



***Special
Olympics
Newfoundland
& Labrador***



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Let me win.
But if I cannot win,
let me be brave
in the attempt.

-Special Olympics athlete oath

EXECUTIVE REPORT



Special Olympics Newfoundland & Labrador



“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.” The Special Olympics Athlete oath is very inspirational as we look back on the 2019-2020 year for Special Olympics in Newfoundland & Labrador.

2019-2020 was an incredibly challenging year. SONL spent the Fall working with our local clubs running our weekly programs and preparing Team NL to compete at the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games Thunder Bay 2020. The Games took place from February 25-29th. Team NL sent 44 athletes who competed in 7 sports they were supported by 19 volunteer coaches and mission staff along with the Chef de Mission, Mike Daly and Team Manager, Kim McDonald-Wilkes. The Team joined 1200 athletes’ coaches and volunteers from across Canada for a fantastic Games experience. Team NL was highly successful returning home with 45 medals.

On March 13th, the COVID-19 Pandemic reached Newfoundland and Labrador, under the guidance of the Provincial and National Health Authorities, SONL made the difficult decision to pause all programming and fundraising events until June 30th. This had a devastating effect on our athletes who were left with few options to stay healthy, active and connected, while staying home. This is when we realized that the success of an organization can be measured in how you manage your plan B when faced with adversity and change. SONL staff moved quickly in conjunction with Special Olympics Chapters across Canada to create online resources to stay connected with our athletes and provide them with access to online programs. Many had fun as they walked across Canada!

SONL Coach Melissa Tobin took the online programming to new heights when she along with the SONL program staff created the Sunshine Sum-

mer Challenge. 200 athletes from around the province signed on, with the goal of 100 to 400 minutes of physical activity per week, recording their workouts in personal logs, participating in online sessions with coaches and much-loved dances. It was great to see athletes and their families being active together in many innovative ways.

The COVID-19 pandemic also created a financial challenge for SONL with the cancellation of the 2020 Special Olympics Festival and the 2020 Law Enforcement Torch Run. The SONL Board have worked hard to create new fundraising initiatives such as the Piatto Pandemic Pizza Party and the 50/50 draw to ensure the financial sustainability of SONL.

SONL is now working on a safe return to in-person programs it will take time and will happen slowly. We are working with our local clubs on new and innovative program delivery models, while continuing to grow athlete and volunteer participation, reaching a more diverse audience, and strengthening quality standards in all aspects of program delivery.

We look forward to a new normal as we continue to be part of a global movement of people creating a world of inclusion and community, where every single person is accepted and welcomed, regardless of ability or disability.



PROVINCIAL AWARD WINNERS

Male Coach of the Year: 2020 - Shawn Dean



Shawn has been coaching with Special Olympics for 7 years, currently he is involved with a number of sports at his local club and has been a part of the Provincial Team for both Summer (2018) and Winter (2020), coaching athletes on the National stage! Shawn is with CBS

Brightstars and is the Head Coach for both Athletics and Bocce. Special Olympics athletes under his direction have set many personal bests and won many medals.

His dedication to Special Olympics can be seen on and off the playing field. When not actively coaching he is often the first to step up and help with all other aspects of Special Olympics within his local club. He can be seen fundraising, assisting with transportation needs, or giving a helping hand anywhere needed!

His passion for coaching can be seen in everything he does! Shawn helps athletes reach their full potential all while creating lasting relationships along the way!

Presidents' Award 2020—Gail Baker



Gail has been involved with Special Olympics for 15 years, over those years she has served as Club Coordinator, Treasurer, Chef de Mission and Program Volunteer. She has a tremendous impact on both the athletes and fellow volunteers alike with her local club. Gail works

tirelessly to support every aspect of the Special Olympics movement. Her dedication and leadership skills are outstanding!

A highlight for Gail over her 15 years of volunteering is being part of her local clubs' award presentation night. She loves handing out awards and recognizing the many talents of the athletes she so passionately supports.

Gail continues to go above and beyond for the club and her leadership and passion for Special Olympics is infectious!

Female Coach of the Year: 2020—Christina Kendall



Christina has been coaching with Special Olympics for 3 years, currently she is involved with 5 Pin Bowling, Snowshoeing, Swimming, Athletics and Curling!

Christina is a dedicated volunteer and when not out on the field coaching,

she can be found sitting around a meeting table, as she serves as the clubs' treasurer and sits on the Social Committee.

