2014 Polar Plunge Team Toolkit

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What is the Polar Plunge?

It's when thousands of people around Oregon run into icy cold water to raise money for Special Olympics Oregon. As a plunger you register to participate in one of the five plunges around the state. Maybe you join a team. Maybe not. Then you raise a minimum of $50 in pledges from friends, family, co-workers, Facebook friends, etc (the more you raise, the bigger your incentive prizes). Then on plunge day you run or jump into the water and get out as fast as you can. You decide how far you want to go in. It's all done for fun and to raise money for a great cause.

Polar Plunge Oregon is a Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) event and began in 2007 when Bend Police Department and Deschutes County Sheriff’s Office decided to take the Plunge for Special Olympics Oregon.

LETR is the largest grassroots fundraising effort for Special Olympics Oregon. More than 70 law enforcement agencies throughout the state raise money and awareness year round for the athletes of Special Olympics Oregon.

Polar Plunge Teams

Why put together a team?

This is a great opportunity to bond with family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers while showing your support to Special Olympics Oregon. It’s cold enough, and you are bold enough!

What is a Team Captain?

A team captain serves as a liaison between the plunge and the team members. You will help keep your team motivated and excited for the plunge!

The Role of a Team Captain:

- Build a team
- Recruit a co-captain
- Set specific goals regarding recruitment and fundraising
- Share fundraising tools with teammates
- Assist in organizing and delegating team fundraising events
- Attend Team Captain lunches
- Help create a great team costume
- Stay connected with the team by:
  - Sending regular emails to update members of team progress, fundraisers, etc.
  - Phone calls
  - Meetings

*How to Be a Successful Team Captain:*

- Recruit
  - Set very specific goals
    - Set a goal for number of team members
    - Set a goal for total amount of money
    - Aim high!
- Motivate
  - Show your enthusiasm for the event!
  - Stay in contact with your teammates
- Educate
  - Let your donors & teammates know that you are fulfilling a very important mission
  - Learn about Special Olympics Oregon

*Team Fundraising Resources*

*Resources*

We have a number of resources at Special Olympics Oregon that we’d love to share with teams. Please contact Lindsey Warner at (503) 248-0600 or lwarner@soor.org if you are interested in using any of the resources below:

- PB (life size Polar Bear Mascot)
- Table Top Prize Wheel
- SOOR Athlete Speakers
- Polar Bear icons
- Polar Plunge posters
- Polar Plunge flyers

*What do your donations support?*

- $50-2 Basketballs
- $250-Snowboard/Skiing rental equipment for 10 athletes for 1 day
- $500-Supports 1 athlete all year (3 seasons)
- $1000-Provides equipment and uniforms for an entire softball team
- $2500-Provides 250 uniforms for athletic competitions
Fundraising Event Ideas

Organize and hold fundraisers to bring in the donations!

- **Personal Assistant for a day** Offer to run errands, babysit, organize, clean a fridge, dog-sit, etc for a donation.
- **Bake Sale** Bring baked goods into workplace and sell. All money goes to your Polar Plunge.
- **Chili/Pie/BBQ Cook Off** Charge a small entrance fee, then small tasting fee. Invite friends over to watch a sporting event.
- **Sports Bracket or Pools** Organize weekend game brackets for NFL/College Football. Charge a fee, with a split of proceeds to the winner.
- **Charity Game Night** Organize a game night. Charge a small entrance fee, all money goes to your Polar Plunge.
- **Potluck lunch at work** Have co-workers bring a dish into work, and everyone can donate money for the food instead of eating out or bringing lunch.
- **Pancake Breakfast at Work** Cook breakfast at work and sell it.
- **Christmas Light set up and/or removal** Offer to help set up or remove lights for donations.
- **Gift Wrapping** Offer to wrap gifts in exchange for a donation to your Plunge.
- **Used Book Sale** Ask people to donate their used books, and sell them at work.
- **50/50 Trivia Night**-organize a trivia night at your house, with a small buy-in. Split proceeds with winner.
- **Change Collection**-Set up a collection jar at your workplace or ask friends for spare change.
- **Pop Can Drive** Reach out to neighbors for pop cans.
- **Yard Sale** Clean out your house and sell what you no longer need
- **Guess Jar** Fill a clear jar with candy, and people pay a small fee to guess how many pieces are in the jar. Proceeds split and go to your Polar Plunge.
- **Bar/Restaurant Night**- Get a local bar or restaurant to donate proceeds to your Polar Plunge efforts. Examples: Chipotle, Burgerville, etc.

