



## Celebrate the Tradition of Giving

Do you know that every time you make a gift to Special Olympics North Dakota, you receive something in return? Your gift not only helps strengthen our athletes athletic ability, but also helps to build confidence and leadership skills in athletes across the state, who then, shine as employees in local



businesses and become members in local service clubs, churches, schools, and other groups. As 2019 comes to a close, please consider Special Olympics as a recipient of your year-end generosity. A gift from the heart, in any amount, is greatly appreciated. Gifts of cash, stock, real estate, and life insurance policies make a huge difference in the lives of our athletes, their families, volunteers, and our staff. Every dollar matters. Athletes like Melissa from Grafton; Braydon from Bismarck; Jenni from Fargo; and Samantha from Jamestown are among 1,600 people whose lives have changed because of Special Olympics. Thank you for all you do to help our athletes! [Give now!](#)

P.S. Don't forget about the special tax credit North Dakota offers to gifts of \$5,000 and more to qualified endowments. The Circle of Champions Endowment plans towards Special Olympics North Dakota's future for people with and without intellectual disabilities and we would love for you to help us plan for the next 50 years! For more information click on <http://sondchampions.com/>

## Upcoming Events

### January

- 4-5 Alpine coaches Training School
- 5 Snow Sports Invitational – Valley City
- 11 Track & Field Coaches Training School
- 17-18 State Winter Games - Bottineau Winter Park

### February

- 1 District III Basketball Tournament-Jamestown
- 8 Area Basketball Tournament-Minot
- 9 District IV Basketball Tournament-Dickinson
- 12 A Special Night Out
- 13 Giving Hearts Day
- 22 Trivia Night Fundraiser-Delta Hotel, Fargo
- 23 Polar Plunge, Grand Forks
- 28-29 State Basketball Tournament Minot

### March

- 7 Polar Plunge– Dickinson
- 15 Polar Plunge– Minot
- 21 Polar Plunge– Bismarck

### April

- 7 Dancing for Special Stars– Grand Forks

### June

- 4-6 State Summer Games– Fargo

## 2019 Memorials

Special Olympics North Dakota deeply appreciates receiving donations in memory of friends and loved ones. Memorial gifts have been received in remembrance of:

Audrey Burfening  
“Cowboy” Bruce D Durheim  
Carol J Overlie

Allan Cleem  
David Gilbertson  
Jesse Ridl



## 2019 State Award Winners



Special Olympics is more than an event, it is one of the most influential and powerful social movements in the world. We are so privileged and overcome by the support of the people from throughout the state. There is no desire more honorable than to develop communities of acceptance for all. On October 26th, we honored some of our athletes as well as individuals, organizations, and businesses for their noble and generous work in unleashing the human spirit and improving the freedom of every child and adult with intellectual disabilities. Here are those people honored for the year 2019:

Female Athlete of the Year: **Melissa Moran**, Wahpeton

Male Athlete of the Year: **Trevor Bratvold**, Grand Forks

Youth Service: **Trista Crimmins**, Valley City

Area Volunteer: **Yvonne Hummel**, West Fargo

State Volunteer: **Rachael Buss**, Bottineau

Coach of the Year: **Chantel Keller**, Dickinson

Family of the Year: **Curt and Janell Duppong**, Dickinson

Area Organization: **Holy Family Catholic Church**, Grand Forks

State Organization: **Microsoft**, Fargo

School of the Year: **West Fargo High School**, West Fargo

Continuous Service: **Marisa Misek**, Bismarck

Continuous Service: **Nick Meagher**, Fargo

Continuous Service: **Jordan Lorenzen**, Fargo

LETR® Flame of Hope: **Heith Janke**, West Fargo

Roger Kerns Character Award: **Kenny Fowler**, Fargo

Daryl Bjelde Memorial Award: **Dan Bower**, Minot

Hall of Fame: **Tim Bachmeier**, Wahpeton

Hall of Fame: **Julie Blehm**, Fargo

## Dancing for Special Stars

You know them as business owners, teachers, lawyers, or even bankers, but for one night, they were known as dancers. Dancing for Special Stars is our dancing competition where local celebrities and dance instructors pair up and perform a choreographed dance routine and compete against the others for judge's points and audience votes. The 5th Annual competition in Minot premiered on October 15th, and as always, the event was a success as ten couples floored the audience with their dance routines, but it was Debbie Hansen & David Gerding who took home the coveted mirror ball trophy. We'd like to thank you all again for making it a successful show a 5th year in a row and recognize our major sponsors; **Gold Sponsors:** Embridge **Silver Sponsors:** First International Bank & Trust **Bronze Sponsors:** 10 North Main; People's State Bank of Velva



## State Bowling Tournament

Thirty four years ago a bowling alley in Mandan was the only alley that thought Special Olympic athletes had the right to bowl and offered to host the very first state tournament. Fast forward to present day where delegations from across the state, (Jamestown, Belcourt, Bismarck, Fargo, Dickinson, Grafton, Grand Forks, Harvey, Jamestown, Lisbon, Mandan, Standing Rock, Stanley, Valley City, and Wahpeton) comprised of 525 athletes and 44 coaches came to that same bowling alley and participated in the 2019 State Bowling Tournament.