On the playing field the athletes she coaches have taken home a full collection of medals, most recently Bronze, Silver and Gold at the Provincial Athletics Championships, held in Marystown. Christina is highly respected within the club by athletes, volunteers, and fellow coaches. She is a true team player whose positive attitude fosters an atmosphere of acceptance and inclusion.

Volunteer of the Year 2020—Melissa Tobin



Melissa has been involved with Special Olympics for 7 years and is currently the Head Coach for both Bocce and Swimming for Mount Pearl. She has also been a Head Coach for Swimming with our Provincial Team.

Melissa's passion for Special Olympics led her to apply for

a grant from the Duke of Edinburgh for the summer of 2019 and 2020. In 2019 she designed and implemented a Sunshine Swim Camp for all Special Olympics Swimming Athletes to come together and learn specific skills to improve their abilities.

In the summer of 2020, Melissa quickly readjusted her plans when COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. She brought Special Olympics right into the homes of our athletes by offering a virtual Sunshine Summer Challenge.

Her dedication and commitment to the Special Olympics movement is absolutely inspiring!



**ONE OF THE
GREATEST GIFTS
YOU CAN GIVE IS
YOUR TIME**

Thank you to all our volunteers!

PROVINCIAL AWARD WINNERS

Male Athlete of the Year 2020 - Michael Budden



Michael has been involved with Special Olympics for a short time yet has an amazing list of accomplishments! He enjoys competing in Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing, Curling, Swimming and Athletics.

At the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games 2020, Thunder Bay, Ontario in Cross

Country Skiing he received a Gold for the 2.5km and 7.5km Freestyle and picked up a Bronze for the 5km Freestyle. Michael, along with his fellow teammates, received a Gold in the 3 X 1km Classic Relay!

On the Provincial Stage, at the SONL Athletics Championships, he took home Gold in 100M, Silver in 200M and Shotput and Bronze in Mini Javelin.

Michael trained and competed with School Sports NL Cross Country Running, taking home a 1st Place with the regional team.

His dedication and commitment to sport, training, and living a healthy lifestyle is amazing! He displays a positive attitude in everything he does!

Female Athlete of the Year 2020- Rhegan Robinson



Rhegan has been involved with Special Olympics for 8 years and is no stranger to competition! She enjoys 5 Pin Bowling, Athletics, Bocce and Unified Sports.

At the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games 2020, Thunder Bay, Ontario in 5 Pin Bowling she received a 4th place finish. This was her 2nd ap-

pearance on the National competition stage.

On the Provincial stage, at the SONL Athletics Championships she took home 5th in 100M, Silver in 200M, Bronze in both Shotput and Long Jump and picked up a 7th in Mini Javelin.

Rhegan also competed through Unified Sport at the National Youth Games in Ontario!

She exemplified dedication, enthusiasm, and sportsmanship at every practice. Rhegan is a true role model for others and a positive role model to her fellow Special Olympics athletes!

Gina Bludon Award 2020-Margaret MacNeil



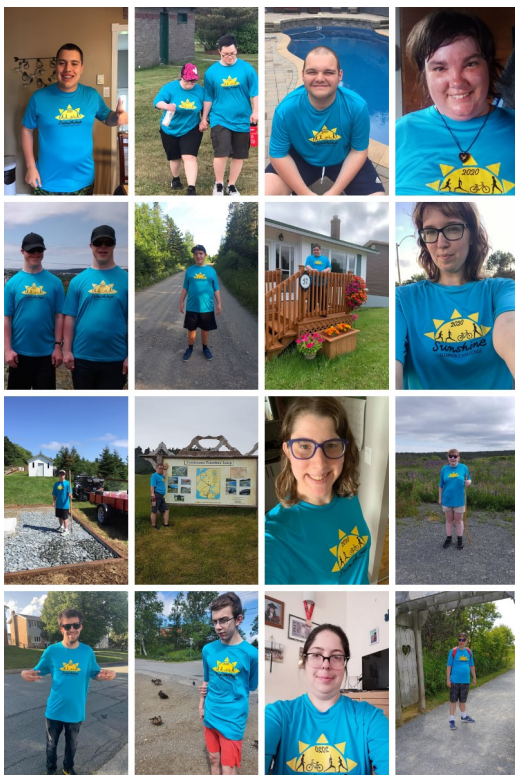
To earn the Gina Bludon Award an athlete must exhibit the qualities of Heart, Commitment, Dedication and Leadership.

