

## **What is the Law Enforcement Torch Run?:**

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics began in 1981 in Wichita, Kansas when Police Chief Richard LaMunyon saw an urgent need to raise funds for, and increase awareness of, Special Olympics. The idea for the Torch Run was to provide local law enforcement officers with an opportunity to volunteer with Special Olympics in the communities where the officers lived and worked. After three successful years in Kansas, Chief LaMunyon presented his idea to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, which endorsed Special Olympics as its official charity through the Torch Run.

Law enforcement from all 50 United States, 10 Canadian provinces and territories and 35 nations carry the “Flame of Hope” in honor of Special Olympics athletes in their area and around the world. The “Flame of Hope” symbolizes courage and celebration of diversity and the inclusion of all people around the world. The Torch Run is the largest grassroots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle for Special Olympics in the world. This international program has raised over \$600 million to support Special Olympics programs. More than 97,000 law enforcement personnel from thousands of agencies around the world have been “Guardians of the Flame” and carried the “Flame of Hope.”

## **Tips for Selling T-Shirts/Getting Involved in Final Leg:**

- Get your local community involved! The Final Leg can have not only the local police departments and sheriff’s offices involved, but also the local fire department, ambulance, administration, family members, retired officers, and so many more come out and support the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics!
- If people are unable to run, they can still purchase an LETR T-Shirt or Baseball hat for \$20! Have them come out and line the street to cheer on those officers running through.
- Contact people to take pictures! Whether it is asking for a volunteer photographer to follow the leg or if people can take pictures with their phones, any pictures to help document the Flame of Hope coming through helps!
- Let your local media know! Spread the word to local newspapers, radio stations and news stations that the torch will be coming through your community. Contact your leg leader for details of timing and where your rest stops will be.
- Spread the word on social media! Use your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other outlets to spread the word! Use the hashtags #SOMN, #SOMNLETR #MNFINALLEG
- Hang fliers around your department and local community areas (i.e. libraries, local YMCA, City Halls) to let the public know the Final Leg is coming!