



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Special Olympics Indiana to Host Annual Polar Plunge Fundraising Events in February and March

Thousands of advocates will raise money and awareness in their local communities this winter before taking an icy plunge to show their support for Special Olympics Indiana.



INDIANAPOLIS — As they have each year for nearly two decades, Hoosiers in every corner of the state will come together this winter to raise money and awareness for Special Olympics Indiana before taking part in the annual [Polar Plunge](#) — a series of exhilarating events where individuals and teams brave the elements by taking an icy dip to demonstrate their commitment to the cause.

A total of 18 Polar Plunge events are scheduled between Feb. 4 and Mar. 4 in cities and towns across Indiana, including Bloomington, West Lafayette, South Bend,

Fort Wayne, Terre Haute, and Indianapolis, among others. For details and a complete calendar of events, visit www.polarplungeIN.org.

All funds raised by the events directly benefit more than 12,000 Special Olympics athletes throughout the state, giving them the means to train locally and to compete at the state level in a number of Olympic-type sports.

“We’ve been doing this a long time now, and most people are familiar with the concept—but I think the newcomers are surprised at how much fun we have in spite of the cold,” said Senior Director of Development Scott Furnish. “Whether you want to challenge yourself by taking the Plunge or you just want to support our athletes throughout the state, this is a great opportunity to get involved and to support what we do.”

To date, the organization’s signature fundraiser has raised more than \$3 million in support of year-round programs and events, including a record \$690,232 in 2016. More than 3,000 individuals are expected to take the plunge this year, raising a minimum of \$75 each.

To learn more about the Polar Plunge, or to register or make a contribution in support of a participating individual or team, visit www.polarplungeIN.org.

Teams, Prizes, and More

- Each Polar Plunge event has its own unique personality, with additional activities ranging from costume contests to 5K fundraising races and the always popular “After Splash Bash” — a celebration following each event where participants are recognized and presented with awards.
- The majority of Polar Plunge participants register as part of a team, often representing a business, school, family, fraternity/sorority, church group, or sports team. Teams of 10 or more are eligible for team awards.
- All individuals who raise at least \$75 are rewarded with an official Polar Plunge t-shirt. Other prizes include branded towels, blankets, hoodies, coolers, and jackets, each awarded at a certain fundraising level. Learn more by visiting www.polarplungeIN.org/prizes.

Campus Challenge

- Polar Plunge events will be held on seven Indiana campuses in 2017, including Purdue, IU, Butler, Indiana State, Ball State, Valparaiso, and Wabash College.
- Committees made up of students and volunteers at each school lead the charge to host the best campus event, with the top fundraising school earning the right to keep a traveling trophy at the end of each Polar Plunge season.

Other Ways to Support the Polar Plunge

- Those who are unable or unwilling to participate in the Polar Plunge are encouraged to fundraise as “Virtual Plungers” or to donate on behalf of a participating individual or team. Volunteers are also needed to organize and staff each event.
- Individuals who go above and beyond in their efforts to support the Polar Plunge by raising a minimum of \$4,000 are eligible to be recognized as “Super Plungers.” Twelve individuals earned this distinction in 2016.
- The Polar Plunge is presented by the Law Enforcement Torch Run® to benefit Special Olympics Indiana. Companies and other organizations can support the Polar Plunge through corporate sponsorships or employee matching programs. Statewide sponsors of the 2017 Polar Plunge include Duke Energy, Graycor Industrial Constructors, Coca-Cola, Bluebridge, Toyota Indiana, Knights of Columbus, Psi Iota Xi, DePuy Synthes, Solid Platforms, Inc., and Taco Bell.

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ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS INDIANA

Special Olympics Indiana is a not-for-profit organization that provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in more than 20 Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, reaching more than 12,000 athletes across Indiana. The organization receives no federal or state appropriated funds, is not a United Way agency, and relies entirely on corporate, civic and individual donations. For more information about Special Olympics Indiana, call (317) 328-2000 or visit www.soindiana.org.

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