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Mission

The mission of the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) for Special Olympics Oklahoma is to raise funds for and awareness of the Special Olympics movement. Special Olympics is a program that we can see achievement and self-worth realized by any individual. It is our belief that persons with cognitive disabilities, by their involvement in Special Olympics, show the community at large there are no limits to human potential or the human spirit.

Vision

The vision is to further the Special Olympics mission, law enforcement will carry the torch, representing the “Flame of Hope,” and dedicate itself to the goals of continually increasing both awareness and generating resources for Special Olympics athletes worldwide.

History

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics began in 1981 when Wichita, Kansas Police Chief Richard LaMunyon saw an urgent need to raise funds for and increase awareness of Special Olympics.

As retired Chief Richard LaMunyon once said, “What started in 1981...as a flicker of hope for Special Olympics has now become a roaring flame of stability for Special Olympics athletes worldwide.” The LETR is changing the future for people with intellectual disabilities. Through the LETR and Special Olympics partnership we are lighting the way for acceptance and inclusion.

Impact

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics is the movement's largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle, at its most basic level the Torch Run is an actual running event, in which officers and athletes run the Flame of Hope to the Opening Ceremonies of Special Olympics local, state, national and world competitions. Annually, more than 113,128 dedicated, compassionate and volunteer law enforcement officers participate in the torch run throughout 41 countries and 52 Programs in United States, raising more than \$733 Million since its inception in 1981.

There are over 97,000 law enforcement members that carry the “Flame of Hope” annually. The flame symbolizes courage and celebration of diversity uniting communities around the globe.

Oklahoma LETR

Oklahoma’s Law Enforcement Torch Run kicked off in 1986 and has become the largest grass-roots fundraising vehicle for Special Olympics Oklahoma. There are currently over 185 participating law enforcement agencies (police departments, sheriff’s offices, Department of Corrections, state, federal, and military) in Oklahoma who in 2019, raised more than \$500,000 for Special Olympics Oklahoma through fundraising events and merchandise sales.

Being involved in the Oklahoma LETR enables nearly 12,100 athletes the opportunity to gain confidence and a positive self-image which carries over into the home, the classroom, the job and the community through successful experiences in sports.

Agency Benefits

The LETR is a great community policing opportunity for your agency. Some of the key benefits include:

- Generates positive press and community relations
- Boosts agency morale and camaraderie
- Identifies officers with leadership potential within your organization
- Develops a positive image of both the agency and individual officers
- Provides a vehicle to network with other law enforcement agencies to come together for a single purpose
- Provides a platform for your agency to encourage its officers to become more involved, on a personal level, with the community
- Teaches officers how to better understand and communicate with individuals with intellectual disabilities
- It not only changes the life of a Special Olympics Oklahoma athlete but also the life law enforcement volunteers!

Structure

All Torch Run activities around the world are governed by the Law Enforcement Torch Run Executive Council. The Executive Council is authorized by Special Olympics and supported by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The council's purpose is to encourage, promote, support and provide technical guidance to accredited Program Torch Run volunteers in planning and coordinating Torch Run events and activities on a worldwide basis, thereby facilitating the expansion of existing Torch Run activities and planning for the development of new Torch Run activities and events.

Structure (cont.)

The Oklahoma LETR is managed by a volunteer group of committed law enforcement individuals, who make up the LETR Committee. The committee consists of a director, assistant director, treasurer, secretary, area representatives, at large members and a Special Olympics athlete. Members serve a two-year term. The committee meets monthly to discuss issues and coordinate issues. These meetings are open to any law enforcement personnel to attend.

Special Olympics Oklahoma provides a staff member to work directly with the state committee and agencies coordinators to ensure the success of the LETR. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to have an agency coordinator to coordinate LETR events for their agency.

The agency coordinator is responsible for coordinating the LETR efforts at your agency. The agency coordinator works with Special Olympics Oklahoma staff to coordinate events. The agency coordinator recruits volunteers within the agency and works with the Public Information Officer on media releases to promote LETR events.

LETR Areas



Contact your Area Representative or Special Olympics Oklahoma LETR Liaison to help you with your LETR efforts.

Northwest

North

Northwest

Mark Wollmerhauer
Tulsa Police Department
Touchstone75@aol.com

West

Central

East

Jennifer Fisher
Oklahoma Highway Patrol
432fish@gmail.com

Southwest

South

Southeast

Special Olympics Oklahoma: LETR Liason 918-481-1234 name@sook.org

Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Oklahoma
6835 S. Canton Ave. Tulsa, OK 74136
Tel 918.481.1234 www.sook.org





Special Olympics Oklahoma

Mission

The mission of Special Olympics 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 Goal

The goal of Special Olympics is for all persons with intellectual disabilities to have the opportunity to become useful and productive citizens who are accepted and respected by their families, friends and in their communities.

