



## **Law Enforcement Torch Run Polar Plunge® Benefiting Special Olympics Illinois**

### **What is the Polar Plunge®?**

In a nutshell, participants collect pledges from friends, family and co-workers, in exchange for jumping into icy waters in the middle of winter. All proceeds collected by Plungers benefit Special Olympics Illinois athletes. Prizes may be awarded in several categories.

### **What it Takes to be a “Plunger”**

Anyone with a little guts and a warm heart wanting to support Special Olympics athletes is welcome to participate. In past years, participants have included children and adults, football players, mayors, police chiefs and officers, sheriffs and deputies, corporate employees, civic organizations, high school clubs, fraternities and sororities, media personalities and everyone in between. For the more hesitant souls, there is always plenty of room for spectators!

### **What Puts the “Icing on the Lake”**

More than 22,000 Special Olympics athletes and more than 20,000 Young Athletes have benefited from the more than \$16.5 million that has been raised by more than 60,000 Plungers since the event’s inception 18 years ago.

Its purpose is to simply raise funds to enhance Special Olympics’ 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 and other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

**For more information, call Sandy Nash at 1-800-394-0562 or visit [www.plungeillinois.com](http://www.plungeillinois.com)**

## When and Where the Plunge “Broke the Ice”

**1999:** The Plunge started in Lake Bluff and was a huge success, with 150 Plungers raising more than \$34,000.

**2000:** A second Plunge added at Lake of the Woods in Mahomet. That combined with Lake Bluff event, saw 280 Plungers raise more than \$79,000.

**2001:** A third Plunge was added at Rend Lake in Southern Illinois. Combined, there were 234 Plungers who raised more than \$95,000.

**2002:** A fourth Plunge was added at Lake Decatur. Combined, there were 317 Plungers who raised more than \$121,000.

**2003:** Three more Plunges were added in Galesburg, Manteno and Springfield. Combined, the seven Plunges had 524 Plungers who raised nearly \$191,000.

**2004:** Five more Plunges are added in Yorkville, Carlyle, Effingham, Peoria and Quincy. In total, the 12 Plunges had 1,073 Plungers who raised more than \$292,000.

**2005:** Two new Plunges were added in Rockford and Palatine, bringing the total to 14 Plunge sites. Nearly \$420,000 was raised by 1,429 Plungers

**2006:** Evanston was added to the locations for Plunges hosting both a single-time Plunge and the SUPER Plunge, where participants Plunge once an hour every hour for 24 hours. In total, 1,625 Plungers raised more than \$539,000.

**2007:** A Plunge was added at Fox Lakes and the Peoria Plunge was relocated to Bloomington. At the 16 Plunge locations, 2,050 Plungers raised nearly \$638,000.

**2008:** No new locations were added. Nearly \$858,000 was raised by 2,672 Plungers.

**2009:** A new Plunge was added at Lincoln. Nearly \$944,000 was raised by 3,623 Plungers.

**2010:** No new locations were added. GEICO added as a Presenting Sponsor for the Plunges statewide. For the first time, the Polar Plunges raised more than \$1 million and 45 SUPER Plungers raised more than \$100,000! In fact, more than \$1.3 was raised by 5,154 Plungers.

**2011:** A new Plunge was added at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, bringing the total of locations to 18. More than \$1.4 million was raised by 5,752 Plungers.

**2012:** Two new Plunges were added in Rock Island and Joliet, bringing the total to 20 locations. More than \$1.6 million was raised by 6,288 Plungers statewide.

**2013:** No new locations added. More than \$1.7 million was raised by 6,913 Plungers statewide.

**2014:** No new locations added. More than \$2.1 million was raised by 7,352 Plungers statewide.

**2015:** Illini Plunge added at University of Illinois Memorial Stadium in Champaign, bringing total of locations to 21 around the state at which to Plunge! More than \$2.25 million was raised by 7,666 Plungers statewide.

**2016:** New Plunges at Macomb and Oak Brook were added, Plunges at University of Illinois and Lake Bluff were dropped, and Evanston and SUPER Plunges were relocated to Clark Street Beach. Minimum amount to plunge raised to \$100.

**2017:** A new Plunge at Mendota was added.