



HISTORY

Across the United States, law enforcement officers carry the Special Olympics Torch on intrastate relays, running for a common cause that takes them through blizzards in Alaska, the daunting Florida Everglades, the endless farm land of Illinois, and the deserts of Arizona to bring the torch to the Opening Ceremonies of their state's Summer Special Olympics Games.

The dedication of more than 85,000 police chiefs, police officers, Secret Service and FBI agents, military police, sheriffs, state troopers, prison guards and other law enforcement personnel in 50 states, and 46 nations generate more than \$51 million annually and raise huge amounts of awareness for Special Olympics athletes.

The numbers are impressive. And the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run continues to grow.

The Torch Run began in 1981, when Wichita Kansas Police Chief Richard LaMunyon saw a need to raise funds for, and awareness of, Kansas Special Olympics. LaMunyon felt that Special Olympics was a fitting cause to unite local law enforcement officers, giving them closer ties to the community and to a very special population.

Each individual Torch Run is organized by law enforcement personnel with liaisons from Special Olympics. Law enforcement officers, carrying the Special Olympics Torch, run intervals along a planned route covering most of the state or country to the site of the Opening Ceremonies of the Chapter or International Special Olympics Summer Games. At that time they pass the torch to a Special Olympics athlete and together they run up to the caldron and light it signifying the beginning of the games. Law enforcement officers then become part of the ceremony as an honor guard.

After three years of success, LaMunyon presented his highly successful Torch Run program to the International Association of Chiefs of Polices (IACP), whose enthusiastic support enabled the Torch Run to expand to nine states. Two years later, The Good Sam Club, a national organization of recreation vehicle owners, volunteered to provide massive logistical assistance as a National Support Sponsor.

The Torch Run grew enthusiastically through increased support of the Adopt-A-Cop program, a donation program built for businesses, service clubs, and schools. The naming in 1988 of Arnold Schwarzenegger as the Official Honorary Chairman served notice that the Torch Run had arrived.

As the Torch Run continued to grow, it took on another dimension: International Games Torch Run. In 1987 the sponsors and organizers created the Final Leg - A Torch Run extravaganza in which law enforcement representatives carried the Special Olympics Torch from Chicago, the site of the First International Summer Special Olympics Summer Games in 1968, to the 7th International Summer Special Olympics Games in South Bend, Indiana. Now, every two years there is a special Torch Run leading to the International Summer and International Winter Special Olympics Games (organized in alternating years). These Torch Runs are comprised of runners from every state and participating country.

ILLINOIS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN FACTS

- Began in Illinois in 1986
- In 1986 the Torch Run began with 5 Legs and fewer than 100 runners carrying the torch along five legs: North (starting in South Beloit), South (starting in Cairo), East (starting in Quincy), West (starting in Danville), and the city of Chicago
- Illinois' first Torch Run raised just \$14,039.93
- Today's Torch Run is made up of Law Enforcement officers from many different agencies around the state: Chiefs of Police, Illinois State Police, FBI, City and County Police, Corrections, National Guard and many more Law Enforcement associations and groups
- Since 1986, the Torch Run has raised more than \$35 million for Special Olympics Illinois
- In 2002, the Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run was 5th highest grossing Torch Run in the World, raising more than \$1.2 million for Special Olympics Illinois for the first time ever
- In 2015, the Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run surpassed another milestone, raising more than \$4.1 million for Special Olympics Illinois – a more than \$300,000 increase from the 2014 fundraising efforts
- The 2016 Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run will take place June 5-10, with the Special Olympics Illinois State Summer Games running from June 10-12 in Normal, Illinois

Examples of law enforcement agencies and organizations supporting the Torch Run include:

Administration Courts	NEMEG Narcotics Enforcement	Conservation	FBI
Police Departments	Corrections Department	Railway	IRS
County Coroners	Secret Service	Campus	DEA
Secretary of State	Multi-Training Unit (MTU)	State Police	Sheriffs
Health/Human Services	Illinois Police Association	US Postal Service	
State's Attorneys	Military Police	US Marshals Office	

Key Organizational roles in the Torch Run:

SPECIAL OLYMPICS INC. (SOI)

International headquarters for Special Olympics offers its considerable human and organizational resources in all 50 U.S. Chapters and various National Programs to support the Torch Run, and coordinates involvement of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, law enforcement organizations, International Special Olympics Games Committees and U.S. national sponsors.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE (IACP)

The official international organizing body is an international organization of Chiefs of Police and other law enforcement organizations and officials who have endorsed the Torch Run and are committed to facilitating the delivery of support from law enforcement to Special Olympics at every level. The IACP seeks the support of the Association of Chiefs of Police in each state or country asking for written endorsement of the project, requesting appointment of a Torch Run Director and secure logistical, fundraising and media relations support.

THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

An international union of sworn officers, the F.O.P. has adopted the Law Enforcement Torch Run as one of its official charitable activities. The F.O.P. will seek the support of officers in each state or country.