This tournament was filled with astonishing achievements showcasing what these bowling athletes have accomplished in those 34 years. An athlete from Dickinson bowled the high score for the Males with a 238, he had bowled a 223 the previous game. While another athlete from Dickinson, recorded the Female high score of 152. Other notable scores were, 212 and 197 from Fargo, 195 from Grand Forks and Bismarck. Once again proving that Special Olympic athletes are able to bowl.



A special thank you to Midway Lanes for hosting the competition, Legacy High School for hosting the dinner, Opening Ceremony, and Dance, Mandan Moose Lodge for providing lunches, and University of Mary student athletes and Bismarck Bobcat players for working as lane volunteers. This tournament would not be possible without the generous contributions of these organizations. **Gold Sponsors:** Mandan Moose Lodge **Bronze Sponsors:** Bismarck/Mandan CVB; EMC Insurance Companies; MDU Resources Foundation; Starion Bank

## Truck drivers show support through Truck Convoy!

Special Olympics North Dakota and the Law Enforcement Torch Run hosted the 2019 Truck Convoy for Special Olympics on September 28th to raise awareness and funds for athletes across the state. The annual fundraiser is organized by members of the North Dakota trucking community and local law enforcement.

"The Truck Convoy is one of the highlights of our year," said Kathleen Meagher, President/CEO of Special Olympics North Dakota. "The drivers come from across the state, even out of state, to show off their trucks, and many offer to let our athletes ride in the Convoy with them. It also offers us a chance to celebrate the trucking community and all they do for Special Olympics!"

The event was held at SUPERVALU|UNFI Distribution Center where 69 trucks in the Convoy traversed an 18 mile route throughout the city of Fargo. At SUPERVALU|UNFI, drivers were provided coffee & donuts before the Convoy, a post-Convoy lunch, and enjoyed live music and a silent auction. A highlight of the event was the live auction where drivers bid in for the right to be the Lead Dog and Tail End positions of the Truck Convoy! This convoy would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors; **Silver Sponsors:** Goldmark Property; Jim's Towing; Kylo Trucking; TDS Trucking, Inc.; Valley Express, Inc.; Wanzek Construction **Bronze Sponsors:** Killoran Trucking & Brokerage, Inc.; RDO Equipment & RDO Truck Center; S&S Transport, Inc.



## **Applebee's Tip-A-Cop lets the community meet Law Enforcement & Special Olympics Athletes!**



Applebee's Neighborhood Grill and Bars once again partnered with the Law Enforcement Torch Run and sponsored Tip-A-Cop on Sept. 17-18! More than 50 law enforcement personnel from different agencies volunteered their time, hosting guests in Applebee's across the state to raise awareness and tip money for Special Olympics. This is the 13<sup>th</sup> annual event for the Law Enforcement Torch Run, which consists of volunteers from all agencies of law enforcement across the state.

The event took place during the evening at Applebee's restaurants across North Dakota. "We strive to be a good neighbor in all of our communities and with the support of area law enforcement, we can provide a wonderful fundraiser for Special Olympics North Dakota," states Dusty Jensen, Apple Core COO. Thank you to all the Applebee's locations in North Dakota and thank you to everyone who came out and "tipped" the dedicated law enforcement volunteers!

## **State Soccer & Bocce Tournament**

A picture perfect fall weekend in Grand Forks welcomed the participants of the State Soccer Bocce tournament. Delegations from Bismarck, Fargo, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Grafton, Grand Forks, Harvey, Jamestown, Mandan, Valley City, and Wahpeton came to compete in the two-day event. Once again, a special thanks is extended to the Grand Forks School District and Grand Forks Park District as they offered South Middle School and Red River High School as venues for the weekend. Thirty-one soccer teams battled for gold in 7 divisions. Two soccer divisions comprised of 8 youth teams from 5 different cities showed that our movement is reaching the next generations of Special Olympics athletes across the state. In Bocce, over 160 individuals competed in 20 divisions of Team and Doubles Bocce. When the weekend was complete, athletes, partners, coaches and spectators were treated to another successful Special Olympics competition comprised of tenacity mixed with friendship and joy. Thank you once again to all our sponsors who made this event such a huge success!



