

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Alex Jones, Plunge Coordinator

573-469-7864

ajones@somo.org

18th Annual Columbia Polar Plunge raises more than \$63,000 for Special Olympics Missouri

COLUMBIA - The 18th Annual Columbia Polar Plunge on March 8 at Finger Lakes State Park was a splashing success, raising more than \$63,000 to date. A total 200 brave men and women from around the area donned costumes and swimwear to take a chilly dip into the lake at Finger Lakes State Park. Their Reason for Freezin' was the athletes of Special Olympics Missouri (SOMO).

Online fundraising is still ongoing. Organizers of the Plunge still hope to raise an additional \$7,000 to reach the goal of \$70,000. Donations can be made on our [online fundraising page!](#)

"The Columbia Polar Plunge was a great success," Plunge Coordinator Alex Jones said. "A big thank you to our plungers, volunteers and sponsors! This event could not happen without them! MSHP Troop F went above and beyond as our host this year. They really made this event a huge hit!"

Top individual fundraisers:

- 1st Place Fundraiser – Gus Bousquet | \$4,529 (Hickman High School Kewpsicles)
- 2nd Place Fundraiser – Jason Bricker | \$2,500 (Individual Plunger)
- 3rd Place Fundraiser – Sarah Byland | \$2,442 (GLOW with SOMO Athletes and Friends)

Top team fundraisers:

- Top Fundraising Team – Isle of Capri Casino | \$5,593
- Top Law Enforcement Team – Luminous Law (MSHP Troop F) | \$3,985
- Top Fundraising School – Hickman High School Kewpsicles | \$4,709

Competition for the Golden Plunger was steep this year. Participants were encouraged to come in costume and compete for the chance to take home the "Golden Plunger."

- Group 1st Place – Jelly Fish- Jefferson City High School Student Council
- Individual 1st Place – Scuba Diver- Jason Bricker
- School Team 1st Place – Neon-Fulton High School Student Council

SOMO was lucky to have two Plunge Ambassadors helping with this event. Our Plunge Ambassadors for this year's Plunge were Kenlee Lewis and Joe Collins. They are both SOMO athletes, and they worked for months to help spread awareness of the Plunge! Collins and Lewis are both in our Athlete Leadership Program!

This year's event was held in conjunction with the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Thank you so much to our sponsors!

- Our Polar Level sponsors are The Columbia Missourian, Clear 99, and KOMU.

For more information about the Polar Plunge, visit PlungeMO.org.

Media is welcome to download and use any pictures from [our Flickr page](#).

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 12 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 83% 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. 5 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 [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Tik-Tok](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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