, and B.C. Sheriff Services members.

“The Prince George Detachment was once again honoured to host the Law Enforcement Torch Run in our community,” Prince George RCMP Superintendent Warren Brown told the Prince George Citizen prior to the run/walk. “The public support has been overwhelming and the appreciation of the athletes makes all the efforts worthwhile.”

From June 6 to 9, the Lower Mainland’s law enforcement finest teamed up with SOBC athletes for the Lower Mainland Torch Run, which swept through 18 communities. Participating agencies included the Abbotsford, Delta, New Westminster, Port Moody, Vancouver, and West Vancouver police departments, RCMP detachments throughout the Lower Mainland, Canada Border Services Agency, the Justice Institute of British Columbia, and Metro Vancouver Transit Police.

Comox Valley RCMP members and SOBC – Comox



Golden



Abbotsford



New Westminster



Richmond

Valley athletes took a trip down the Rotary Trail in the Comox Torch Run on June 25. This inspiring event started off at Simms Park and participants had the option of taking part in a one-, two-, or five-kilometre walk/run.

Cranbrook RCMP champions and SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook athletes came together for the Cranbrook Torch Run on June 29. The three-kilometre run was followed by a barbecue and softball game with Cranbrook RCMP members.

In July, law enforcement members helped kick off the 2017 SOBC Summer Games in Kamloops with the BC LETR Final Leg. After a five-kilometre run through Kamloops, runners representing BC Corrections, Kamloops RCMP, Vancouver Police Department, and Yukon RCMP received an enthusiastic welcome from a cheering crowd as they delivered the Flame of Hope to the Opening Ceremony.

Golden-Field RCMP members and SOBC –

Golden athletes enjoyed an amazing day of fun and festivities at the Golden Torch Run on September 9. This five-kilometre run/walk started and ended at the Golden Museum Fall Fair, giving participants an opportunity to enjoy everything the fair had to offer.

From March 9 to 18, SOBC – Coquitlam athlete Mandy Manzardo and Oak Bay Police Department Constable Sheri Lucas had the honour of being part of the 2017 LETR Final Leg team that carried the Flame of Hope through 47 cities, towns, and communities across Austria and into the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games Opening Ceremony.

"I don't think I have smiled so much in my entire life, nor has my heart ever been so full of life and energy. It just confirmed that this is where I should be – helping spread awareness and encouraging more law enforcement members to get involved," Lucas said. ○



Kamloops RCMP Constable Sofie Winkels and SOBC – Kamloops swimmer Shinji Matthews carry the Flame of Hope at the Opening Ceremony of the 2017 SOBC Summer Games.

LETR recap

Special Olympics BC would like to thank the various agencies that organized events in 2017 to raise funds and awareness.

The Delta Police Department hosted their annual 50/50 draw at a **Vancouver Giants game** right before the new year and followed this up by selling 50/50 tickets at another Giants game in January. Together, the two events raised more than \$6,000.

Mission RCMP members worked up a sweat on stationary bikes to support SOBC at their successful **Cycle for a Cause** fundraiser in March.

Saanich Police Department Constable Lisa Bruschetta, Central Saanich Police Service Corporal Pat Bryant, and Oak Bay Police Department Constable Sheri Lucas camped out on scaffolding to raise funds and awareness in April's Free the Fuzz fundraiser.

May's **Metro Vancouver Transit Police Charity Golf Tournament** was a great day on the greens that raised over \$17,000.

Also in May, Prince George RCMP, Prince George Fire Rescue, and B.C. Sheriff Services members ran a successful **car wash fundraiser** for SOBC.

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.

The **New Westminster Police Charity Golf Tournament** in September was a fun day on the fairways that supported SOBC and Honour House Society.

There were lots of big smiles and high fives as SOBC athletes and BC Law Enforcement Torch Run members raised funds and awareness



SOBC – Abbotsford athletes, LETR members, and other participants had a great time at the Abbotsford Police Department Challenge Run.



LETR members raised funds and awareness from behind bars at Free the Fuzz in Victoria.

at **Red Robin Gourmet Burgers and Brews restaurants** in October. This was the campaign's first year in British Columbia and it was a big success, raising more than \$9,000 for SOBC.

Metro Vancouver Transit Police and the Vancouver and Victoria police departments



SOBC – Coquitlam athletes and members of the Coquitlam RCMP, Metro Vancouver Transit Police, and Port Moody Police Department raised funds and awareness for SOBC at Red Robin's Coquitlam location.



SOBC – Delta athletes and Delta Police Department members selling 50/50 tickets at a Vancouver Giants game.

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. ○

Fearless Plungers get bold and cold for SOBC

Brave participants in colourful costumes made a huge splash at the **2017 Polar Plunge for Special Olympics BC presented by Westminster Savings Credit Union** on March 4.

The frigid and festive fundraiser brought in more than \$85,000 for SOBC, almost three times as much as 2016's inaugural Vancouver Polar Plunge, with 189 individuals registering to get freezin' for a reason at Kitsilano Beach.

Staged in partnership with the BC Law Enforcement Torch Run, the Polar Plunge saw members of the Vancouver, Abbotsford, and West Vancouver police departments, Coquitlam and North Vancouver RCMP detachments, Canada Border Services Agency, Justice Institute of British Columbia, and Metro Vancouver Transit Police show their support for SOBC alongside corporate teams, students, and other individuals.

"The number of participants and spectators in attendance clearly shows we are accomplishing our goal of creating awareness for athletes with intellectual disabilities and raising money to help out athletes and their families," Transit Police Deputy Chief and BC LETR Executive Council member Barry Kross said.

This fun-filled event included a colourful costume contest and inspiring speeches from the likes of Kross, crowd-pleasing representatives from Westminster Savings, and SOBC – Vancouver athlete Sheryl Spurr.

"Special Olympics gives athletes like me life-changing opportunities. This would not be possible without events like this or people like you. Special Olympics athletes are brave, and you are brave, too!" Spurr told Plunge participants during her speech.

The law enforcement teams plunged first, with Transit Police Chief Doug LePard, VPD Chief Adam Palmer, and Abbotsford Police Department Chief Bob Rich leading them into the icy ocean. They were followed by waves of Plungers dressed as wild animals, lucha libre wrestlers, and so much more!

MLA David Eby, Vancouver Park Board Chair Michael Wiebe, and BC Lions Emmanuel Arceneaux, Marco Iannuzzi, and Travis Lulay were among the brave participants who took the Plunge.

In 2017, the Vancouver Polar Plunge welcomed Westminster Savings as Presenting Sponsor. The sponsorship is part of the credit union's three-year provincial partnership with SOBC to help change lives through sport.

"I'm plunging because we are a sponsor of the Polar Plunge and we are also a sponsor of Special Olympics BC. We have a three-year partnership with Special Olympics and over the next three years we are going to contribute over \$200,000 to this wonderful cause," said Westminster Savings Senior Vice President Consumer Operations and Chief Customer Experience Officer Maury Kask before taking the Plunge in March. "I think the Plunge today is going to be cold. It's already cold outside, and I am already cold, so I think going in the water is going to intensify it, but I'm ready to go!"

The Polar Plunge was also supported by Media Sponsors 96.9 JACK FM, City Television, and OMNI Television, and Event Sponsors Dueck



BC Lions Emmanuel Arceneaux, Marco Iannuzzi, and Travis Lulay joined SOBC athletes, law enforcement members, and other enthusiastic SOBC supporters at the 2017 Polar Plunge.



The Westminster Savings team gets bold and cold!



VPD Chief Adam Palmer and other brave participants prepare to take the Plunge.

Auto Group, Safeway, and Tim Hortons. KiSS RADiO was on site to pump the tunes for participants on Plunge Day.

The event also benefitted from fantastic volunteers, including VPD cadets and SOBC athletes who worked to raise funds and awareness for SOBC throughout the event.

Big thanks to all the amazing Plungers, sponsors, and volunteers who made the 2017 Polar Plunge a success!

We can't wait for the 2018 Vancouver Polar Plunge for SOBC presented by Westminster Savings on March 3! We are also excited for the first-ever Polar Plunge for SOBC on Vancouver Island, also coming in 2018! To find out more or to register, visit plunge4specialolympics.com. ○



Courtney, Pam, and Greg Keith of Team Dueck with SOBC – Vancouver athlete Sheryl Spurr (second from right) at the Polar Plunge.

Building champions every day

"On the playing field, I am proud to be a Special Olympics athlete. Every day, I am proud to be me."

The empowering spirit of Special Olympics is celebrated in a new Special Olympics BC PSA video created by Hyphen Communications, entitled *Everyday Champions*.

The video is intended to spotlight the abilities of Special Olympics athletes both on and off the field, show the power of Special Olympics to change the way the world sees people with intellectual disabilities, and inspire more people to get involved with the movement.

The video contains powerful narration by SOBC athletes Malcolm Borsoi, Christian Burton, and Paige Norton.

The talented team at Hyphen, including writer/director David Martin, producer Michelle Schwartz, and editor Ornella Sinigaglia, brought the piece to life. The video also includes footage from the last two Special Olympics



David Martin of Hyphen Communications and SOBC – Abbotsford athlete Paige Norton in studio creating an inspiring new video for SOBC.

BC Games shot by Graham Pollock, and select off-field B-roll footage from Special Olympics International.

The Hyphen team shared their vision as follows: "Most people have heard about Special Olympics, but they associate it largely as being a sport event. We saw this video as an opportunity to present a more complete picture of what Special Olympics is really all about, and to shine the light on some of the amazing people and initiatives that happen away from the gym, pool or field, 365 days a year. Hopefully this video will remind people that champions aren't just created on the field of play, but in our schools, homes, and communities, every day, in every part of our province."

Find *Everyday Champions* and other inspiring videos on SOBC's YouTube channel: youtube.com/specialolympicsbc

Goldcorp support enriches lives with Special Olympics BC

We are so grateful to **Goldcorp** for their significant and ongoing support, which helps empower Special Olympics athletes of all ages to enrich their lives through the joy of sport.

