

## TALKING POINTS



### Special Olympics New Jersey

- **Mission:** To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.
- Special Olympics New Jersey serves 20,000 + athletes across the Garden State
- **24 Sports** are offered throughout **4 Sports Seasons**, with annual state-wide events culminating the competition seasons at **Fall Games, Winter Games (just wrapped up), Spring Games (Basketball – March 25-26, Bowling – April 1-2) , and Summer Games (June 9-11 at TCNJ).**
- Additionally, more than **265 local competitions** take place throughout the state year-round.
- All programming is **FREE** to registered athletes. That includes all training, competition, uniforms, sports equipment, meals, housing, health programs and much more.
- The various fundraising events hosted by Special Olympics New Jersey throughout the year enable our athletes to train and compete. Upcoming events include the [Snow Bowl](#) at MetLife Stadium **March 3-5**, [Lincoln Tunnel Challenge 5K](#) on **May 7**, [Annual Torch Run](#) on **June 9**, and [Statue of Liberty 5K](#) on **July 4**.
- Visit [www.sonj.org](http://www.sonj.org) to learn more and get involved today.

### Polar Bear Plunge at Seaside Heights

- This is the **30th annual Polar Bear Plunge at Seaside Heights** to benefit Special Olympics New Jersey
- Visit [www.plungeseaside.org](http://www.plungeseaside.org) to see fundraising progress
- Presented by the **Law Enforcement Torch Run** for Special Olympics New Jersey
- Sponsored by the **New Jersey State PBA**
- Supported by **NJ 101.5** and **Wawa**
- The 2022 Polar Bear Plunge at Seaside Heights raised almost **\$2.1 Million**, while the 2020 Plunge was the largest on record, hosting **8,000 plungers** and raising over **\$2.5 Million**

- As of Friday, Feb 24, over **7,300 plungers pre-registered** and **\$2.3 million** has been raised

- Top Individuals –
  - **Lou Castano – \$22,493**
  - **David Coppola – \$21,350**
  - **Kevin Burke - \$16,784**
- Top Teams
  - **Bayshore Shrinky Dinks – 116 Members – \$105,178**
  - **2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Freeze-Out – 159 Members – \$102,415**
  - **NJKofC Polar Penguins – 51 Members – \$65,191**
  - **Team Wawa – 231 Members - \$24,588**

**Note:** Numbers are changing by the minute, check [www.plungeseaside.org](http://www.plungeseaside.org) for current stats.

- Individuals who registered in 2022 needed to **raise a minimum of \$100** to plunge. Those who registered in January needed to raise **\$110** minimum, in February a minimum of **\$120**, and day-of **\$125**.
- This is the **one of three Polar Bear Plunges** held each year for Special Olympics New Jersey. The **Polar Bear Plunge at Wildwood** raised over **\$288,000** this past January, and the **Thanks4Giving Splash and Dash in Asbury Park** along with the **Cools Schools Challenge** raised almost **\$100,000** last November.

### **The Law Enforcement Torch Run**

- Mission is to raise dollars and awareness of the Special Olympics Movement worldwide.
- Fundraising events are conducted year-round in New Jersey, including the [Annual Torch Run](#), Polar Bear Plunges, [Lincoln Tunnel Challenge 5k](#), [Liberty 5k](#), [United Airlines Plane Pull](#), [Bike SONJ: Ride for Inclusion](#), golf outings and an ever-evolving menu of local initiatives.
- In addition to fundraising, Law Enforcement officers volunteer at athletic competitions and events year-round while serving as ambassadors in their local communities.
- **Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics New Jersey raised almost \$10 Million in the last three years.**

**Special  
Olympics**  
New Jersey



LAW ENFORCEMENT  
**TORCH RUN**  
FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
NEW JERSEY



**NEW  
JERSEY 101.5**

**Wawa**