How to Raise $500 in 7 days!

- **DAY 1**: Start by sponsoring yourself for $25
- **DAY 2**: Ask 3 family members to sponsor you for $25
- **DAY 3**: Ask 5 friends to donate $15
- **DAY 4**: Ask 5 co-workers to sponsor you for $10
- **DAY 5**: Email 15 people and ask for a $10 donation
- **DAY 6**: Ask your company for a $75 donation
- **DAY 7**: Ask 2 businesses you frequent for $25
Important Links

Visit and share the links below to learn more about Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Oregon.

- [www.PlungeOregon.com](http://www.PlungeOregon.com)
- [www.facebook.com/PlungeOregon](http://www.facebook.com/PlungeOregon)
- [www.twitter.com/PlungeOregon](http://www.twitter.com/PlungeOregon)
- How to Use Your Pledge Page to EASILY Raise Funds:
  - [http://screencast.com/t/jrxOrGa6](http://screencast.com/t/jrxOrGa6)
- Special Olympics Oregon YouTube Channel:
  - [http://www.youtube.com/user/soorstate](http://www.youtube.com/user/soorstate)
- Plunge Oregon: Why Your Company Should Have a Polar Plunge Team
- Plunge Oregon Profile: Officer Dan Ashworth Medford Police Department
  - [http://youtu.be/PNYdw3UGNKs](http://youtu.be/PNYdw3UGNKs)

Plunger Business Card

On the next page is a template with cards for you to personalize. Share these with your donors to assist them in making a donation to your plunge. Make sure to print front and back, just cut and share with everyone you know!
PLEASE SUPPORT ME AS I TAKE THE PLUNGE!

2014 ANNUAL POLAR PLUNGE

Donate online at:
www.plungeoregon.com

Click on the “Sponsor Plunger” button and search for my name. Your donation is helping make a difference in the lives of the 10,000 Special Olympics Oregon athletes who benefit from this crazy event!

Thanks, ______________________
[Plunger Name]

www.facebook.com/PlungeOregon

www.twitter.com/PlungeOregon
YOU PLEDGE, AND I’LL PLUNGE!
Help me reach my goal!

My goal is to raise at least $ ________ for the athletes of Special Olympics Oregon and I need your help. Consider making a donation or joining me in taking a chilly dip into the icy cold water this February! You can do either by visiting this website and clicking “Sponsor Plunger” and searching for my name or clicking “Register” to start your own fundraising.

www.PlungeOregon.com

www.facebook.com/PlungeOregon

www.twitter.com/PlungeOregon
Letter Campaign

This is one way to raise a lot of money in a short amount of time! Set aside about four hours one day and you can have it all done. Write personal letters to your family, friends, and coworkers and let them know you are plunging.

- **Make it easy for people to donate!** Consider including a self-addressed envelope (stamped or not) in the envelope when you mail a letter.
- **Feel free to compose a one page letter.** Write it on your own as if you were sending it individually to a close friend.
- **Send it to everyone who has ever sent you something**
- **Early on, make the ask.** Don’t limit your donors, but ask for a specific range. Ask for “$10, $20, $50 or whatever your budget will allow.”
- **Give a 10 day deadline for response.** People will respond when there is a sense of urgency.
- **Copy the letters.** Before stuffing into the envelope; handwritten in colored ink, on the top of the letter the person’s name and a quick line, “Hope you can support me.” Sign it to add that personal touch.
- **Feel free to use our sample letter on the following page.** Remember to share sample letter with team members to get them started. Also, make sure your plunge date is correct (the sample letter is for the Portland Plunge, so for others you should change it accordingly).
Dear [Insert Name],

On February 8 [change to your Plunge date], I will be participating in the 2014 Polar Plunge in Portland, Oregon [change to your Plunge city]. I have decided that it’s cold enough, and I’m bold enough to take a freezing dip into the Columbia River [change to the body of water you will be plunging in] for the athletes of Special Olympics Oregon!