In 2011, Goldcorp announced a \$1-million gift to help SOBC develop youth programs. This generous gift allowed SOBC to more than double the number of youth programs offered around the province, and gave many more children with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to learn vital social and motor skills in a fun and welcoming environment. The company then doubled their commitment in 2014 with an additional \$1 million, allowing youth programs to continue growing and helping SOBC develop opportunities for athletes to train, compete, and improve their health.

To acknowledge the vital contributions made by the company, the Final Fore Golf Tournament was renamed the Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament. This inspiring annual event has been a huge success year



after year, thanks to the help of many Goldcorp representatives who give their time as part of the event organizing committee. To date, the

tournament has raised more than \$2.1 million for Special Olympics BC.

Goldcorp is passionate about making a difference for Special Olympics athletes. Speaking at the Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament in 2017, Goldcorp President & CEO David Garofalo reminded participants just how important and far-reaching their support is, as it helps individuals with intellectual disabilities develop skills to help them succeed in sport and in life. "Special Olympics is much more than just about sports, you're contributing to the betterment of society," said Garofalo.

We are incredibly grateful to Goldcorp for being a dedicated and important sponsor of our work. Their generous support has helped Special Olympics BC make a difference to athletes of all ages across the province. ○

Staff update

2017 has been a year of exciting changes for the Special Olympics BC staff!

In March, we welcomed **Melainie Hatt** as Community Development Coordinator for Region 1, who brought many years of experience working with individuals with ID to the role. We bid a fond farewell to **Jill Harris**, who moved onto new opportunities in the area and kindly worked with Melainie to transition.

Our best wishes went with **Lori Cruddas** as she departed for new opportunities with her family in May, and **Reanne Holden** as she started an exciting new opportunity with the United Way in Kelowna.

In August we welcomed **Charlene Flood** back to the role of Community Development Coordinator for Regions 7 and 8. During her hiatus she did not go far from the SOBC family, as

she continued volunteering with SOBC – Prince George and served as Region 8 mission staff for the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games!

We said our fond farewells to **Shawn Fevens** and **Sarah Wall** in August as they embarked on exciting new chapters in their lives. Shawn, his wife Joanne, and their sons Archer and Max moved back to Nova Scotia to be closer to family as they await the arrival of their third child, due in January, and Sarah departed to achieve her dream of completing a Master's degree in occupational therapy at the University of Alberta. We wish them both the very best!

October brought three new staff members to Special Olympics BC! **Helen Cheung**, a recent graduate of UBC and volunteer with the SOBC – Richmond swimming program, joined the team as Performance Program

Coordinator, and **Chelsea Rogers**, a synchronized swimming coach who recently earned her degree in Recreation Management, stepped into the role of Community Development Coordinator for Regions 3, 4, and 5. In the Okanagan, **Morgan Parker** took on the position of Community Development Coordinator for Region 2 after volunteering as a basketball coach for SOBC – Penticton for the past two years.

In November we wished all the best to **James Marchand** as he departed to take on an exciting new career opportunity with KPMG, and welcomed **Joanie Hayes** into the role of Competition & Youth Coordinator. A floor hockey coach with SOBC – Delta, Joanie brings a background in sport science, kinesiology, and physical education to the position. ○

Stories from Special Olympics BC Locals

News from SOBC – 100 Mile House

By Denise Thiessen, Local Coordinator

Our year in the Cariboo was pretty quiet and the athletes are having fun as usual. We have 16 athletes and once our bowling program wrapped up in mid-April, we all anxiously awaited golf. We went twice, I believe, and then things got pretty crazy for some 72 days while we dealt with the horrible forest fires.

We did have six athletes in Kamloops for the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games, one competitor for golf and five for 5-pin bowling. One of our athletes, Jared Douglas, came home with a gold.

We have now settled back into our bowling program and await a new athlete to join our group. On March 24 we will be hosting a 5-Pin Bowling Regional Qualifier so we are pretty excited about that.

Moving forward with a smile is our motto!! ○

SOBC – Oceanside debuts Sport Start swimming pilot program

By Christine Neeter, PR Coordinator

Special Olympics BC – Oceanside is excited to be the first SOBC Local to initiate a Sport Start swimming pilot program.

In response to a request from one of our local secondary schools to register a number of non-swimmers with our Local's swimming program, we explored ideas for how we might be involved in supporting these athletes in reaching the level required to join the team.

SOBC, our Regional District aquatic staff, a Resource Teacher from Ballenas Secondary, and representatives from our Local met to look at how we might work together to serve the needs of the students in learning to swim. Our local pool offers an adapted swim program and was delighted to look at a partnership with

SOBC to pilot a Sport Start Swim option during our swim team sessions.

"Working with our community to meet the needs of our athletes, current and future, is very gratifying," SOBC – Oceanside Program Coordinator Barbara McLeod said.

The goal of the program is to get the students to the point where they are able to swim a length of the pool unassisted and become eligible to join our swim team at some point in the future.

The Sport Start swim program is off to a great start. Seven students ages 12 to 18

instructor and is happy to see the students feeling so comfortable in the pool. "The program has given adults and athletes a clearer focus with regards to specific skills that need to be worked on," she said. "Esme (the instructor) is very encouraging, gentle, and kind. She connects with each student and adult pair to ensure that everyone is comfortable and she models skills to practice."

Sue feels that all of the students are benefitting from the program and notes that each student has shown growth in various



Ballenas Secondary School teacher Sue Koziellecki, swimmer Ethan Mandin, and Ravensong Aquatic Centre instructor Esme Kurulak enjoying SOBC – Oceanside's Sport Start swimming program.

attend the once-a-week lesson with their one-to-one educational assistants. The 45-minute session is divided into a 30-minute lesson time followed by a 15-minute practice. An instructor from the aquatic centre works with the students for 30 minutes each week to teach the skills to both the students and their aides. The aides reinforce and practice the skills with their students for the remaining time.

Resource teacher Sue Koziellecki is thrilled with the program. She has high praise for the

areas, from putting their faces in the water to doing a back float with dumbbell floaties. "Monday afternoon swimming is definitely a highlight for each student and we are hopeful the program will continue!"

It is our hope to continue the program in the winter term. At the end of the season, we will meet to evaluate the pilot and to decide next steps.

"I absolutely love working with these students," said Esme Kurulak, Ravensong Aquatic Centre swim instructor. ○

News from SOBC – Quesnel

By Rick Prosk, Program Coordinator

Special Olympics BC – Quesnel is a busy Local with 13 sport programs and several other initiatives that are offered to athletes. This year, for the first time, we registered our 70th athlete, including 11 athletes new to Special Olympics. We were also pleased to welcome six new coaches, including new head coaches in basketball, Club Fit, cross country skiing, curling, and swimming. In addition, Quesnel offers alpine skiing, 5-pin bowling, floor hockey, golf, rhythmic gymnastics, snowshoeing, soccer, and track and field.

The first half of 2017 was spent in training our athletes to compete in the Special Olympics BC Summer Games.

Thanks to a successful qualification year in 2016, we had 26 athletes headed to Kamloops in July: 20 athletes competing on two Quesnel Fury soccer teams, three in bowling, two in swimming, and one in track. They were supported by eight coaches. In fact, we had too few athletes for the spots available, so had to give up our spot in basketball when there weren't enough players in the Region to field a team.

It was a bright, sunny day in July when we headed down to Kamloops, taking most of the seats available on the chartered bus. Once there, our athletes settled in quickly, and performed well. The Fury II soccer team, with many members attending Provincial Games for the first time, finished fourth in its division. The Fury I team lost a close 2-0 game to the eventual provincial champions from Kelowna to take the silver medal.

The five-pin bowling team, with Quesnel athletes Beth Hoffman, Eldon Carter, and Evan Curr and coach Ellen Martz, finished second in its division and qualified to join the Team BC 2018 Training Squad. Swimmer Kassidy Rutledge and track athlete Thomas McHugh won individual gold medals, with Thomas' four medals earning him a spot on the provincial team. Since the Games ended, Brock Terlesky has been invited to join the Team BC soccer team on its trip to National Games.

Brock is a talented multi-sport athlete, and this summer attended the Canada Summer Games in Winnipeg to compete in the 100- and 200-metre races. Brock loved his time with the



SOBC – Quesnel's 2017 inductees into the Quesnel Sports Hall of Fame.

B.C. team, and managed a fifth-place finish (and personal best) in the 100-metre final with a time of 12.70. He also finished seventh in the 200-metre final.

In September, we were pleased to have 10 athletes inducted into the Quesnel Sports Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony coincided with the opening of the West Fraser Centre in downtown Quesnel. Athletes were recognized for their past athletic accomplishments: Eldon Carter, Dean Cake, Jean Scriver and Cory Melnychuk for winning gold in 5-pin bowling at National Games in 2014; Danny Dodgson and Cherie Swaan for winning gold in snowshoeing at Provincial Games in 2015; Cory Melnychuk for winning gold in cross country skiing at the same event; and Glenda Melnychuk, Travis Burt, Martin Scriver, Dean Cake, and Alfred Schotel for winning gold in curling at both Provincial Games in 2015 and National Games in 2016.

Over the past year, we have received tremendous community support to continue funding our programs. We've had sizeable donations from the Quesnel Community Foundation, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, and the Prospectors' Car Club. In January, we concluded our most successful fundraiser yet, collecting over \$12,000 through our annual ticket raffle. This year's event is currently underway.

We are now looking ahead to the upcoming competitive season. We will host the Curling Regional Qualifier in March, hopefully with four teams competing. We will attend other Regional Qualifiers in alpine skiing, cross

country skiing, snowshoeing, 5-pin bowling, and for the first time in many years, floor hockey. In April we will host our second Try-It Day, and our first joint track meet with the local high school track team. As well in April, we will celebrate our 25th anniversary with a reunion weekend event. In September, we will host our fourth annual golf tournament. ○

News from SOBC – Sunshine Coast

By Micheal Oswald, Athlete Reporter

2017 was a time to laugh and a time to cry. The first half of the year was all about the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer Games in Kamloops. The training that solidified the SOBC – Sunshine Coast athletes' performances in bocce, golf, rhythmic gymnastics, softball, swimming, and track and field resulted in 26 medals!