Margaret has been involved with Special Olympics for 8 years and is not only an active competitive athlete, but also is involved with the Athlete Leadership Program.

She is full of energy and encourages her teammates at every opportunity given. Margaret, alongside her teammates earned a Gold Medal in Curling at the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games 2020 in Thunder Bay, Ontario!

Margaret is a true community leader; she has spoken on multiple occasions to groups about Special Olympics and the positive impacts it has had on her life.

She is patient and kind when called upon to help others. She is well known through the club and the community for her positive and cheery attitude that shines through in everything she does!



Summer Sunshine Challenge 2020

NEWS & EVENTS

Coach Development

Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador believes strongly in educating our coaches. The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) offers a variety of coaching courses for Special Olympics. These courses range from in-person session on how to plan and implement programs for our athletes to online courses aimed at helping to increase knowledge-base on specific types of disabilities our coaches will interact with during the course of their coaching career with Special Olympics NL.

SONL completed several Competition Coaching courses prior to COVID halting in-person training. In the first couple of months of COVID-induced restrictions SONL used our social media platforms to reach and engage our coaches. The NCCP online courses were circulated along with a chance to win a gift card for completing all 4 courses.

SONL has also started helping coaches with online platforms such as ZOOM and have helped keep our community connected.

Young Athletes

FUNDamentals and **Active Start** are Young Athletes programs that introduce young athletes and their families—not only to Special Olympics—but also to the key components of living a healthy active lifestyle and all the

basic motor skills needed for life. They are built on the rationale that, when children with an intellectual disability receive early instruction in basic motor skills and developmentally appropriate play, there is an excellent opportunity for improvement in their physical, social and cognitive skills.



S.O. Give it a GO!

S.O. Give it a GO are “try-it” days for potential and returning Special Olympics athletes. S.O. Give it a Go provides opportunities for individuals with an intellectual disability to try different activities.

Competitions

Special Olympics Newfoundland & Labrador has 16 community-based clubs that offer a variety of sports programs including athletics, bocce, bowling, cross country skiing, curling, floor hockey, golf, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, softball, snowshoeing, soccer and swimming. Each club works diligently to ensure that athletes have an opportunity to showcase their skills in their chosen sport.

With a variety of sports offered by the clubs throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, SONL has multiple Provincial Competitions each year. Many of our athletes are multi-sport athletes so between Provincial Games years; athletes are encouraged to compete in Provincial and Invitational Competitions by sport.

Unified Sport

Team sports bring people together. Special Olympics Unified Sports teams do that too, and so much more.

Special Olympics Unified Sports is an inclusive program that combines Special Olympics Athletes (individuals with an intellectual disability) and partners (individuals without an intellectual disability) on teams for training and competition.

Special Olympics Unified Sports promotes social inclusion through shared sport training and competition experiences for individuals with and without intellectual disabilities. Unified Sports helps increase the skills necessary for individuals with an intellectual disability to be accepted and fulfilled socially.



ATHLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs)

What is ALPS? Through organized training and practical experiences, Athlete Leadership Programs prepare athletes to undertake meaningful positions of influence and leadership throughout the Special Olympics organization, both on and off the playing field.



SONL is so proud to that Heather Miller is Special Olympics Canada Athlete Representative on SOC's Board of Directors. Leadership is not new to Heather. She sits on SONL Board of Directors, is the Chair of the Canadian Athlete Leadership Council, writes a newsletter - The Athlete Post and delivers many speeches to our sponsors and partners and works tirelessly to promote Special Olympics.

Athlete Leadership in Review by Heather Miller

Athlete Leadership is a new exciting role for an athlete to follow. I find my roles as an athlete Representative on the SONL board of Directors, chair for the Canadian Athlete Leadership Council(CALC) and an athlete representative on the board of directors of Special Olympics Canada challenging and rewarding. COVID has made things very different this past year; for an example. our CALC meetings have been held on zoom and I have been using my Special Olympics Athlete Post Facebook page as a way for athletes to stay connected.

