



Hello,

2019 marks the 35th Anniversary of the Maine Law Enforcement Torch run for Special Olympics. This grassroots campaign is the largest annual fundraising event for Special Olympics Maine. Last year over 800 members of Maine Law Enforcement raised over \$400,000 to help support the program.

Special Olympics is a year round athletic training and sports competition program for children and adults who have intellectual disabilities. In Maine there are over 4,400 athletes involved in the program. In addition to sports, Special Olympics Maine also provides numerous socialization opportunities, a four season, lake front summer camp (Camp Tall Pines) for our athletes, travel, free medical screenings, athlete leadership positions, self-esteem building, choice, opportunity and the chance to develop friendships that will last a lifetime.

Hosting 18 “state level” competitions each year (and over 55 additional “Area” events), the Special Olympics Maine Summer games are fast approaching, June 7-9. Over 1,400 athletes will compete at the University of Maine in Orono. Special Olympics is often the only opportunity for people in Maine, who have intellectual disabilities, to train and/or compete in sports...an opportunity to excel, to make friends, compete with their peers and to be seen for their abilities as opposed to their disabilities. At our Summer Camp, Camp Tall Pines in Poland, one elderly athlete heard an echo for the first time in his life. At our summer games an adult athlete received their first pair of glasses and saw the world clearly for the first time in their lives. For the past 6 years, through Unified basketball, some Special Olympic Maine athletes competed for the first time on a high school sports team. Special Olympics also provides athletes the skills they need to live a healthier and happier lifestyle.

With an annual budget of over one million dollars a year, Special Olympics Maine relies on the generosity of our sponsors, donors, and volunteers. Without the Law Enforcement Torch Run, we would no longer be able to continue such a successful program. Because of the Torch Run we are able to not only continue with and enhance our current program but to also add new programs and new athletes each year.

All funds raised benefit Special Olympics Maine athletes directly. As a matter of fact, one out of every five dollars we spend comes from the Law Enforcement Torch Run. The money is used to provide our athletes with sports equipment and proper training, it is used to provide them with housing and meals at their events, as well as uniforms. Funds are also used for the rental of sports facilities, the training of coaches and officials, athlete travel expenses for special events and out of state competitions, a band or DJ for the Victory Dance at our summer games, free health screenings and more. Much, much more. We would be most thankful for any help that you could give to Maine Law Enforcement members toward their fundraising efforts.

Your generosity and support of Special Olympics Maine and the Maine Law Enforcement Torch Run would be greatly appreciated beyond words. On behalf of over 4400 Special Olympics Maine athletes, thank you for considering a donation or sponsorship. Thanks for caring and sharing.

With Sincere Appreciation,

Lisa Bird, SOME/LETR