

Be Cool.

TAKE THE PLUNGE.



COLLEGE CUP

ABOUT US

Special Olympics Illinois builds a more inclusive world alongside people with intellectual disabilities. We believe that when athletes have the support to use their abilities, everyone thrives. Through year-round sports, health, and leadership programs, we create opportunities for growth, personal development, and connection.

Serving more than 60,000 athletes, Unified partners, coaches, and volunteers, we offer training and competition in 18 sports, working with individuals to reach their potential while strengthening communities.

WHAT IS POLAR PLUNGE?

The Polar Plunge is one of the largest and most iconic Law Enforcement Torch Run/Special Olympics Illinois fundraisers. Each winter, thousands of participants across the state brave icy waters to support Special Olympics Illinois athletes. Each Plunge across the state offers a festive atmosphere with costumes, team spirit and community celebration.

WHAT IS THE COLLEGE CUP?

College students have significant impact and influence on the 27 traditional plunge locations across the state. As a recognition for their participation, The College Cup is an epic statewide competition encouraging universities and colleges to fundraise and bring awareness about Special Olympics Illinois and Polar Plunge to their campuses and communities.

There are two ways your school can take part: form a team (or several) and plunge at one of our 27 official plunge locations, or create your own Polar Plunge event right on campus.

Claim victory in The College Cup by becoming the top fundraising college or university, and earn ultimate bragging rights along with the coveted College Cup Trophy.

WHO CAN JOIN?

Any college or university – students, faculty, groups, fraternities, sororities, and community members.



HOW TO PARTICIPATE?

Start Here: Have your Team Captain fill out the College Cup Interest Form to let us know how your school wants to participate.

Then Take Your Pick: Join a Traditional Plunge: Gather your classmates and create a team to at a local plunge near you. Be sure to register as Collegiate team and select your school during sign-up.

Host a Campus Plunge: Want to plunge on campus? Rally your RSOs, Greek Life, or any other student groups to plan a fun, create plunge event. Use a pool, portable tank, fire hose, water trough, buckets of cold water, even a water balloon fight. Make it your own. The goal is to be imaginative and inclusive, and raise a lot of donations.

Fundraise. Fundraise. Fundraise: Use our [Fundraising Guide](#) for ideas to boost donations and become a Plunge Influencer and share your participation with your friends and family.

Track Your Progress: See how your school stacks up against others on plungeillinois.com/collegecup.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

The top Statewide school fundraiser will be awarded THE COLLEGE CUP TROPHY and ultimate bragging rights!

WHY HOST AN ON CAMPUS PLUNGE?

Hosting a Cool School Plunge is more than a fundraiser, it's a powerful way to build a stronger, more inclusive school community. It aligns with the Special Olympics Illinois Unified Champion Schools strategy by engaging students of all abilities in meaningful, school-wide activities that promote respect, leadership, and teamwork. The Cool School Challenge is also a fun and impactful team-building experience that teaches students the value of inclusion and responsibility of citizenship. Best of all, it directly benefits the athletes of Special Olympics Illinois. Please reach out to jhosteny@soill.org with questions.

PLUNGE SAFETY POLICY

The first priority of Special Olympics Illinois is always the safety and health of our athletes, volunteers, Staff, and supporters. For that reason, all of our Special Olympics Illinois-hosted events will be held within our local health and CDC event guidelines.

Cool School Challenge participants are encouraged to be safe with their Polar Plunge choices. During our hosted Polar Plunge events, Special Olympics Illinois utilizes professional dive teams in the water and emergency responders to ensure the safety of participants. Do not attempt to jump into a lake, river, or any other open body of water to participate in the Cool School Challenge.

Participants should not do anything that could physically harm themselves or others. Special Olympics Illinois is not responsible for any injuries that occur while participating in the Cool School Challenge.