I recently had the opportunity to chair one of our CALC meetings, CALC also had the opportunity to be part of the selection process in choosing the athlete of the year award winners, I am also part of SOC's Awards committee, and I got to take part in the selection process as well for all the national awards. In the first few months of the Pandemic I planned some karaoke nights and some social chats with some of the athletes all over the province. With the help of Rachel from Special Olympics Canada Program Manager I have taken on a big role in creating a On Boarding manual for new members that are joining our Canadian Athlete Leadership council.

Athlete leadership allows athletes to explore many opportunities outside sports. These roles include, becoming a voice for Athletes , A Health Messenger, an Athlete speaker, peer mentor, and positions on boards and committees.

“ Athlete Leadership has been as my cup of tea... I love it!”

Heather Miller



ATHLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Health Messenger

SONL athlete Andrew Hynes has completed Special Olympics Health Messenger Training and is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and advocate for the health of people with intellectual disabilities.

Andrew was trained this past summer and has already had several engagements; filming for SONL, speaking with sponsors and engaging the community about the benefits of Special Olympics and how it has helped him lead a healthy lifestyle.



HEALTH MESSENGER TRAINEE

Special Olympics
Newfoundland & Labrador

ANDREW HYNES

- Learn about the SO Health Program
- Be a healthy & positive role model to others
- Be a community leader & advocate for health of people with an Intellectual Disability
- Help others establish healthy lifestyles
- Be an empowered leader and help SO athletes in health & fitness

TEAM NL

Canada's Sports Hall of Fame



In addition to be inducted into the class of 2020/21 inductees for [Canada's Sports Hall of Fame](#), Jackie Barrett was named Special Olympics Canada Male Athlete of the Year in 2000 and 2015. In 2015, he also received the prestigious Dr. Frank Hayden Athlete Lifetime Achievement Award from Special Olympics Canada and became the first Special Olympics athlete to be nominated for the Lou Marsh Award as Canada's Top athlete.

After retiring from competition, Jackie has found several new roles in the Special Olympics organization; he is a peer mentor other powerlifters while volunteering as a Public Speaker, Ambassador, and Coach through the Special Olympics Canada Athlete Leadership Program.

He was also recruited to work with a committee to develop the National Coaching Certification Program's Powerlifting technical manual, which is now used across Canada. A tremendously accomplished athlete, Jackie Barrett remains at the forefront of the Special Olympics movement in Canada, shining a new light on what people with intellectual disabilities can accomplish in sport and life.

What's next for ALPs?

We continue to look forward to building our Athlete Leadership Program and working with our athletes to create an organization that upholds our values of empowerment, excellence, respect, diversity and inclusion.

2020 SO CANADA WINTER GAMES

Team NL could not have asked for a better Games experience!

Wow! Team NL had quite the showing at Special Olympics Canada 2020 Winter Games Thunder Bay, Ontario. We took a team of 43 athletes, 15 coaches and 6 mission staff and returned home with 45 medals; 11 Bronze, 13 silver and 21 gold. Just as important as the medal tally is the number of personal bests, fun stories, and learning opportunities every had.



Floor Hockey

Our Floor Hockey team played each game with clear eyes and full hearts. The level of sportsmanship was unparalleled and the team walked off the floor after each gaming - knowing that they gave it their all!



Skating

Melanie Taylor, our figure skater, had a fantastic performance to her chosen song "Shine your Light" by the Ennis Sisters. She skated her way into a 4th place finish. Brandon Park, our speedskater, skated in the 222m, 333m and 500m and came away with 2 silver medals and a gold!



5-pin Bowling

Bowling made the switch from a summer sport to a winter sport; but that did not stop our crew of 2 teams, 10 athletes, from playing their best! The bowlers led the way in team spirit; getting up to dance a jig to playing the spoons during breakfast. Their team work and comradery help them come home with 3 gold medals and a bronze!

2020 SO CANADA WINTER GAMES

Snowshoeing

The 9 snowshoeing athletes accumulated 17 medals; each athlete came home with a medal and a personal best during the Games. Governor General, Julie Payette, said during Opening Ceremonies - when the gold medal is at stake, give it your all and don't leave anything behind, and our snowshoe athletes ran with that advice during a cold week in Thunder Bay.



Cross Country Skiing

NL had both freestyle and classic style skiers at these Games! The 5 skiers came home with 16 medals and each member of the team brought home a minimum of 2 medals! The skiers had a fabulous week and made many new friends throughout the country.

