



**POLAR PLUNGE.**



FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS NORTH CAROLINA

## **Tips to maximize fundraising for your Polar Plunge**

One of the most effective means of fundraising is by creating a personalized online fundraising page. Special Olympics NC provides access to individuals to create a personalized page that can be shared with all your contacts through email, blogs and social media – such as Facebook and Twitter. Your contacts can donate safely and securely via credit card.

To create a page, go to [www.polarplungenc.com](http://www.polarplungenc.com) and select the Polar Plunge where you will participate.

### **Suggestions for creating effective online fundraising pages:**

1. Personalize your page. Add a picture, write a brief paragraph on what you're doing or if you're plunging in honor of someone, and include information about Special Olympics NC.
2. Be sure to note that donations are 100% tax deductible.
3. Post your fundraising goal. Most plunges have a minimum fundraising amount, but you are encouraged to raise more! The more you raise, the more SONC athletes you are able to help experience the joy of sports.
4. Add an incentive for people to donate. Make donating a contest for your friends and family; let people know that for every \$25 they donate, they could be entered into a drawing for a great prize. Be creative; offer to bake cookies, raffle off tickets to a game you can't attend, giveaway a bottle of wine you've been saving ...
5. Link your fundraising page to your social network sites

### **Make sure you SPREAD THE WORD**

Once your website is set up, you want to share that link with everyone you know! The fastest and easiest way to start is to send out an email to everyone in your address book. You may also consider sending snail mail letters to your holiday card list.

### **How to write a good Email or Letter**

To ensure that your friends and family know what a great cause you're supporting, follow these simple steps:

- Introduction - let people know that you're planning on "Freezin' for a Reason" to support the mission of Special Olympics NC
- Be sure to include information about Special Olympics NC and where the money goes.
- Include why you are supporting Special Olympics NC... Are you plunging in honor of anyone?
- "The Ask" or request for a donation is really important. Make sure you specifically ASK for help reaching your goal by ASKING for a donation
- Let people know how to donate (either through your webpage or include a self-addressed envelope and donation reply card if you're mailing letters)
- Tell them donations are 100% tax deductible
- Include a personal fundraising deadline so people don't put off donating -remember, funds must be raised by the day of the event
- Closing and Thank you

## **EMAILS vs. LETTERS**

Email is the fastest way to get your online fundraising website out to all your family and friends. It is also a great tool for sending event updates and reminder emails. Letters take a bit more time but can be really effective at letting people know how serious you are about reaching your goal.

Ideally, use both! Some people you know will respond better to a letter, knowing you took the time to write and mail one. Others may prefer the ease of simply clicking on a link in an email to donate on line. Many people will need more than one request to donate, so it's okay to send your invitation to donate via both email and letter.

## **Use Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Blogging**

Social media is a great way to self-promote! Connect with people who you would normally not be in regular contact with and let them know you are fundraising.

Some tips:

- Use your Facebook status update with your website link
- Tweet your web link to let people know what you are doing.
- Start a fan page on Facebook and invite all of your "friends" to be a fan. Be sure to include your fundraising page link on your fan page and send out periodic updates.
- You can also start a blog that chronicles your journey to plunge – including your thoughts, what you are going to wear, etc.