Chris Walker and Amanda Boghean with the Vancouver GoGo's took gold in softball; Amber Fenton, Darlene Nelson, Wes Harrison and Candice Garrett won gold in bocce; Linsey Davidson won two bronze in rhythmic gymnastics; Gus Vaughn achieved a gold in golf; Orca swimmers Genny Verge, Stephanie Rogers, Christel Jensen, Lindsay Pearson, Paul Davis, and Micheal Oswald collectively won four gold, five silver, and two bronze; and Bruce Stuart and Amber Maher brought home two gold, two silver, and two bronze in track and field!

Swimmer Genny Verge went on to compete at the 2017 Canada Summer Games in

continued on next page



The Sunshine Coast's members of the Region 5 team for the 2017 Provincial Games.

Winnipeg, bringing home gold, silver and bronze for 100-metre backstroke, 100-metre freestyle and 50-metre freestyle!

She along with Stephanie Rogers, Amanda Boghean, Chris Walker, and Gus Vaughn qualified for the Team BC 2018 Training Squad, along with golf Head Coach Darren Lane! They will be gearing up to compete in the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games in Nova Scotia. So awesome!

2017 was also a sad time. January saw the passing of Annette Bertrand, beloved Program and Volunteer Coordinator and wife of Chuck Bertrand, due to cancer. We shall never forget you Nette and we will always remember your smile and how much you loved Special O.

"I always walk away with a smile on my face. Special Olympics is the most rewarding organization I have even been with." Those are beautiful words from a beautiful soul.

A memorial picnic on August 19 was held for Annette at Porpoise Bay Park. There was fun and laughter during games; there were also times of tears and reminiscence and a moment of silence. In a surprising event, Chuck Bertrand graciously donated funds to the Lions Club, who in turn passed it onto our Local Coordinator Pat Stuart for SOBC – Sunshine Coast. Chuck was also gifted with a garden stone painted by Peggy Faulkner from Local Committee member Allyson Pearson and swimmer Lindsay Pearson.

The Coast's RCMP are constant supporters of our cause. They teamed up with our athletes on several occasions to play soccer, basketball, and floor hockey. In these times of strife it is beautiful to see the laughs, smiles, and camaraderie that happen when our local

constabulary joins us in sport. Thank you to the all officers involved for your commitment and dedication to our community.

There was also a very successful Walkathon fundraiser this year sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. It raised \$20,000, almost double our goal! A humongous thanks to David Short for putting together the event!



Members of SOBC – Trail and the Beaver Valley Nitehawks enjoying their Try-It Sports Day.

The 2017/2018 season is a qualifying year regionally for fall/winter sports. Our local curling team hopes to host a bonspiel in Gibsons sometime in February with competitors from the two Locals in our region

who have curling teams, the Sunshine Coast and Vancouver.

And what kind of athlete reporter would I be if I didn't talk about the number 1 most important aspect of Special Olympics? The volunteers. This year 10- and five-year service pins were awarded to coaches who have been part of this wonderful program for several years. Bill Climie and Samantha Giampa were honoured for their decade of service in their in basketball and curling respectively, and Ann Simonet, Richard Hoath, Helen Halet, and Shelly McKinnon were given five-year pins for their years of volunteering!

That about wraps things up for 2017! See everyone next year! ○

News from SOBC – Trail

By Paula Prough, Athlete Representative

Special Olympics BC – Trail had had a very busy fall. In September we held a bake sale at the Trail & District United Way's Free Parking Day. We also applied for and participated in the ParticipAction events and held a Try-It Sports Day open to the community. The Beaver Valley Nitehawks lent a hand and we set up at our local park with five Special Olympics sport stations that people could try out. Lots of fun was had by everyone that attended.

In October, we sent two teams to the SOBC

– Kimberley/Cranbrook Pat Mark Memorial Bowling Tournament. Everyone who went had fun and tried their best. We also sent two teams to the SOBC – Castlegar West Kootenay Bowling Invitational. One of our teams placed

second, and the other fourth. It was a great event that was well attended.

November has been exciting. Our floor hockey team spent time practicing with the Selkirk Saints, and they attended the Castlegar Floor Hockey Tournament, which as always was a ton of fun. We also held our second bake sale of the season at the Waneta Mall's Christmas Bake Sale Day.

We have one coach and one athlete for swimming and one coach for golf preparing for the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games, and one coach and one athlete in 5-pin bowling preparing for the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Bowling Championships. They are all busy training and preparing all year as members of the Team BC 2018 Training Squad. ○

New awareness tools available for SOBC sponsors

Special Olympics BC's valued sponsors play a vital part in helping our organization grow, both with their important funding and in raising awareness about our movement and the life-changing impact of their support. To help sponsors share the difference they make and spread the word about Special Olympics, SOBC has developed a new package of tools that can be customized for a sponsor's channels.

Created by the talented team at Hyphen Communications, SOBC's sponsor toolkit includes an array of customizable materials to meet the needs of different businesses. Whether a sponsor is seeking a button for their website, poster for their staff or sales spaces, ad for newsletters, or signage for events, SOBC has material to help tell the story of the sponsor's support and impact.

SOBC will be rolling out the tools in 2018, and interested sponsors are welcome to contact SOBC's Caitlin Woods-Rotering by email at caitlin@specialolympics.bc.ca or by phone at 604-737-3042 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free. ○

Club Fit helping athletes ramp up fitness and health

Special Olympics BC **Club Fit** programs are growing around the province, providing weekly physical training to help athletes build their overall fitness and health to benefit them in their sport performance and throughout their lives!

Intended for participants ages 14 and up, Club Fit offers quality weekly physical training sessions that help SOBC athletes improve their fitness and health, supplementing and benefitting their participation in traditional sport programs. Athletes are also permitted to take part in Club Fit as the only program they are registered in, so the program benefits those athletes by helping them improve overall health and fitness, helping them throughout their lives, and access ongoing activity opportunities.



Workout fun with SOBC – Fort St. John's Club Fit program.

SOBC Sport Consultant Jacques Thibault, an internationally recognized training and speed skating expert with a Master's degree in science, is working with SOBC athletes and coaches to help empower them to be their very best. Thibault notes that Club Fit is designed to give athletes what they can't get from their sport programs, and points out the top five reasons why every Special Olympics athlete should be in Club Fit:

1. Better performance in all Special Olympics sports

No matter how we look at it, being stronger, more agile, having better balance, being more flexible, and being in better shape are advantages in sports. Most sports require strength, and strength is developed much faster in Club Fit than at sport-specific practices. If you want to run faster, throw

bowling balls easier, or swim faster, being stronger will help your performance.

2. Better health and fewer injuries

Health Canada recommends 150 minutes of exercise per week. Many Special Olympics programs train only 60 to 90 minutes per week. Adding Club Fit will give you the additional time necessary to improve your health, strength, and fitness, which will diminish injuries and sickness and improve your sport performance. A triple good thing.

3. Club Fit instructors are professionals

All Club Fit instructors are qualified instructors that can provide the best training for health and sport performances. They have training knowledge and can recommend adequate exercises just for you. This is a huge advantage that coaches and athletes must be part of.

4. Club Fit is a great place to meet new people

Special Olympics athletes love to meet people and have a great time. Club Fit is not just about working hard, it's also about working out with great people. The instructors and volunteers are amazing, and all athletes encourage each other during sessions.

5. Club Fit helps you look good and feel great

When athletes work hard, they always love the way they feel and the way they look. Losing weight, feeling strong, and being in shape is a great feeling to have.

Club Fit is part of SOBC's long-term athlete development model, and it is mandatory for all Team BC 2018 Training Squad athletes.

For program leaders, SOBC offers a growing base of flexible Club Fit resources that can be combined in numerous ways to achieve a high-quality program that meets the fitness goals of all athletes.

More coaches with personal training backgrounds or exercise, strength and conditioning, or kinesiology experience are being sought to help power these quality programs and create opportunities for SOBC athletes. Please spread the word! To get involved with this rewarding opportunity, please contact SOBC's Helen Cheung by email at hcheung@specialolympics.bc.ca or by phone at 604-737-3055 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free. ○

SOBC's Performance Program helps power athletes to 'awesome' results

Special Olympics BC – Vernon's Kyle Borden says exercises he learned through SOBC's **Performance Program** have helped him improve his fitness, and this has made him a better athlete.

Borden says he was thrilled to see proof in a functional testing session in Kelowna in March 2017 that his training had paid off. In functional testing, athletes participate in exercises that measure fitness and test their foundational movements, generating data to help track and motivate progress. At the March session, Borden improved upon many of his October 2016 functional testing results, including many tests that involve core strength.

"It felt really good!" he said.

SOBC's Performance Program is a long-term plan with the goal of enhancing the skills and performance of coaches and through them, all SOBC athletes. Participating coaches and athletes take the skills they learn back to their local programs to benefit all athletes, not just a few. In addition to helping athletes and coaches develop sport-specific skills, one of the main goals during the 2016-17 Performance Program season was to improve athlete fitness, especially in terms of core strength.

Pam Kiselbach runs the SOBC – Coquitlam Club Fit program and is the SOBC Healthy Athletes Clinical Director for Health Promotion. Kiselbach ran fitness sessions at several Performance Program camps during the 2016-17 season, and she says she always includes a core strength component because core strength is important to an athlete's success and well-being.

Kiselbach says Performance Program camps are a great resource for coaches because they show the potential of SOBC athletes. Coaches can take what they learned at the camps, including conditioning techniques, and incorporate them into their sport programs.

SOBC's new functional testing database shows the Performance Program's focus on fitness and core strength is having an impact. From functional testing sessions held in 2016 to those held in 2017, SOBC athlete averages improved in four tests that involve core strength: the plank, stork stands, pushups, and agility. The biggest improvements were the average plank test time going up by more than 50 per cent and the average amount of pushups increasing by 62 per cent.

Borden says SOBC's Corrective Exercise Booklet and SOBC – Vernon's Club Fit sessions played important roles in helping

him improve his functional testing results and overall level of fitness.