Curling

The curlers came to the Games with one goal; to win one game. It was amazing to see what this team accomplished in Thunder Bay. They certainly worked at keeping butterflies in their coaches' stomachs during the week; there were many nail-biting moments and down to the last rock moves! However the team with a dream to win one game exceeded their own goals by bringing home the gold medal!



PARTNERSHIPS

SOBEYS SUPPORTS SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC WITH NUTRITION EDUCATION - AND \$1M DONATION

Due to the Covid-19 crisis, Sobeys Inc. (Sobeys) made the difficult decision to cancel its national checkstand fundraising campaign in support of Special Olympics Canada, scheduled June 18 to July 1, 2020. To ensure that this decision does not negatively impact Special Olympics athletes, Sobeys has honoured its fundraising target with a \$1 million donation.

As a Special Olympics Canada partner since 2016, Sobeys has contributed more than \$5.4 million in food and funds. Through this support, we have seen first-hand the difference nutrition education can make in empowering healthy bodies and healthy minds.

Special Olympics Canada thanks Sobeys for the astounding \$1 million donation. These much needed funds will help keep grassroots, community-led programs sustainable, supporting 49,600 athletes with an intellectual disability and 22,000 coaches and volunteers from coast to coast.

**MUCH LIKE OUR ATHLETES,
SOBEYS WON'T LET
OBSTACLES KEEP THEM
FROM GREAT THINGS.**



Sobeys

Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
Canada



Tim Hortons

Tim Hortons is the Lead National Corporate Sponsor of Active Start and FUNdamentals, providing cash and support through product and TimsTV. This extends Tim Hortons' support of grassroots sports programs for children and youth through its Timbits program. Tim Hortons signed on to be the sponsor of Special Olympics' Day of Inclusion in Canada. On July 21, 2018, Tim Hortons sold a Special Olympics donut designed by an athlete, raising funds and awareness for the movement and 50th Anniversary. The in-restaurant campaign raised more than \$121K for Special Olympics Canada and the Chapters. On July 20, 2019, the second Day of Inclusion ran at Tim Hortons and \$150K was raised. The 2020 Day of Inclusion was postponed due to COVID-19 and is currently scheduled to run in early 2021. Special Olympics Canada will confirm the date with Chapters in writing as soon as it's finalized by Tim Hortons.



Active Start

FUNdamentals

LETR

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics is the movement's largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle worldwide. 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 local, regional, provincial Special Olympics competitions and National Games.

Today, the Torch Run is more than just a run and encompasses a variety of fundraising vehicles such as T-shirt sales, special events including Polar Plunges, Cop on Top, Battle of the Badges, and a host of other events that have local appeal.

All funds raised through the Law Enforcement Torch Run Newfoundland & Labrador events are directed into program support that directly affects all community Special Olympic NL programs. Funds are then put into community programs and help pay for various expenses including: games travel, accommodations, meals, grants to new community programs, volunteer and athlete training, administration and information/promotional materials.



IN MEMORY

Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador would like to remember the following members that have passed away this year.



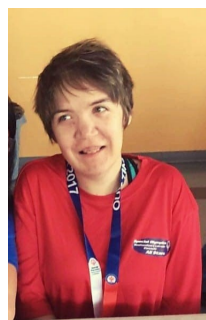
Gary Thompson, Happy Valley-Goose Bay Howling Huskies

Gary's absence will always be felt when the Huskies take the field, go on one of our many trips or just out and about in town; especially Northmart!

Gary and the other Howling Huskies are loved and supported by the Happy Valley Goose Bay community and I know they love this community just as much.

I would like to say thank you to the Thompson family, thank you for letting us be a part of Gary's life, he will forever be missed.

With Love and Respect,
The Howling Huskies



Terri-Lynn Penney, Clarenville All Stars

Terri Lynn was full of joy and quick with a smile and a laugh. She was a wonderful person and dedicated athlete who will be fondly remembered by our whole Special Olympics family.

We would like to share our heartfelt sympathies with her family as they grieve the passing of such an extraordinary person.



Andrew Ash, Mount Pearl

Throughout his life, Andrew devoted his time to participating in Special Olympics, attending The Vera Perlin Centre, and being a faithful parishioner of St. Michael and All Angels Church. In these organizations, Andrew developed and maintained a large circle of friends. He will be remembered for his radiant smile, sense of humour and loving nature.



PROVINCIAL SPONSORS



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Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
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Special Olympics Newfoundland & Labrador



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