I have set a personal fundraising goal of $[insert amount], and I need your help to reach it! Any amount would be appreciated—it all goes to a wonderful cause, and every little bit gets me that much closer to my goal. The other option--join me in taking the plunge!

There are three easy ways to support my Plunge:

1. **Online donation**: Credit or debit card. Visit [insert donation page URL]
2. **Offline donation**: Cash or checks. Make checks payable to “Special Olympics Oregon” then mail to SOOR / 5901 SW Macadam Ave, Suite 200, Portland, OR 97239. If you do it this way, please be sure to include my name in the memo area so that the staff will know where to credit the contribution.
3. **Join!** Join my team [insert team name] at [www.plungeoregon.com](http://www.plungeoregon.com)

If you want to learn more about this exciting and zany winter event, visit www.plungeoregon.com to find out all the chilly details. Think warm thoughts for me as February 8th approaches. Can you believe how much WARMTH can come out of so much COLD? Your support changes lives!

Thank you!

[Plunger Name]
Fundraising Incentives

- Prizes
  - At each plunge, prizes will be awarded to the:
    - Plunger raising the most money.
    - Team raising the most money.
    - Law Enforcement employee raising the most money.
    - Team with the most members
    - Best Costume Contest
    - K-12 School Raising the most money
  - Win Alaska Airlines Tickets (possibility of)
    - Each Polar Plunger who raises $1800 or more will be entered into a drawing for 2 round trip coach tickets anywhere Alaska Airlines flies, courtesy of our friends at Alaska Airlines
  - Win a LCD TV
    - Each Polar Plunger who raises $1,000 or more will be entered into a drawing to win a 40” LCD TV, courtesy of Fred Meyer

- 2014 Incentives
  - $50 Official Polar Plunge Oregon NIKE Long-Sleeve T-Shirt
  - $250 the above, plus a Polar Plunge Oregon NIKE Hat
  - $500 the above, plus a Polar Plunge Oregon NIKE Gym sack
  - $1000 the above, plus a Polar Plunge Oregon NIKE Hooded Sweatshirt
  - $2500 the above, plus a Polar Plunge Oregon NIKE Rain Jacket
WHO WE ARE: Special Olympics Oregon is a statewide year-round sports program for Oregon’s children and adults with intellectual disabilities. We currently offer training and competition opportunities in 14 different Olympic-style sports. We serve the largest disability population in the state, more than 10,000 participants, ages eight and above.

OUR MISSION AND VISION: The mission of Special Olympics Oregon is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.

The vision of Special Olympics Oregon is to help bring all persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens.

OUR HISTORY: The concept for Special Olympics was born in the early 1960s when Eunice Kennedy Shriver started a day camp for people with intellectual disabilities at her home in Rockville, Maryland. The first International Special Olympics Games were held in 1968 at Soldier’s Field, Chicago with 1,000 athletes participating from 26 states and Canada.

HOW WE’VE GROWN: Mrs. Shriver’s vision of an international sports organization for people with intellectual disabilities, one that would bring the joy and pride developed through sports competition to those the world believed could not learn or play sports, has grown into one of the largest and most successful sports and volunteer organizations in the world. Special Olympics programs are in every state and in over 160 countries worldwide, serving close to four million athletes every year.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Throughout Oregon, there are 100,000 persons with intellectual disabilities and/or closely related developmental disabilities who could benefit from our sports programs. Eligible athletes are all children and adults, at least eight years old, with intellectual disabilities, a cognitive delay, or a closely related developmental disability. Children age six and seven may participate in Special Olympics training, but may not compete.

OUR GAMES ARE ALWAYS: There are training and competition opportunities every day throughout the year. Our programs are free to all eligible athletes and are possible thanks to the generous support from individuals and businesses who believe in Special Olympics athletes. Financial support comes exclusively from individuals, organizations, corporations and foundations. We receive zero government funding. The average cost of supporting one athlete, for one season is $150.00. Your support changes lives.
Plunge Day Checklist

☐ Plunge costume
☐ Shoes to plunge in (required – except in Medford)
☐ Change of clothes for after plunge
☐ Towel
☐ Plastic bag for wet clothes
☐ Offline Donations
☐ Friends
☐ Camera
CONTACT THE TEAM RECRUITMENT MANAGER IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED HELP WITH FUNDRAISING

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Team Recruitment Manager
503-248-0600 ext. 46
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