SOBC – Vernon multi-sport coach and Club Fit trainer Janny Jung attended Performance Program camps for athletics and snowshoeing in 2016 and the Performance Program's Club Fit Summit in 2017. Jung says she has learned new exercises and drills at every camp she has attended and has incorporated them into the programs she is involved with in SOBC – Vernon, which has benefited athletes like Borden.

During the 2016-17 sport season, SOBC hosted 22 camps in 17 sports and Club Fit. The season also saw the introduction of Regional Performance Camps, which are helping bring the Performance Program to more athletes and coaches across the province.

This vision for 2017-18 is to host Performance Program camps in all 18 SOBC sports and Club Fit. There will be an increased focus on getting athletes and coaches ready for winter-sport Regional Qualifiers and helping Team BC members prepare for the

2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games and 2018 Special Olympics Canada Bowling Championships.

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 possible.

For more information and stories, please visit specialolympics.bc.ca/performance-program or contact Helen Cheung, Performance Program Coordinator, by email at hcheung@specialolympics.bc.ca or by phone at 604-737-3055 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free. ○

SOBC Performance Program supported by

Canada



RBC Foundation
RBC Foundation



SOBC athletes and coaches developed sport-specific skills and learned about fitness and nutrition at May's Golf Performance Camp in Cranbrook.



Athletes work on their race start techniques during March's Swimming Performance Camp at Simon Fraser University.



Bowlers and coaches thank RBC Foundation for their support at a Team BC Training Squad camp held in Coquitlam.

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.

In April, the BC/Yukon Knights of Columbus invited Special Olympics BC to speak about our life-changing

programs at their 106th annual State Council AGM and Convention in Richmond. SOBC – Surrey athlete Marc Theriault powerfully shared his Special Olympics story and impressed the audience with his athletic accomplishments. The Knights presented SOBC with cheques totalling more than \$9,000, continuing their strong support of the Special Olympics movement.

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



SOBC – Surrey athlete Marc Theriault shared his Special Olympics story with Knights of Columbus members at the 106th annual State Council AGM and Convention.

Fun and fitness at SOBC functional testing sessions

Special Olympics BC – Castlegar athlete Liam Donnelly said seeing what he could accomplish at a **functional testing** session inspired him to train harder and take pride in his health. “I learned so much in one day,” Donnelly said. “It was so much fun – I had a blast!”

Open to all SOBC athletes, functional testing involves exercises that measure fitness and foundational movements. SOBC hosts functional testing sessions throughout the province to help athletes test their fitness levels and to motivate and guide training.

Coaches can now access their athletes’ results through SOBC’s functional testing database. They are also able to see how these results compare to averages for athletes in their Local, in a specific sport, or throughout the province.

This helps coaches track an athlete’s progress and evaluate the effectiveness of their training programs. The functional testing database will include results from all future sessions.

For the 2017-18 sport season, SOBC will be looking to run one or two functional testing sessions in each of the eight SOBC Regions. Also, all Team BC athletes will take part in functional testing sessions at their training camps as they prepare for the 2018 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games and 2018 Special Olympics Canada Bowling Championships.

To learn more about functional testing sessions, or if you are a coach who is interested in accessing functional testing results or running a functional testing session for your athletes, please contact Helen Cheung, Performance Program Coordinator, by email at hcheung@specialolympics.bc.ca or by phone at 604-737-3055 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free. ○



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

2017 Special Olympics BC award winners

Athletic Achievement Award

A confident, courageous, and talented individual, Special Olympics BC – Abbotsford's **Paige Norton** is an accomplished athlete and a great ambassador for SOBC in her community. Through her commitment to trying her best, showing good sportsmanship, and living a healthy lifestyle, she is a great example to other athletes in her Local, and the winner of SOBC's 2017 Athletic Achievement Award.

A skilled speed skater, Norton put in a great effort at the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria, winning a gold medal and achieving a personal best in the 1000m race and claiming a silver medal in the 500m event. Norton also competed as a member of Team Canada at the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Boise, where she won two gold medals and one bronze medal.

As a member of Team BC, Norton earned multiple medals in speed skating at the 2008, 2012, and 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games and in athletics at the 2010 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games. Norton has also participated with pride in athletics and speed skating at SOBC Games, athletics and swimming at BC Games, and in regional and provincial competitions through her generic speed skating club.

Norton is a strong advocate for SOBC in her community and she regularly gives speeches on how Special Olympics has enriched her life, made her more independent, and encouraged her to live a healthy lifestyle. She consistently volunteers at SOBC fundraising events and has worked to promote respect and inclusion as part of the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign in Abbotsford and via Sport British Columbia and the Government of B.C.'s #ERASEbullying initiative.

Congratulations to Paige and nominees



Donna Bilous and Paige Norton receiving their awards.

Bilous works hard to help SOBC athletes develop confidence, independence, and skills. A knowledgeable and respected coach who consistently demonstrates honesty and integrity through her actions, Bilous is the deserving recipient of the 2017 Howard Carter Award.

SOBC – Abbotsford's longtime coach of speed skating and youth soccer, Bilous employs a coaching philosophy that emphasizes mutual respect and lifelong learning. She has a vibrant personality and she encourages athletes to celebrate successes and learn from setbacks. A registered nurse, she also brings her experience in health care to her coaching roles, incorporating mental training, nutrition, and wellness practices

John Chen (SOBC – Vancouver), Terry Daniels (SOBC – Comox Valley), Cory Duhaime (SOBC – Delta), Krista Meikle (SOBC – Victoria), Glenda Melnychuk (SOBC – Quesnel), Jonathan Robins (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), and Tony Wilkinson (SOBC – Kelowna)!

Howard Carter Award

Region 3 Coordinator and Special Olympics BC – Abbotsford coach **Donna**

into her practice plans.

Bilous has supported athletes as a coach at multiple Provincial, National, and World Games, most recently as Team Canada's speed skating Head Coach for the 2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria. At all levels Bilous has made a point of collaborating with less experienced coaches to teach them about sport-specific techniques, equipment maintenance, and rules and protocols, and her athletes have delivered impressive performances.

In her role as Region 3 Coordinator, Bilous has helped her Region thrive and her contributions have had a positive impact across the province. Over her time with SOBC, she has played an important role in recruiting, training, and mentoring new coaches and Local Committee volunteers, and some of these individuals have become leaders in the Special Olympics movement in B.C.

Congratulations Donna and nominees Nikki Apps (SOBC – Comox Valley), Angela Behn (SOBC – Nanaimo), Penny Coyle (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), Courtney Keith Motz (SOBC – Delta), and Steve Neilsen (SOBC – Victoria).

Grassroots Coach Award

Special Olympics BC – Port Alberni's **Bill Scobbie** is a committed and caring coach

who has developed great relationships with athletes, coaches, parents, and caregivers in his Local. A knowledgeable bocce and curling coach, Scobbie works hard to provide opportunities for athletes, and he is the deserving winner of SOBC's 2017 Grassroots Coach Award.

An SOBC volunteer of more than 10 years, Scobbie supported athletes as a coach at the 2016 Special Olympics



Bill Scobbie receiving his award from SOBC – Port Alberni Volunteer Coordinator Anne Evans.



Joan Gerhardt (left) receiving her award from SOBC – Kelowna Local Coordinator Sue Foisly.



Kelsey Thomson receiving her award.

Congratulations Joan and nominees Phyllis Baudais (SOBC – Comox Valley), Andrea Boyes, (SOBC – Victoria), Sami Fields (SOBC – Vancouver), Sally Masters (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), Lisa McPhedrian (SOBC – Richmond), Grace Todd (SOBC – Port Alberni), and Arlene Vanderniet (SOBC – Grand Forks).

Spirit of Sport Award

Special Olympics BC – Richmond’s **Kelsey Thomson** is a cheerful, compassionate athlete who is always looking to support her teammates. Described by her nominators as an inspiring leader and role model to other athletes, Thomson is the deserving winner of SOBC’s 2017 Spirit of Sport Award.

A hardworking multi-sport

athlete, Thomson loves to try new sports and embraces new challenges with a positive attitude. She always tries her best, and even if she doesn’t win she makes sure to congratulate the other participants. Thomson cares about the wellbeing of everyone in SOBC – Richmond and she goes out of her way to cheer on other athletes, help them develop sport skills, and make them feel better when they are having a bad day.

Thomson is always eager to support SOBC – Richmond. She consistently volunteers at her Local’s functions and in 2017 took part in SOBC’s Athlete Speakers Bureau 1 course so she can promote Special Olympics in her community.

A dedicated athlete, Thomson has won medals in rhythmic gymnastics in SOBC Summer Games and Special Olympics Canada Summer Games. After challenging herself to take up track and field, she won a gold and two silver medals at the 2013 SOBC Summer Games and competed in the 2014 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games.

Thomson has a great relationship with her coaches and she appreciates their advice and direction. She is grateful to everyone who helps provide SOBC athletes with life-changing opportunities and she makes an effort to thank coaches and volunteers whenever she can.

Congratulations Kelsey and nominees Connor Charlong (SOBC – Grand Forks), Mathew DeForge (SOBC – Port Alberni), Chelsea Kaake (SOBC – Delta), Raymond Mabayo (SOBC – Vancouver), Kendall Salanski (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), and Wally Trotter (SOBC – Victoria). ○

Canada Winter Games and has served as a coach and mission staff member at Provincial Games. Over his time with Special Olympics, he has coached at numerous regional competitions and volunteered as a first aid attendant at many SOBC events.

“Bill is very approachable and easy to talk to. He treats all people with respect and is very calm in all situations even if there is a need for discipline. He honestly cares! One of his fellow coaches commented that Bill knows his curling so well and is so kind and caring that he is a natural coach,” his nominators wrote.

An inspiring and inclusive coach, Scobbie finds ways to ensure all athletes in his Local can participate in sport. This has included researching techniques for delivering a curling stone from a wheelchair, building a wheelchair ramp so athletes can access bocce courts, and supporting athletes who need extra care at Games.

