

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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It's time for the Aloha SOMO Plunge! The official party of winter is Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024

MARYLAND HEIGHTS - The 18th Annual Maryland Heights Polar Plunge and 1st Annual Polar Bear Strut 5k will take place on Feb. 24, 2024. Brave men and women from around the area will don Hawaiian-themed costumes and swimwear and take "polar" dips into Creve Coeur Lake. Their Reason for Freezin' is the athletes of Special Olympics Missouri (SOMO)! All proceeds from this year's event will benefit training and competition for the thousands of SOMO athletes across the state, including right here in the St. Louis Metro Area.

The Polar Plunge is open to anyone 10 years or older who is a fan of having a good time for a good cause. The event is hosted by the Maryland Heights and Hazelwood Police Departments and will take place at the Treymane Pavillion at Creve Coeur Park. Day-of registration begins at 11 a.m., and the Plunge starts promptly at 1 p.m.

"I love seeing our St. Louis Metro Area communities come together for this event to support our incredible SOMO athletes," Plunge Coordinator Kellen Wolters said.

In 2023, Polar Plungers raised more than \$65,400 for SOMO athletes. Each participant must raise a minimum of \$75 to take the Plunge and can earn incentives by reaching fundraising goals. This year's goal is \$75,000, and organizers hope to break the million-dollar mark across the state with more than 10 events.

For those not interested in the cold water, SOMO invites everyone out to the Polar Bear Strut 5k! This 5k Fun Run/Walk is another way to show your bravery in the freezing cold! You can run, walk, roll or strut through the cold winter air. Whatever works! You can sign up for the [Polar Bear Strut 5k here!](#) It will begin at 10 a.m.

Costumes are highly encouraged. Awards will be given in the following categories for pre-registered Plungers only:

- Top Individual Fundraiser
- Top Fundraising Community Group
- Top Fundraising School Group
- Top Fundraising Law Enforcement Group

Golden Plunger awards for the most creative costumes will also be presented to Top Law Enforcement Group, Top Community Group, and Top School Group.

No wet suits are allowed, and shoes are required.

The easiest and most efficient way to register and fundraise is online. Simply go to our [online fundraising page](#) to sign up. We encourage Plungers to email their friends and families to support their

Plunge efforts. Paper registration forms are also available at the SOMO St. Louis Metra Area office. Mail or deliver pre-registration forms and the minimum \$75 contribution to Special Olympics Missouri Plunge 2945 S. Brentwood Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63144.

Plunging participants will receive an official Polar Plunge commemorative shirt, bragging rights for freezing your fur off, and a Plunger meal. Participants can also receive incentives for reaching fundraising goals: \$250 – Beach Towel, \$500 – Sling Bag, \$1,000 – Stanley Cup and \$2,000 – Tech Gloves and all other items.

SOMO is lucky to have a Plunge Ambassador helping with this event. Our Plunge Ambassador for this year's Plunge is Glenn Plank. Glenn is a SOMO athlete, and he has been working for months to help spread awareness of the Plunge!

If you'd like to set up an interview with any of our Plunge Ambassadors or receive any additional information about the Polar Plunge, please contact Kellen Wolters at 314-961-7755 or email wolters@somo.org.

Thank you so much to our sponsors!

- Our Polar Level sponsors are Premiere Rentals, Special School District of St. Louis and Fox2/KPLR
- Our Tundra Level sponsor is Hollywood Casino

Please note: This Plunge is separate from our Lake Saint Louis Plunge, which will be held on Saturday, Feb. 3. [Click here for more information on our Lake Saint Louis Plunge!](#)

Special Olympics Missouri

Special Olympics Missouri (SOMO) is a year-round program of sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Thousands of athletes participate in 13 Olympic-type sports throughout the state. SOMO provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy as they participate in the sharing of gifts and friendship with their fellow athletes, their family and friends, and communities across Missouri.

SOMO is proud of our financial health, returning 82% of every dollar back to program services. We are privileged to be recognized with these honors: Better Business Bureau A+ Charity Accreditation, Guidestar Gold Level and Charity Navigator 4-star rating. Special Olympics was also recently named Morning Consult's No. 4 most trusted nonprofit.

Thank you for trusting us with your donations, volunteer time and your goodwill.

Visit Special Olympics Missouri at www.somo.org. Engage with us on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Tik-Tok, Threads, LinkedIn and YouTube.

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