Benefits

Athletes carry the benefits from their involvement in Special Olympics with them in their daily lives at home, in the classroom, on the job and in the community. Families are strengthened and the community increases its understanding, acceptance and respect of these individuals.

- ♦ Physical, social and psychological development
- ♦ Improved physical fitness and motor skills
- ♦ Greater self-confidence
- ♦ Positive self-image
- ♦ Friendships and increased family support

Today, over 12,100 Oklahoma athletes participate in Special Olympics Oklahoma. These athletes are supported by over 1,700 coaches that devote their time and experience to our athletes. There are over 13,000 volunteer opportunities available annually. Families, coaches and volunteers are proud to be part of Special Olympics.

Special Olympics
Oklahoma



LAW ENFORCEMENT
TORCH RUN[®]
FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS
OKLAHOMA



Special Olympics Oklahoma (cont.)

Special Olympics Oklahoma offers competition in 16 official sports year-round in traditional and Unified Sports. Unified Sports partners athletes with and without intellectual disabilities, of similar age and ability.

In all, this unique program coordinates over 175 local, Area and state competitions each year. We have competitions and training scheduled throughout the year in all corners of the state.

Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Oklahoma
6835 S. Canton Ave. Tulsa, OK 74136
Tel 918.481.1234 www.sook.org

Special Olympics
Oklahoma 

Fundraising

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, the movement's largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle, raised \$40 million in 2020 for Special Olympics Programs around the world. Since its inception in 1981, over \$900,000 has been raised!

The Oklahoma LETR raised more than \$500,000 in 2019 (pre-COVID) for Special Olympics Oklahoma through fundraising events and merchandise sales. Below are fundraising events your agency can participate in.

Polar Plunge

A Polar Plunge is a fundraising challenge made to an individual or group challenging them to dive into a cold body of water in order to raise money for Special Olympics. Each participant collects pledges from family, friends and businesses in the hopes of raising lots of money for the local Program. Then, on a select day, they "take the Plunge" in the cold water to benefit Special Olympics.

The Polar Plunge is a very popular special event among Law Enforcement Torch Run volunteers across the country. In 2019, Polar Plunge participants raised over \$280,000 for Special Olympics Oklahoma! Check us out on www.mysook.org



Merchandise Sales

The Oklahoma LETR committee designs a LETR t-shirt each year. Agencies can check out merchandise and turn in money or unsold merchandise at any time. Contact Special Olympics Oklahoma to check out your merchandise today.



Tip-a-Cop

Use your table-waiting skills to work at a restaurant for a day. Officers can help to wait tables and fill drinks for tips. Restaurants such as Red Robin, Texas Roadhouse and The Garage have participated in the past, but local restaurants in your community would also be a great place to hold this event. Special Olympics Oklahoma coordinates statewide Tip-a-Cops a few times a year but you are encouraged to use your contacts to schedule a local Tip-a-Cop on your own. Special Olympics Oklahoma can provide donation envelopes, signs, banners, iPads for credit card donations, flyer templates and other resources.



Cover the Cruiser

A marked squad car will be in the parking lot, waiting to be covered with “Law Enforcement Torch Run” icons whenever a donation is made to Special Olympics. Donors will have the opportunity to write their name or an inspirational message on the icon, which will then be attached to the police vehicle.



Torch Run

Runners can incorporate a pledge drive into their annual Torch Run by asking community families and businesses to pledge a certain amount of money for each mile that they run. Whether you are doing a small run through your city or running all the way to Stillwater, you can find many supporters who will cheer you on and donate money for your efforts. The Torch Run Final Leg takes place the opening day of Summer Games each year as agencies from across the state converge in Stillwater at the Summer Games Opening Ceremonies.



Cops on Doughnut Shops

Have fun with the age old joke of cops and doughnuts. Contact your local donut shop to collect donations at the front door and drive through. Special Olympics Oklahoma will coordinate an annual event with Dunkin Donuts.

Other

- Dunk a Cop
- No Shave November
- Golf tournament
- Poker run
- Softball tournament
- Guns N Hoses – challenge your local fire department to an event
- Auction
- Car wash

Resources

Special Olympics Oklahoma offers many resources to help you with your fundraising efforts.

