



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. Last year over 750 members of Maine Law Enforcement raised close to \$400,000 to help support the program.

Special Olympics is a year round athletic training and sports competition program for adults and children with 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, 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, there is no off season. Special Olympics Maine State Summer games plans are already underway for the June 7-9 event. Over 1,500 athletes will compete at the University of Maine in Orono. During the games SOME will also offer free medical screenings through our Healthy Athletes program. Special Olympics provides athletes the skills they need to live a healthier 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.

As part of the Torch Run, the officers and participants are each given a shirt to not only wear during the actual run but to also be worn at future state and local events that they attend as volunteers. One example would be tip-a-cop events. Our Officers hold tip-a-cop events throughout the year at several well-known restaurants in Maine. They will typically all wear the LETR shirts to events like these. We feel that the shirts are an important public awareness tool for our program. When people find out that Police Officers support Special Olympic athletes, they in turn want to support them also. We typically give out 650-700 runner shirts. The shirt is also our way of thanking Maine Law Enforcement for the thousands of dollars they raise each year and the countless hours they spend volunteering for our program. In addition we also take about 100 shirts with us to the International Law Enforcement Torch Run conference and trade them with other states and countries. The shirts get a lot of exposure. However, they are also a big expense for the program.

Six years ago we began looking for shirt sponsors in hopes of covering much of if not all of the cost of the shirts. That way all of that money raised in the Torch Run can go directly to benefit athletes. Our goal was to get at least ten \$1000 sponsors, which brings me to the point of writing to you. We are hoping that you will consider becoming a sponsor for our LETR runner shirts. We are asking businesses to sponsor our shirts with a \$1000 donation. In return, we would like to put your business name or logo on the back of our shirts.

Your generosity and your 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 taking the time to read about our program and for your consideration. Thank you for caring and sharing.

Sincerely,
Lisa J. Bird
Lisa J. Bird (SOME/LETR)