Scobbie is dedicated to developing his skills and has completed many coaching training courses so he can provide SOBC athletes with the best possible experiences. Scobbie is generous with his time and knowledge, and is a valued mentor to other SOBC – Port Alberni coaches.

Congratulations to Bill and nominees Larry Cagna (SOBC – Comox Valley), Michael Donoghue (SOBC – Vancouver), Meghan Jamieson (SOBC – Richmond), Aaron Leontowich (SOBC – Kamloops), Ricky Long (SOBC – Victoria), Ellen Martz (SOBC – Quesnel), Misty Pagliaro (SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook), and Derek Taylor (SOBC – Grand Forks).

President’s Award

A Special Olympics BC – Kelowna volunteer of more than 20 years, **Joan Gerhardt** has played a critical role in raising funds and awareness for Special Olympics in her community. Gerhardt is an inspiring leader who is the driving force behind her Local’s most important fundraising event, and she is the deserving winner of SOBC’s 2017 President’s Award.

In 2005, Gerhardt took on the task of organizing SOBC – Kelowna’s annual golf fundraiser. More than 10 years later, Gerhardt has developed the tournament into a highly effective fundraising event that provides opportunities for community business leaders to support SOBC – Kelowna and highlights the personalities and achievements of the Local’s athletes. Gerhardt’s nominators say the tournament is the “feel-good Special Olympics-focused event of the year for our community and athletes,” and it raises funds that play an important role in supporting the Local’s empowering programs.

Along with her involvement in the golf tournament, Gerhardt has served as Treasurer with SOBC – Kelowna and has been coaching with the Local for more than 20 years. As coaches, Gerhardt and her husband Wulf have built a thriving cross country skiing program and have developed a close relationship with Telemark Nordic Club that has proved beneficial to athletes. The couple has also started up a bocce program with SOBC – Kelowna that has become very popular with the Local’s athletes.

Empowerment through athlete leadership

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. At the Special Olympics BC Athlete Leadership Conference in April, 68 amazing athletes from 30 communities came together in Richmond to share their skills, valuable perspectives, and inspiring stories.

Thirty-seven 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.

"Special Olympics is somewhere I can feel accepted and not out of place. I love being part of a team, competing, and winning medals. It makes me feel proud of what I have accomplished," SOBC – Langley athlete Julia Wood said in her Athlete Speakers Bureau 1 speech.

The Governance track teaches skills to help athletes be part of leadership groups, and gives athletes opportunities to share their valuable perspectives on key issues facing Special Olympics. This year's Governance group included a great mix of athletes who are currently serving on Athlete Councils



Athlete Speakers Bureau 1 group at the Athlete Leadership Conference in April.

and/or as Athlete Representative on their Local Committee, and athletes who are new to the practice, from Locals looking to build athlete leadership. All brought excellent ideas and opinions to the table for valuable conversations in the session.



Nelson athlete Nick Toner in Athlete Speakers Bureau 2.

A new Health Advocates session was added to Special Olympics BC's Athlete Leadership course offerings this year. Thirteen athletes from seven Regions came together to discuss health and wellness topics and look at how they can become advocates for healthy living in their community.

Health Heroes training is another recent addition to SOBC's Athlete Leadership training, first introduced in 2016, presented with the support of Golisano Foundation Special Olympics Healthy Communities grant funding. This year's participants learned about Healthy Athletes screenings and how they can help other athletes in their communities access these important opportunities. Participants left the session as certified Healthy Athletes Screenings Health Heroes who can spread the word at home and help change the game for athlete health.

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, please contact Michelle Cruickshank at mcruickshank@specialolympics.bc.ca or 250-208-5402. ○

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.

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.

In 2017 the council welcomed three new Regional Coordinators: Marie-Helene Labonte for Region 1 (Kootenays), Karen Theriault for Region 4 (Burnaby-Delta-Richmond), and Tina Giesbrecht for Region 7 (northwest B.C.).

Labonte kindly stepped into the Region 1 role after Sheila Hawton retired following many years of dedicated efforts to benefit Special Olympics athletes and programs and the movement. Hawton generously gave her time to SOBC in many roles, including Local Coordinator for SOBC – Trail, as a Chef de Mission for Region 1 teams at SOBC Games, and as mission staff for provincial teams at Special Olympics Canada Games.

Labonte brings excellent experience from her years as SOBC – Golden's Local Coordinator and Program Coordinator as well as a coach of several sports. Labonte has been an active participant in Regional Conferences and Regional teams to Provincial Games, and she has been a driving force in expanding SOBC – Golden's programming, promoting Special Olympics in her community, and recruiting volunteers.

The 2013 winner of the SOBC President's Award and SOC Jim Thompson Award, Theriault brings many years of Special Olympics experience and knowledge both as a parent and as a dedicated volunteer in a wide range of roles, including SOBC – Surrey Local Coordinator and many Local Committee positions. Now a North Delta resident, Theriault is known as a well-respected, hardworking, and dedicated leader with great abilities to build partnerships.

Theriault is taking over the Region 4 role after the departure of Natalie D'Angelo. In her year in the position, D'Angelo helped move the organization forward with her great insights in community development, volunteer management, and Athlete Leadership programs.

In Region 7, Giesbrecht kindly stepped into the Regional Coordinator role after the retirement of Nicole Zacharias. Giesbrecht has given her time to benefit Special Olympics

athletes and programs through many roles to date, including SOBC – Burns Lake Local Coordinator, coach of several sports, and coach and mission staff for several Special Olympics provincial and national teams. She and Theriault both excelled as first-time Chefs de Mission for their Regional teams at the 2017 SOBC Summer Games in Kamloops.

Zacharias stepped down from the Leadership Council after several years of sharing great insights from her Region and her wide range of experience. Zacharias has generously given her time to SOBC in an array of roles ranging from SOBC – Smithers Local Coordinator to coaching athletics, snowshoeing, and swimming.

Sincere thanks to all of the Leadership Council members who take so much time and care to help strengthen Special Olympics BC and support all athletes, coaches, and volunteers! ○

SOBC Leadership Council

Leadership Chair: Patty Wheeldon

Regional Coordinators:

Marie-Helene Labonte (Region 1)

Sheila Paynter (Region 2)

Donna Bilous (Region 3)

Karen Theriault (Region 4)

Darren Inouye (Region 5)

Jean Tetarenko (Region 6)

Tina Giesbrecht (Region 7)

Tracy Heartt (Region 8)

Members:

Deanna Levchuk

Vincent Li

James Sutherland

Matthew Williams

Park'N Fly Vancouver helps Special Olympics athletes reach new heights

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 Special Olympics 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 happily

Regional Qualifiers creating competitive thrills

We're pumped for the 2017-18 season of winter-sport **Regional Qualifiers**, where SOBC athletes throughout the province will experience the excitement of competing to qualify for the 2019 Special Olympics BC Winter Games.

In the 2019 Provincial Games, athletes will compete for the opportunity to advance to the 2020 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games in Thunder Bay, Ontario, which will be the qualifier for the 2021 Special Olympics World Winter Games.

For SOBC athletes, it all starts right here with the Regional Qualifiers. In the 2017-18 season, it's especially exciting to see 5-pin bowling making its debut in the winter-sport competition cycle. This season Regional Qualifiers are being held in 5-pin bowling, alpine skiing, cross country skiing, curling, figure skating, floor hockey, snowshoeing, and speed skating.

Competitions will be posted on the SOBC website once they are confirmed and sanctioned. Find the latest info at specialolympics.bc.ca/2017-18-regional-qualifiers.

If you have any questions, please contact SOBC's Joanie Hayes by email at jhayes@specialolympics.bc.ca or by phone at 604-616-1342 / 1-888-854-2276 toll-free. ○

Champions of respect ending the R-word

On and around March 1, Special Olympics champions throughout the province and around the world spoke out in support of the ninth annual **Spread the Word to End the Word** awareness day. Champions of inclusion and dignity for individuals with intellectual disabilities use this inspiring campaign and the international awareness day to help stop the hurtful use of the R-word and rally people to pledge respect at r-word.org.

In addition to the grassroots events happening year-round in schools and

the third consecutive year. The campaign had the support of all 11 Abbotsford high schools, UFV, and the City of Abbotsford.

Abbotsford Mayor Henry Braun and UFV President Dr. Mark Evered were the first to sign the forms pledging their support to eliminate the derogatory use of the R-word and promote the acceptance and inclusion of people with intellectual



University of the Fraser Valley President Dr. Mark Evered, SOBC – Abbotsford coach Roshan Gosal, and local volunteers calling for an end to the hurtful use of the R-word.

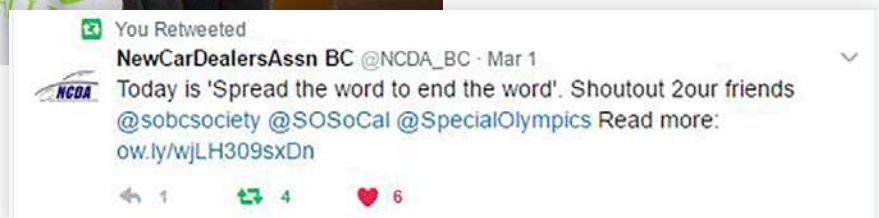
communities throughout the province, SOBC and our supporters share messages of respect and understanding through social media on and around the Spread the Word to End the Word awareness day, reaching thousands of followers. Many celebrities, SOBC sponsors, sport organizations, and individuals help spread the word through posts and shares.

In Abbotsford, University of the Fraser Valley student Roshan Gosal, with the help of more than 70 student volunteers and numerous Special Olympics athletes, initiated the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign throughout the community for

disabilities. The campaign had a presence all over Abbotsford in the spring, including at UFV on April 4 and 6 sponsored by a club Gosal founded called Friends of Special Olympics.

Gosal, who serves as SOBC – Abbotsford's Community Outreach – Youth Coordinator and has been a coach and volunteer for five years, also appeared on Global TV with athlete Paige Norton and on Country 107.1 radio to call for respect and an end to the hurtful use of the R-word.

Gosal's goal is to spread this awareness campaign throughout B.C., hoping to see each school embrace this message of inclusiveness.