**Silver Sponsors:** Greater Grand Forks Convention & Visitors Bureau; Little Miracle's, Inc.; Retrax Holdings, LLC **Bronze:** Acme Tools; Grand Forks Park District; Sigma Alpha Epsilon

## **You Dine and Texas Roadhouse Donates!**



Texas Roadhouse is a fantastic partner with Special Olympics North Dakota! Not only do they donate food and volunteers for Polar Plunges and the State Soccer & Bocce Tournament, but they also hold several Dine to Donate events throughout the year! When a customer shows the flier for the event, Texas Roadhouse donates 10% of the food total back to Special Olympics North Dakota, and it is a great way for our athletes to meet the public, spread awareness of the program and get new volunteers! Thank you to all the restaurants across the state!

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## **Save the Date**

### **Are you brave enough to endure icy water?**

Polar Plunges are scheduled for 2020 and we need you to grab a friend and go “freezin’ for a reason”! The Polar Plunge is an annual fundraiser organized by community volunteers and is part of the year-round Law Enforcement Torch Run program to raise awareness and funds to support physical fitness and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Polar Plunges offer a unique opportunity for individuals, organizations, and businesses to support Special Olympics athletes by raising money and taking the plunge into chilly North Dakota waters.

Plungers raise a minimum of \$75 for the opportunity to take the plunge. Have FUN! Form a team, come up with a fun name and crazy costumes with friends, co-workers, or classmates. No matter what, the Polar Plunge is all about FUN! Visit [Polar Plunge Info](#) for more information or to register online!

### **2020 Dates!**

February 22 - Grand Forks - Choice Health & Fitness

March 7 - Dickinson - Location TBA

March 15 - Minot - Sleep Inn & Suites

March 21 - Bismarck - Elk’s Lodge

TBD – Fargo



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### **Finish Line helps to raise awareness for Special Olympics**

Through December 31st, Finish Line stores across the nation will run their annual campaign to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics. The Fargo store in North Dakota will participate in this national campaign. While doing your holiday shopping you will be asked if you want to make a donation! Can't make it to the store?

[Donate online](#)

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### **Winter Games**

The 2020 sports season will kick off on January 17th and 18th with the State Winter Games in Bottineau, ND offering competition in Alpine Skiing, Cross Country Skiing, Figure Skating, Speed Skating, Snow Shoe racing. Also in conjunction with the Winter Games there will be an Alpine training session for athletes and coaches at the Bottineau Winter Park on January 4th and 5th. Please contact [info@specialolympicsnd.org](mailto:info@specialolympicsnd.org) for more info.



### **SPOTLIGHT: West Fargo High School**



Among West Fargo High School's goals is the hope to prepare students to exhibit global and community awareness along with respect for the individual. The ultimate purpose of all education is to make the students their own teachers, and through its involvement with Special Olympics North Dakota, West Fargo High School is championing a message of inclusion that is changing our world.

They made strides in inclusive activities beginning with the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign held in March, where their entire school of more than 1,400 students was exposed to the power of inclusion. During

the last year the school has formed Unified Sports teams in the sports of Flag Football and Soccer. It showcased this success in a competition hosted at their school in the spring and again at the Special Olympics North Dakota State Summer Games in Fargo. In the model of true inclusion, its Unified Flag Football team was announced in a General School Assembly with all other West Fargo High School Sports teams. West Fargo High School also included their Special Olympics athletes in their West Fest parade by granting them the opportunity to create their own float and spread their message.

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### **SPOTLIGHT: Microsoft Makes a Difference!**

Microsoft is a global partner with Special Olympics, and North Dakota is fortunate to have a partnership with the Fargo campus. Beginning in 2015, Microsoft, its leaders, and employees have forged a substantial partnership through expanding awareness on the capabilities of people with intellectual disabilities. This has included hosting three Leadership Luncheons on the Fargo campus; being a major financial sponsor of the 50th Anniversary Celebration and State Summer Games and graciously provided part of the birthday gift for 600 athletes, and having strong participation through the Fans in the Stands at the State Summer Games!

"At Microsoft," said Site Leader Sandi Piatz, "it truly is an honor to support an organization that celebrates diversity and inclusion and has it as a key component of its mission."



# Happy Holidays

Best Wishes from Special Olympics North Dakota