- Fundraising webpages
- Signage/banners
- iPads for credit card processing
- Flyer templates
- Tip-a-Cop envelopes
- QR codes
- Social media promotion
- Enewsletter promotion

Fundraising and Tracking Procedures

Money collected on behalf of the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics Oklahoma should be sent promptly to Special Olympics Oklahoma so that it can be deposited. Please send only checks and money orders through the mail. Contact the LETR Liaison to coordinate a drop-off or pickup.

The LETR Liaison will track the amount of money that each agency turns in throughout the year. These totals will be used for recognition awards as well as determination of attendance for the LETR International Conference.

When turning in money, please make note of the breakdown of proceeds raised. This helps us better keep track our money and how it was raised. For example:

Merchandise Sales--\$130.00
Bake Sale Proceeds--\$40.00
Employee Donations--\$75.00
Total Amount Turned In: \$245

The money raised by the LETR are used to fund Special Olympics programs throughout the state. Under current LETR By-Laws, agencies are allowed to donate up to 25% of the raised funds back to their local Special Olympics team or Area program. This will be done through the Special Olympics Oklahoma state office, after the money has been turned in. These funds must have come from a fundraising event done by your agency, not from merchandise sales or a statewide LETR event. Funds donated to local teams will still count towards the agencies fundraising totals, but will not count towards LETR International Conference totals. The donation must be made in the same year that the money was raised. Please contact the LETR Liaison for more information.

Torch Run

Each year, hundreds of Oklahoma law enforcement employees organize and participate in the Torch Run for Special Olympics. The Torch Run is a series of relay runs leading up to the Special Olympics Oklahoma State Summer Games. Runners carry the torch from all corners of the state and meet up in Stillwater. The culmination of the run, Final Leg, is at the Summer Games Opening Ceremonies, where the torch bearers bring the “Flame of Hope” into the ceremonies to light the Summer Games cauldron.

Even if you are not an avid runner, the torch can be walked or driven through your town on its way to Stillwater. This is one of the most visible events for our Torch Run and we want to show our communities what our organization is all about!

Oklahoma’s annual Torch Run is not only a symbolic relay, but it is also a fundraising opportunity for LETR. Runners are encouraged to collect pledges from family and friends for their participation in the event. **Runners collecting \$25 or over will receive a free Torch Run t-shirt to wear during the run.**

Special Olympics hosts a USA Games and World Games every two years. The Oklahoma LETR committee sends one officer to represent Oklahoma. Contact the Special Olympics LETR Liaison if you are interested in making a nomination.



Annual Recognition

Each year in January we host an annual Kickoff Luncheon. Over 150 officers from throughout Oklahoma attend this annual event. It is a great way to celebrate the accomplishments from the previous year and also look forward to the events of the new year. Annual fundraising awards are given out and we also have a short program including sponsor recognition and a speech by one of our Special Olympics Oklahoma athletes. Awards are given based on fundraising totals from the previous calendar year. There are seven different award levels:

- **Champion Award** **\$25,000 and up**
- **Heart Award** **\$20,000 to 24,999**
- **Magic Award** **\$15,000 to \$19,999**
- **Courage Award** **\$10,000 to \$14,999**
- **Spirit Award** **\$5,000 to 9,999**
- **Dreams Awards** **\$1,000 to 4,999**
- **Certificate of Achievement** **\$1 to \$999**

Top Cop Awards

A “Top Cop” is a participant who has worked hard throughout the year to raise funds and awareness for LETR and Special Olympics Oklahoma. This is an individual award that is decided by an agency’s LETR coordinator at the end of each year. Agency coordinators should keep track of each volunteer’s fundraising efforts so that it is easier to choose Top Cops at the end of each calendar year. Each agency is given a Top Cop award for every \$1,000 you raise.

Annual Recognition (cont.)

Tim Stafford Unsung Hero Memorial Award

The Tim Stafford Memorial Award was created to recognize outstanding individuals who have contributed to the success of the Law Enforcement Torch run on a state, local or community level. The Tim Stafford “Unsung Hero” should be someone who contributes to the Torch Run in spirit, dedication and enthusiasm in an effective and unheralded fashion. The award was also created to honor the memory of Trooper Tim Stafford, Oklahoma Highway Patrol and his many contributions to LETR and Special Olympics.

The nominee’s involvement must demonstrate a substantive contribution to the Law Enforcement Torch for Special Olympics. Part of the focus of the award is to recognize someone who is an “Unsung Hero.” There are many successful LETR volunteers who are very satisfied to contribute mightily, in a low-key, but effective way.

Tim Stafford, who died in 2002, was such an “Unsung Hero” for the state of Oklahoma. Tim, with the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, was a true friend and an inspiration to all who knew him. He was a top fund-raiser in the 1990’s and represented Oklahoma by running in the Final Leg of the 2000 Special Olympic World Games. His contributions and efforts touched his fellow Torch Run members, Special Olympics Oklahoma and Special Olympics International.