He recently received the YMCA Power of Peace Youth Award for his work. To date, more than 6,000 pledges of respect have been collected in Abbotsford alone.

Thanks to our friends at Vancouver Whitecaps FC, SOBC also had the opportunity to invite pledges of respect with awareness booths at their season opener on March 5.

In June, the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign was featured in three Victoria schools thanks to Rocky and Danielle Vitale, LPHS Collegiate Prep Academy softball and baseball players, and Special Olympics BC – Victoria athletes. Turning the spotlight on respect and inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities with stirring presentations at Torquay Elementary, Gordon Head Middle School, and Lambrick Park Secondary School, they attracted more than 1,000 pledges of respect.

The presentations were accompanied by



Lambrick Park Secondary School students pledging to show respect to everyone.

speeches by SOBC – Victoria athletes Michael Langridge and Sheenagh Morrison, who were “crazy great,” LPHS Academy Director Rocky Vitale wrote in an email.

Across Canada, supporters pledged to end the R-word and joined *motionball* in saying there’s #NoGoodWay to use the R-word. *motionball* has joined the movement with their #NoGoodWay campaign and many champions across Canada took up the call in 2017.

Support for that campaign included a widely shared video by Toronto singer Madison Tevlin, and another popular video with sports and pop culture star and *motionball* champion Cabbie Richards with athletes from the Toronto Raptors, Maple Leafs, and Blue Jays.

Spread the Word to End the Word is making a difference: On March 1, Special Olympics International released studies showing that a lot of progress has been made over the last nine years in promoting inclusion for all and changing attitudes and perceptions about people with intellectual disabilities. Teens, specifically, are standing up for inclusion and respect for all at school and in their communities. However, it appears that adults are aware of the R-word but are not yet as active in promoting inclusive behaviors.

Although use of the R-word still exists and more acts of inclusion need to be encouraged, today teens are having more connections with people with intellectual disabilities in school and in their neighborhoods, breaking down stereotypes and perceptions that exist for people with disabilities.

Sincere thanks to everyone helping to raise awareness and promote respect with the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign!

Learn more at r-word.org

SOBC project helps break down barriers and build inclusive communities

Thanks to funding support provided by the federal and provincial government through viaSport British Columbia, Special Olympics BC is embarking on an exciting new **Inclusive Communities Project** which aims to overcome barriers to SOBC athlete participation in diverse communities and welcome more young athletes to Special Olympics programs.

Working in the communities of Surrey and Richmond, this pilot project will help SOBC identify and reduce obstacles to participation in Special Olympics programs across ethnic groups, helping to foster inclusion in all SOBC communities across the province.

The SOBC Inclusive Communities Project will help provide information about SOBC to non-English speaking families and caregivers by developing accessible, translated materials in five languages: Hindi, Punjabi, Tagalog, Simplified Chinese, and Traditional Chinese.

We are also looking for individuals who are fluent in one or more of these languages and who would be willing to help reach out to new families or to review translated material. If you would like to help with this initiative, please email dhowe@specialolympics.bc.ca.

SOBC will also host Family Information Days and Try-It Days in these communities to give families in these areas opportunities to learn more about Special Olympics and try new sports and activities.

We are grateful to the provincial and federal governments and viaSport for supporting this important project and helping SOBC create inclusive communities across the province. ○



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 Wheaton Precious Metals 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.

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 third straight year, in 2017 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.

Quarterback **Travis Lulay**, who has been an incredible champion of Special Olympics throughout his years in B.C. and beyond, has been joined by slotback **Manny Arceneaux** and wide receiver **Marco Iannuzzi** (who retired



Marco Iannuzzi of the BC Lions celebrates with SOBC Treasurer Colin Yakashiro after taking part in the 2017 Polar Plunge for SOBC.

at the end of the 2017 season) in generously supporting Special Olympics with participation in events and awareness-raising on social media. In 2017, the trio of Lions bravely took the plunge into the icy waters of English Bay at the Vancouver Polar Plunge for Special Olympics BC.



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

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.

In 2017, the Whitecaps generously welcomed SOBC as the featured charity at their season opener in March, providing a high-profile opportunity to raise awareness about Special Olympics and invite pledges of respect in the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign.

Thanks to the Whitecaps and Major League Soccer (MLS), SOBC was also invited to be part of the 2017 MLS WORKS ESPN Special Olympics Unified Sports All-Star Soccer Match. SOBC – Abbotsford soccer player Bradly Barnett and coach Roshan Gosal were part of the exciting experiences in Chicago July 31 to August 2. MLS WORKS and ESPN host this



SOBC – Abbotsford coach Roshan Gosal (left) and athlete Bradly Barnett (right) were part of the 2017 MLS WORKS ESPN Special Olympics All-Star Match experience with Whitecaps FC Residency midfielder Jonas Hakkinen.

program and invited 44 delegates this year representing all 22 MLS clubs, and SOBC – Abbotsford midfielder Barnett hit the field alongside Whitecaps FC Residency

midfielder Jonas Hakkinen in the East vs. West matchup.

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 from the hockey world that helped establish our movement in Canada. They remain active supporters of the movement today, giving everything from their time at events to auction donations and support on social media.

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! ○

motionball events full of inspiration, inclusion, and successful fundraising



The 2017 *motionball* Marathon of Sport Vancouver, Marathon of Sport Kelowna, and CrossFit 24 events in B.C. were fun and memorable days full of laughter, joy, and inspiration that helped raise funds to support Special Olympics programs across the country.

motionball Marathon of Sport Vancouver presented by Vega took



CF/24 at Raincity Athletics.

and 40 Special Olympics athletes came together at City Park for a day of friendly competition and camaraderie at Marathon of Sport Kelowna presented by Interior Savings Credit Union.

These two inspiring events raised nearly \$230,000 for the Special Olympics Canada Foundation, helping provide life-changing sport and competition opportunities for athletes with intellectual disabilities nationwide.

On October 21, participants in CrossFit gyms across Canada helped make a difference by conquering *motionball*'s CrossFit 24 challenge. Working in teams of three to six, CrossFitters completed one high-intensity workout every hour for six, 12, or 24 hours

to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics. In 2017, more than 700 participants in 26 gyms nationwide took part, raising over \$116,000 for Special Olympics programs across Canada. In B.C., Raincity Athletics stepped up to the challenge, completing 12 workouts in 12 hours and raising over \$5,900.

motionball is a not-for-profit whose

mandate is to introduce the next generation of supporters, sponsors, and volunteers to the Special Olympics movement through integrated sporting and social events. Since inception in 2002, *motionball* has donated over \$7.5 million to the Special

Olympics Canada Foundation.

We are so grateful to *motionball* for their ongoing support, as well as the volunteer organizers for their countless hours logged to make these days possible, and all participants and athletes who come out to support these important and inspiring events. ○



Marathon of Sport Vancouver.

place on June 10 at EA Sports complex in Burnaby, and saw 24 teams of young professionals joined by 33 local SOBC athletes for an amazing day of sport, inclusion, and fun. In Kelowna, September 23 was a memorable day of laughter and friendship as 28 teams



Marathon of Sport Kelowna.

Pristripe Productions

Special Olympics Team Canada shone in Austria

After years of training and competition to reach the **2017 Special Olympics World Winter Games**, the members of Team Canada from British Columbia truly delivered in Austria March 14 to 24.

Special Olympics Team Canada's 16 athletes, eight coaches, and one mission staff member from B.C. did their province proud as they were well prepared to compete with skill and determination on the world stage. Competing in alpine skiing, cross country skiing, figure skating, snowshoeing, and speed skating, all of the B.C. athletes medalled, collectively earning 11 gold, 10 silver, and five bronze.

With the help of their coaches and supporters in their year-round Special Olympics programs at home, the members of Team Canada were very well prepared to compete and shine on the world stage. Their achievements at these World Games mark the culmination of an exciting four-year journey, as the B.C. athletes progressed through Regional Qualifiers in 2014, the 2015 Special Olympics BC Winter Games, and the 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games to earn the opportunity to compete in Austria.

"We are very proud of this province's members of Special Olympics Team Canada 2017. They trained so hard to be able to perform at their best on the world stage, and they showed such inspiring dedication, sportsmanship, and skill," said Lois McNary, Special Olympics BC Vice President, Sport.

SOBC – Victoria's Michael Langridge earned two gold medals in his two alpine ski races at his first-ever World Games. "I couldn't believe it," he told the Victoria News.



SOBC coach Elizabeth Roman and figure skater Darlene Jakubowski react to Jakubowski's golden performance in her singles freeskate.

SOBC – Nanaimo cross country skier Dennis Lynch, competing in his first World Games after 30 years as a Special Olympics athlete, was proud to win silver in the 1KM relay event as well as finishing fourth in the 1K freestyle and 2.5K classic. "Lynch said he was 'a little bit nervous' going into the race and was happy and proud when he crossed the finish line second," NanaimoNewsNOW reported.

Several of the team members from B.C. marked major milestones in World Games

competition, including SOBC – Surrey figure skater Marc Theriault taking the ice in his eighth World Games, and alpine skier Erin Thom of SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook and cross country skier Tracey Melesko of SOBC – Kelowna racing in their fifth World Games.

"This one was more special," Melesko told Global Okanagan. "I was just more relaxed, I think I did really well."

SOBC – Fort St. John figure skater Darlene Jakubowski struck gold in Level 6 Singles in her



SOBC – Victoria's Michael Langridge celebrates with his two World Games gold medals.



SOBC – Abbotsford's Paige Norton gave her all on the ice in Graz.



SOBC – Kelowna's Francis Stanley charging through the Ramsau cross country course.



SOBC – Kelowna's Tony Wilkinson sprinting for the finish line in Ramsau.

third World Games. "It feels good," she told the Alaska Highway News. "I landed my axel. I got my one thing done. I did it in the practice, it wasn't as I planned. Then I did it in the program and I landed it clean."

For the first-time World Games competitors, the experience was very special too. "I'm very proud of myself," SOBC – Kelowna snowshoer Tony Wilkinson told Global Okanagan. "I worked so hard for this."

