

Getting Your Department Involved



Setting Department Goals and Establishing a Formula for Success

The first step in a successful Torch Run effort is setting a fundraising goal for your agency. For new departments, that goal should be something ambitious but realistic. For departments that have been involved before, try to increase your revenue from the previous year. Whatever your goal is make sure you periodically inform everyone in your department concerning the progress of that goal, for example: "We have raised \$2,500, almost halfway to our goal of \$5,000."

The second step is to make sure your agency's upper management is behind the Torch Run effort and everyone in your department knows the goal and can easily get involved. Also, make sure each person knows about Special Olympics and the Torch Run.

Next, form a committee. This will be very helpful in terms of organization and relieving you from all of the responsibilities. If your department is large, by forming a committee consisting of representatives from all areas of your agency, communication lines will be greatly improved to officers working different shifts. Effective lines of communication will increase T-shirt and hat sales.

One idea is to separate your department's responsibility for the run and ceremony from the fundraising aspect of the Torch Run. Have one person in charge of the logistics of the run and one person in charge of fundraising (distributing T-shirts, collecting and depositing money, etc.). Committee members and volunteer officers can be assigned to assist the Departmental Coordinator in both areas.

Delegating responsibility to committed officers within your agency will help your operation run smoothly. Officers can be assigned anything from ceremony set-up, to handling a specific fundraising event. Determine your department's priorities and use your committee to see your needs are filled. This will also allow for the development of others to step up to leadership roles. Remember, each individual department that raises \$1,000+ will get its department name on the 2010 Torch Run T-Shirt, along with receiving a plaque of appreciation from Special Olympics Minnesota.

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Inter-Department Competitions & Incentives

In addition to the incentives are offered at the state level, many departments have their own incentive and competition programs. Recognition goes a long way in saying "Thank you" for the effort and the help. Whatever you do, make sure all incentives or contests are advertised to the entire department well in advance. Some ideas include:

- Have a plaque made for the platoon or unit that raises the most money. Do the same for the individual that raises the most money.
- Let top fundraisers carry the torch during your run while the media is there. Get their names mentioned in the department newsletter!
- One department's chief offered an extra paid day off to the platoon that raised the most money for the Torch Run.