Agencies are encouraged to make nominations for this prestigious award. The award is given each year at the Kick-Off and Awards Luncheon. All nominations will be forwarded to the Tim Stafford Award Committee for review and selection.

Annual Recognition (cont.)

Tim Stafford Unsung Hero Past Recipients:

- 2003 Lt Stewart Meyer, Oklahoma Highway Patrol
- 2004 Captain Phil Carr, Oklahoma City Police Department
- 2005 Milt Gilliam, Department of Corrections
- 2006 Mark Wollmershauser, Tulsa Police Department
- 2007 Jill McPherson, Civilian
- 2008 Det. Sgt. Don Hull, Oklahoma City Police Department
- 2009 Brett House, Civilian, Oklahoma City Police Department
- 2010 Steve Burrows, Oklahoma Highway Patrol
- 2011 Debbie Dorris, Joseph Harp Correctional Center
- 2012 Mike McPherson, Oklahoma City Police Department
- 2013 Jennifer Fisher, Oklahoma Highway Patrol
- 2014 Jim Fisher, Oklahoma Highway Patrol
- 2015 Shawn Byrne, Oklahoma City Police Department
- 2016 Lt. Charles Avery, Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office
- 2017 Deputy Justin Green, Tulsa County Sheriff's Office
- 2018 Deputy Paul Fox, Payne County Sheriff's Office
- 2019 Fran Singleton, Oklahoma Highway Patrol
- 2020 Tom Evans, Edmond Police Department
- 2021 Jeff Sewell, Oklahoma Highway Patrol
- 2022

International Conference

Conference Qualifications

The Oklahoma Law Enforcement Torch Run Committee and Special Olympics Oklahoma have implemented an incentive program for agencies wishing to send delegates to this conference. Fundraising totals are taken from **January 1 to December 31** each year. The following are the incentive levels and benefits earned per agency and/or individuals:

- \$12,000
 - Special Olympics Oklahoma will pay for the room, transportation and registration fee of one delegate to attend the conference. (The room is shared with another delegate and some food and entertainment expenses are paid by attendee).
- \$10,000
 - Special Olympics Oklahoma will pay for the room and registration fee of one delegate to attend the conference. (The room is shared with another delegate and some food and entertainment expenses are paid by attendee).
- \$8,000
 - Special Olympics Oklahoma will pay for the registration fee of one delegate to attend the conference. (Some food and entertainment expenses are paid by attendee)

International Conference (cont.)

Agency delegates must be law enforcement personnel or an employee of that law enforcement agency, or retiree of law enforcement agency. Family members do not qualify as an agency representative unless they are an employee of the law enforcement agency or organization. Any Special exemptions will be decided by the LETR Committee. Special Olympics athletes, volunteers or Board members do not qualify for these incentive levels without meeting the law enforcement requirement. Monies raised to benefit SOOK by law enforcement agencies may be used for these incentive levels within their specific agency only and cannot be shared with another agency. We encourage agencies to send new representatives each year to experience this great conference.

CLEET Class

Oklahoma's Law Enforcement Torch Run offers a **free** CLEET certified continuing education class for police departments and officers across the state. The class is a great way to learn more about Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics Oklahoma, while also completing four mandatory education hours. **This class counts for 2 Mental Health Credits.**

Topics in the course include the history of Law Enforcement Torch Run, international and state program information, fundraising possibilities and tips on how to motivate your agency employees and community members to become more involved in Torch Run events. The class is informative and will hopefully inspire more law enforcement agencies to become active in our great program.

Contact the Special Olympics Oklahoma LETR Liaison for more information. The class is offered at the January LETR Kickoff Luncheon each year. We are also available to travel to law enforcement agencies across the state to teach the course. This class is free of charge to any agency in Oklahoma.

STAY CONNECTED!

Website - visit www.sook.org/support/letr for more information and other resources including:

- Merchandise Order Form
- Craig Meyer Memorial Scholarship Application
- Torch Run Registration
- Torch Run Pledge Form
- Tim Stafford Unsung Hero Nomination Form
- LETR and Special Olympics Oklahoma logos
- LETR brochure
- Event templates

Facebook - Follow the Oklahoma LETR at www.facebook.com/OklahomaLETR

E-newsletter - *The Oklahoma Torch* is a monthly e-newsletter sent to law enforcement supporters sharing what's going on in the LETR world and upcoming events. Sign up at www.sook.org/sign-up/.