Cross country skier Justin Sigal of SOBC – Vernon told the Vernon Morning Star: "The

competition was pretty tough. In the races where I won medals, it was pretty fun. I felt like I was pushing myself to the limit. It was such a great experience."

Overall, the competitors from B.C. made everyone proud and relished the experience.

"It makes you really proud to see them come and give their all," coach Ray Huson of SOBC – Penticton told the Penticton Western News. "They just gave everything. It was amazing to watch. Really gratifying."

"This truly was a great experience and I'll

cherish it forever," SOBC – Surrey alpine skier Susan Wang said. "I loved competing with people from all over the world."

SOBC – Langley speed skater Matthew Williams raced to silver in his 1000M event and captured a fourth-place finish in the 500M.

"It means a lot to me, and I hope it inspires others to go out and realize that they fulfill their dream too," he told Breakfast Television Vancouver.

Congratulations to all the members of Team Canada! ○

Results for SOBC's Team Canada members

Alpine skiing

Erin Thom, SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook

Years with SO: 25

2017 World Games results:

Super G: silver

Giant Slalom: silver

Jonathan Robins,

SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook

Years with SO: 17

2017 World Games results:

Giant Slalom: bronze

Slalom: bronze

Katherine St. Amand,

SOBC – Ridge Meadows

Years with SO: 10

2017 World Games results:

Giant Slalom: sixth

Slalom: silver

Michael Langridge,

SOBC – Victoria

Years with SO: 15

2017 World Games results

Super G: gold

Giant Slalom: gold

Roxana Podrasky,

SOBC – Kimberley/Cranbrook

Years with SO: 7

2017 World Games results:

Giant Slalom: silver

Slalom: gold

Susan Wang, SOBC – Surrey

Years with SO: 5

2017 World Games results:

Super G: bronze

Giant Slalom: 4th

Head Coach: Randy Scott,

SOBC – North Shore

Years with SO: 27

Quote: Scott's favourite thing about being involved with Special Olympics is "the athletes. What else can be said! They are the best, and they make the rest of us better people!"

Coach: Mark Schnurr, SOBC – Coquitlam

Years with SO: 27

Quote: "Every day with Special Olympics athletes is a great one."

Cross-country skiing

Dennis Lynch, SOBC – Nanaimo

Years with SO: 29

2017 World Games results:

1km freestyle: 4th

4x1km relay: silver

2.5km classic: 4th

Francis Stanley, SOBC – Kelowna

Years with SO: 7

2017 World Games results:

2.5km classic: gold

10km freestyle: 6th

4x1km relay: 7th with Team Canada men's team

Justin Sigal, SOBC – Vernon

Years with SO: 6

2017 World Games results:

5km classic: silver

2.5km classic: bronze

4x1km relay: 7th

Tracey Melesko, SOBC – Kelowna

Years with SO: 27

2017 World Games results:

5km classic: gold

4x1km relay: gold

2.5km classic: bronze

Coach: Ray Huson, SOBC – Penticton

Years with SO: 22

Fun fact: The 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games were Huson's fourth National Games appearance in three sports – he was also a Team BC coach for snowshoeing in 2008, cross country skiing in 2012, and bocce in 2014; he is also part of the Team BC 2018 Training Squad as a bocce coach.

Coach/wax technician: Garth Vickers, SOBC – Kelowna

Years with SO: 18

Fun fact: An outstanding coach and mentor, Vickers is the 2016 winner of

the SOBC Howard Carter Award and Special Olympics Canada Male Coach of the Year award.

Figure skating

Alexander Pang, SOBC – Vancouver

Years with SO: 8

2017 World Games results:

Ice Dancing Level 3: gold

Singles Level 5: silver

Darlene Jakubowski,

SOBC – Fort St. John

Years with SO:

2017 World Games results:

Singles Level 6: gold

Marc Theriault, SOBC – Surrey

Years with SO: 21

2017 World Games results:

Singles Level 6: gold

Coach: Elizabeth Roman,

SOBC – Surrey

Years with SO: 20

Fun fact: Roman coached figure skating teams to four Special Olympics Canada Winter Games and two previous Special Olympics World Games.

Snowshoeing

Tony Wilkinson, SOBC – Kelowna

Years with SO: 13

2017 World Games results:

100m: silver

200m: 5th

4x100m relay: gold

Coach: Maureen Hunter,

SOBC – Campbell River

Years with SO: 32

Fun fact: Hunter served as a Special Olympics Team Canada coach at four previous World Games – Toronto/Collingwood 1997, Dublin 2003, Nagano 2005, and the Republic of Korea 2013. In 2008, Hunter and her husband Harvey were inducted into the Special Olympics BC Hall of Fame as Local Builders.

Coach: David Wilkinson,
SOBC – Kelowna

Years with SO: 11

Fun fact: Wilkinson's motto is, "Do your best – but have fun." The 2016 Special Olympics Canada Games were his first National Games experience. He is also part of the Team BC 2018 Training Squad as a bocce coach.

Speed skating

Matthew Williams, SOBC – Langley

Years with SO: 11

2017 World Games results:

1000m: silver

500m: fourth

Paige Norton, SOBC – Abbotsford

Years with SO: 13

2017 World Games results:

1000m: gold

500m: silver

Head Coach: Donna Bilous, SOBC Region 3 Coordinator, Abbotsford
Years with SO: 13

Quote: "In 2009 at the World Winter Games in Boise, I was so honoured to be selected Head Coach for Team Canada and the wonderful group of athletes I worked with, and I was so proud to watch my daughter [Paige Norton] receive Canada's first gold medal."

Mission staff

Darren Inouye, SOBC Region 5 Coordinator

Years with SO: 13

Quote: "Special Olympics has given me much more than I could ever give back, the quality of people and the adventures we go on have produced some of the best moments in life, truly stories of a lifetime." The 2017 Games were Inouye's first World Games and he was tremendously excited to support the athletes' and coaches' journeys to Austria.

Dueck Auto Group Car Shows drive strong support for SOBC

Each summer, **Dueck Auto Group** hosts a series of Car Shows to benefit Special Olympics BC, and 2017 was another amazing year. The Dueck Richmond Father's Day Pancake Breakfast Show and Shine kicked off this year's series on June 18. Partnering with the Riverside Corvette Club, this show hosted 76 vehicles, although the rain did hinder registration so fingers are crossed for sunshine next year! On July 9, the show hosted by Dueck Downtown boasted over 80 registrations in just its fifth year running! This event is expected to get stronger and stronger. Wrapping up the series in style on August 6, the Dueck on Marine Custom & Classic Car Show

hosted more than 200 vehicles.

The shows were tons of fun with music, great vehicles, barbecues, and opportunities to meet Special Olympic BC athletes who helped with raffle ticket sales and presenting awards. With this partnership, Dueck was proud to raise nearly \$5,000 for Special Olympics BC! Dueck says they can't wait to do it again in 2018. ○

Dueck Auto Group

SOBC – Vancouver athletes Mathew Schmiing, Alex Pang, and Miranda Orth helped present Dueck Car Show awards.



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. ○



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. The **Howard G. Carter Memorial Fund**, the **John M. Sims Fund**, the **Gordon Walker Memorial Fund**, the **Marge McNary Memorial Fund**, all provide important support for Special Olympics BC and will continue to do so 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 through specialolympics.bc.ca

- **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 ○

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 2017 AGM, all of our Directors were re-elected for the 2017-18 term.

Randy Smallwood of Wheaton Precious Metals has been re-elected as Board Chair, and Ted Hirst of Canaccord Genuity as Vice Chair. Pamela Keith of Dueck Auto Group is Past Chair, and Money Talks host Michael Campbell and Colin Yakashiro of Grant Thornton serve as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

Special Olympics BC welcomes back Directors Brent Bergeron, Michael Coyle, Grenville Finch-Noyes, Peter C. Kalbfleisch, Vincent Li, Richard J. Lucy, Colin MacKinnon, Eamonn Percy, Murray Shapiro and Patty Wheeldon.

Our sincere thanks to all of the members of the Board of Directors who so generously share their time and expertise to strengthen our movement! ○

Chair: Randy Smallwood
Past Chair: Pamela Keith
Vice Chair: Ted Hirst
Secretary: Michael Campbell
Treasurer: Colin Yakashiro
Directors:
Brent Bergeron
Michael Coyle
Grenville Finch-Noyes
Peter C. Kalbfleisch
Vincent Li
Richard J. Lucy
Colin MacKinnon
Eamonn Percy
Murray Shapiro
Patty Wheeldon



**Special
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British Columbia**

Inspiration and fundraising success with Staples Canada

The **Staples Canada Give a Toonie Share a Dream** campaign brought memorable moments and fundraising success in 2017, as stores across B.C. found great support from their communities and inspiration from local Special Olympics athletes.

Now in its 17th year, the Give a Toonie Share a Dream campaign raises funds and awareness to help make dreams come true for Special Olympics athletes. During this national campaign, Special Olympics athletes and volunteers join Staples staff in stores to invite customers to donate at the till or online. The 2017 campaign, which took place from May 6 to June 4, raised more than \$628,000 across Canada.

Darcy Smith, General Manager of Maple Ridge Staples, says their team is a “competitive lot.” So when he challenged them to raise

as much as they could for Special Olympics – spurred on by a little friendly competition with the Langley store down the road – “they made it happen.”

Maple Ridge was the top fundraising store in B.C. and had the second-highest total of dollars raised in Canada. Smith says they enjoy supporting Special Olympics because “we see all the good work they do and it gives a huge morale boost to the team.”

In Duncan, Staples employee and SOBC athlete Debbie McPheators enjoyed being part of the coffee and donut days organized by staff as part of the campaign.

“I liked helping customers and giving them coffee and being there to help out,” McPheators said. She recently brought the gold and silver medals she won in swimming at the 2017 Special Olympics BC Summer

Games into the store to show her colleagues.

