



NEWS RELEASE

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Special Olympics Hawaii Makes a Splash with New, Paradise Plunge Fundraiser

*The traditional, in-person Polar Plunge fundraiser was reinvented to the "Paradise Plunge,"
inviting participants to seas the day and show their support virtually*

HONOLULU – As Special Olympics Hawaii safely gets into the swim of things, they made the decision to reinvent their traditional, in-person Polar Plunge fundraiser into a newly created event they've named the "Paradise Plunge." This creative, new format allows participants to safely support local athletes by sharing a video or photo of themselves taking a dip in the ocean or performing any type of water activity – such as beach bodyboarding, surfing, or taking the plunge in a swimming pool. To sign up, make a donation or for more information on how to participate, please visit: www.sohawaii.org.

"This month we are excited to launch an exciting and safe way for the community to support our athletes during this time with our first-ever Paradise Plunge fundraiser. The event challenges participants to plunge at their favorite beach, taking advantage of our beautiful island home and weather, or even taking the plunge at their neighborhood swimming pool," says Tracey Bender, Special Olympics Hawaii's director of development. "Due to the pandemic we have had to postpone or even cancel many critical fundraisers which makes each fundraiser – like our Paradise Plunge – even more important as we work to safely return our athletes to the playing fields they love."

The Paradise Plunge is open to individuals, families and student groups, and anyone else who wants to take the plunge to support Special Olympics Hawaii athletes. All plungers are asked to raise a minimum \$100 donation to receive a Paradise Plunge event shirt. There is also a reduced fundraising goal of \$50 for students of all ages, elementary through college.

Participants can take the plunge by planning a day visiting their favorite beach and going diving, boating, surfing, or even taking a dip in the swimming pool if they'd prefer. Plungers are asked to send photos or a 60-second, horizontal video clip of themselves making waves performing their "Paradise Plunge" at WeTransfer.com to development@sohawaii.org. The deadline for submissions is Sunday, August 30.

Following the completion of the event, Special Olympics Hawaii will release a 2020 Paradise Plunge compilation video for participants to enjoy and to share with donors and supporters.

Special Olympics Hawaii would like to thank its partners statewide whose support is key to making year-round sports, inclusion and health opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities a reality. A special mahalo to this year's Paradise Plunge sponsor Hawaiian Telcom who is providing Silver Medal support.

Polar Plunges are typically held across the Northeastern and Midwestern states, where participants jump into frozen lakes or ponds to help raise funds for local nonprofits. Since 2010, Special Olympics Hawaii's annual Polar Plunge has helped raise \$527,700 for Special Olympics Hawaii health and sports programs.

Proceeds from this event will help Special Olympics Hawaii to continue to provide virtual and online programs to serve athletes and keep them safe (as many are considered a vulnerable population) during the pandemic and will also help to ensure over 3,400 children and adults with intellectual disabilities can one day return back to the in-person sports. Funds will also help to ensure the organization can provide the necessary equipment and PPE for athletes and coaches so that when they do return to in-person trainings and competitions that they can do so safely.

Special Olympics Hawaii provides year-round sports programs and training for athletes with intellectual disabilities, free of charge. Since 1968, Special Olympics has been changing attitudes about the talents of people with intellectual disabilities and raising awareness to build an inclusive and unified community.

For more information on Special Olympics, please visit www.sohawaii.org. You can also follow Special Olympics Hawaii on Twitter, www.twitter.com/SOHawaii, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympicsHawaii, and on Instagram at www.instagram.com/SOHawaii.

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About Special Olympics Hawaii

Special Olympics is a global inclusion movement using sport, health, education, and leadership programs every day around the world to end discrimination against and empower people with intellectual disabilities. [Founded in 1968](#), Special Olympics Hawaii has grown to serve more than 5,196 athletes and Unified partners on every island in our state. With the support of more than 10,800 coaches and volunteers, Special Olympics

delivers [10 Olympic-type sports](#) and over 50 games and competitions throughout the year. Special Olympics is supported by individuals, foundations and corporate partners.

There is never a fee to any athlete or family to participate in Special Olympics programs. Engage with us on: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). Learn more at www.SOHawaii.org.