In addition to the successful Give a Toonie Share a Dream campaign, the annual **Staples Canada/Special Olympics BC Softball Tournament** in July saw 13 Special Olympics BC athletes join six teams of Staples employees for a day of friendly competition, inclusion, and sportsmanship. SOBC – Delta athlete Nick Johnston said he really enjoyed being part of the tournament, saying “it was a lot of fun!”

We are so grateful to Staples Canada staff and customers for their support of Special Olympics through the Give a Toonie Share a Dream campaign and annual softball tournament. And our sincere thanks go out to all the athletes and volunteers across the province who gave their time and energy to make the campaign a success for Special Olympics! ○



Kelowna athlete Will Richardson and coaches Dennis Richardson and Lorena Mead supporting the campaign at their local Staples.



SOBC – Ridge Meadows athlete Darren Fisher presenting store Charity Captain Ruth Kauth with a plaque celebrating their fundraising achievement.



Kimberley/Cranbrook athletes Kendall Salanski and Erin Thom were joined by MLA Tom Shypitka at their local Staples store, where they asked for donations to help break them out of jail.

STAPLES
IT'S PRO TIME™

Government of B.C. support helps SOBC athletes thrive



SOBC – Coquitlam athletes Devon Marsland-Anderson, Nathan McManamna, and Ariel Taylor visited MLA Selina Robinson to share their stories and SOBC’s appreciation for the Government of B.C.’s support.



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.

Thanks to support from the **Government of B.C.**, Special Olympics BC is providing fun, safe, and supportive places for athletes of all ages to learn vital skills in a warm and welcoming environment.

“Special Olympics BC’s Active Start program fills a void in our son’s life,” says youth program parent James Sutherland. “He loves playing with the equipment, and it is gratifying to see the confidence he is gaining both physically and mentally as he achieves goals and does things he couldn’t do before.”

The Government of B.C.’s longtime support has allowed SOBC to offer more life-changing experiences and programs to children and adults with intellectual disabilities across the province. Financially, between the government’s funding of sport and funds received through Community Gaming Grants, Special Olympics BC received more than \$361,000 in 2017. 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.

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.

We are so grateful to the Government of B.C. for being a vital supporter of our work and helping Special Olympics BC make a difference to athletes across the province. If you have a moment, please thank your local MLA for this support as it truly makes a difference. ○

WOLSELEY

Wolseley Canada has been a valued partner of Special Olympics since 2004. As the official sponsor of the Special Olympics Canada Draft an Athlete national program, Wolseley helps athletes experience the joy of competing in National and World Games. We are grateful to Wolseley for continuing their support of Special Olympics athletes across the country. ○

Postmedia helps spread the word about Special Olympics

Local daily news media **The Province** and **Vancouver Sun** have been proud supporters of Special Olympics BC for more than 20 years. They've donated media space to our print advertising campaigns to create major awareness of our initiatives throughout B.C., and conveyed the exceptional stories of our athletes through their ongoing editorial support.



The Province



Postmedia and The Province have been closely involved in promoting our marquee events, including the New Car Dealers / Special Olympics BC Auction that thrives on the generosity of New Car Dealers throughout B.C., as well as the Goldcorp Invitational Golf Tournament, which brings significant support from the mining and banking sectors.

Postmedia is also an important media partner for the Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Wheaton Precious Metals, providing significant awareness for this key fundraising event, and offers us a way to publically express gratitude to all our donors, partners, and event participants. Postmedia employees also volunteer their personal time to Special Olympics BC initiatives by providing committee support and photography services at many SOBC events.

We are very grateful to Postmedia for spreading the word about Special Olympics BC, and for their ongoing support of important events and initiatives across the province. ○

JYSK Canada bringing Special Olympics support home

Homeware retailer **JYSK** has been a great partner of Special Olympics since 2004. In 2017, JYSK has supported our athletes by raising \$100,000 for Special Olympics Canada through select product sales and Draft an Athlete. SOBC was grateful to be invited to two new store openings in B.C. this year, and we thank JYSK for their ongoing commitment to Special Olympics! ○



SOBC – Coquitlam athlete Ariel Taylor helped celebrate the opening of a new JYSK store in Coquitlam with local Mayor Richard Stewart, City Councillor Teri Towner, and JYSK Director of Marketing Lynne Williams.



Home Hardware helps enrich lives with Special Olympics



Special Olympics BC is grateful for the generous support of **Home Hardware**, which helps empower more than 4,600 athletes across the province and thousands more across the country to enrich their lives through sport. 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 a National Sponsor of one of SOBC's most successful and prestigious annual fundraising events: the Sports Celebrities Festival presented by Wheaton Precious Metals benefitting SOBC and the Canucks for Kids Fund.

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

Other ways to support SOBC

There are so many ways you can support SOBC to enrich the lives of athletes with intellectual disabilities throughout the province! Here are some ways you can help make a difference:



Donate your Aeroplan miles

Special Olympics BC is fortunate to be part of the Aeroplan Beyond Miles donation program. Frequent-fliers can donate their Aeroplan Miles to support Special Olympics by visiting <https://beyondmiles.aeroplan.com/eng/charity/618>



Donate a Car

You can donate your vehicle to support Special Olympics BC – there is no cost to you, and it's incredibly easy! Working on our behalf, **Donate a Car** takes care of the entire donation process from the pickup to the final sale, and works to maximize the dollar amount passed on to SOBC. To donate your vehicle, please visit donatecar.ca.

SOBC athletes and volunteers honoured locally, nationally, and internationally

We're very pleased to congratulate and celebrate Special Olympics BC members who were recognized in 2017 with awards for their significant contributions to Special Olympics, sport, and community!

- Sincere congratulations to all the winners of the Special Olympics Canada 2017 National Awards, including Female Athlete of the Year **Paige Norton** of SOBC – Abbotsford and Female Coach of the Year **Donna Bilous**, SOBC Region 3 Coordinator and SOBC – Abbotsford coach.
- An inspiring volunteer who is driven to make a difference for Special Olympics athletes, SOBC – Kelowna Local Coordinator **Susan Foisy** received a 2017 Community Sport Hero Award.
- Dedicated SOBC Region 5 Coordinator and Special Olympics Team Canada 2017 mission staff member **Darren Inouye** was the deserving recipient of the 2017 Sport BC Presidents' Award for SOBC.
- SOBC – Vernon Registrar **Marie Morris** was named Vernon's Good Citizen of the Year for her outstanding volunteer efforts in her community.
- A founding member of SOBC – Prince George who volunteers with numerous charitable organizations, **Dee Neukomm** was honoured by the Prince George Community Foundation as one of its 2017 Citizens of the Year.
- A hardworking Special Olympics volunteer of more than 13 years, SOBC – Quesnel Program Coordinator **Rick Prosk** was honoured as Quesnel's Volunteer Citizen of the Year.
- SOBC – Victoria swimming Head Coach and marathon swimmer **Susan Simmons** was recognized as one of the World Open Water Swimming Association's 2017 World's 50 Most Adventurous Open Water Women.
- A cheerful, humble athlete who is passionate about alpine skiing, SOBC – Surrey's **Susan Wang** was celebrated with a Spirit of Canada 150 Award.
- Ten SOBC – Quesnel athletes were inducted into the Quesnel Sports Hall of Fame for their impressive achievements at Provincial and National Games. The amazing athletes who received this honour are **Travis Burt, Dean Cake, Eldon Carter, Danny Dodgson, Cory Melnychuk, Glenda Melnychuk, Alfred Schotel, Jean Scriver, Martin Scriver, and Cherie Swaan.**

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 michaelo@specialolympics.bc.ca. ○



SOBC – Prince George coach Dee Neukomm and her husband Ron at the Prince George Community Foundation's 2017 Citizens of the Year Gala.



SOBC Region 5 Coordinator Darren Inouye (centre) receiving the 2017 Sport BC Presidents' Award for SOBC.



Donna Bilous and Paige Norton with Special Olympics Canada CEO Sharon Bollenbach at the Special Olympics Canada 2017 National Awards.



SOBC – Vernon volunteer Marie Morris with members of her family at the Vernon's Good Citizen of the Year presentation.

Kia Canada becomes an official partner of Special Olympics Canada



SOBC – Vancouver athlete Alex Pang and SOBC Director and Richmond athlete Vincent Li at the 2017 Vancouver International Auto Show.

At the Vancouver International Auto Show in March, **Kia Canada** announced a multi-year pledge of support for Special Olympics Canada. As part of their national partnership, Kia Canada generously donated a branded Kia Sorento SUV (pictured) for Special Olympics BC's use.

"Kia is proud to pledge our support to the organization that does so much to ensure that

Canadians with intellectual disabilities are able to feel part of a community, improve their health and fitness, build their self-esteem and to develop other life skills," said Ted Lancaster, VP & COO, Kia Canada Inc. "Led by myself, Kia will take a hands-on role in helping to raise much-needed funds and awareness for Special Olympics – as well as helping to spread their message of acceptance and inclusion." ◯

Pacific Coastal Airlines helps SOBC athletes soar

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 Smith and Pacific Coastal Airlines.

Pacific Coastal Airlines was founded almost 30 years ago and provides regular



Members of Team BC 2016 hit the skies with Pacific Coastal Airlines.

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. ◯



2017 anniversary celebrations for SOBC Locals

SOBC is so fortunate to have incredible athletes and volunteers in 55 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 2017, the following Locals marked anniversary years:

Happy 35th anniversary – established in 1982

SOBC – Chilliwack
SOBC – Kamloops
SOBC – Penticton
SOBC – Richmond
SOBC – Williams Lake

Happy 30th anniversary – established in 1987

Parksville (now SOBC – Oceanside)

Happy 25th anniversary – established in 1992

SOBC – Revelstoke

Happy 20th anniversary – established in 1997

SOBC – Elk Valley

Happy 15th anniversary – established in 2002

SOBC – Delta

Happy 10th anniversary – established in 2007

SOBC – Princeton
SOBC – Summerland

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! ◯

Special Olympics BC Event Partners

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British Columbia



Special Olympics BC is very proud and fortunate to have sponsors. Without the support of these companies, as well as a host of others, Special Olympics BC would not be able to provide the quality sport programs we do. Please support those who support us!

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