



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**“Chill-seekers” get ready for Special Olympics Polar Plunge®  
into San Francisco Bay**

***COLD WATER CAN'T FREEZE WARM HEARTS ON SATURDAY, FEB. 27***

**PLEASANT HILL, Calif.** – Last year 200 plus people came dressed as leprechauns, super heroes, cereal boxes, rock stars, drag queens and other unusual characters to jump into the San Francisco Bay in the middle of winter all for fun and raising money for a good cause. This year's Special Olympics Polar Plunge® promises more zany fun as such teams as the Submergin' Sturgeons, Wet Wedgies, Cow Town Floaters and Frozen Toes are signed up to plunge on Saturday, Feb. 27.

Families like the Agpawas can't even imagine a world without Special Olympics. Born with a rare combination of Hydrocephalus (medical condition of the brain) and a cleft lip and palate, 25-year-old Candy was not given much hope for improvement in mental or physical development. No friends of her own, Candy traveled around to her siblings' sporting events and activities, until the family learned about Special Olympics. Through participation in Special Olympics, Candy learned she can live a normal, healthy, active life.

“Special Olympics gave me the courage to try new things and trust myself. People respect me and admire me for my determination to succeed.” Candy and her mom will take the plunge again this year for a cause close to their hearts.

The Polar Plunge® fundraising event has become increasingly important for Special Olympics Northern California and it makes all the difference to the 5,000 plus Bay Area athletes who rely on individual and community donations at a time when many funding sources have waned.

“We really rely on these community fundraisers to provide thousands of developmentally disabled athletes with free training and competition opportunities,” said Rick Collett, CEO and President of Special Olympics



Northern California. "Our program is not a one-time event but a year-round sports program. Special Olympics is a lifestyle for our athletes. It gets them up in the morning; they look forward to meeting up with their friends, and it builds confidence so that they know they can interact and be a part of the greater community."

The Polar Plunge® is organized much like a walk-a-thon. Participants will get donations from people who sponsor them to enter the chilly water. Many plungers create personal web pages to seek donations from friends and family. To support the entrants, see how the pledges are accumulated or to become a Polar Plunger, visit [www.sonc.org/polarplunge](http://www.sonc.org/polarplunge)

Although plungers are not required to totally submerge, they must register for the activity and sign a waiver. People also should be healthy enough to participate and take precautionary safety measures – including wearing shoes to protect their feet from debris before entering the water.

Local news reporter John Sasaki from KTVU, Channel 2, and the KKIQ/KKDV Hometown Morning Show with morning disc jockeys Wayne Coy, Heather Quarterman and Don Potter will be taking the plunge along with Special Olympics athletes, community groups and officers from several local law enforcement agencies and the California Highway Patrol whose year-round support of Special Olympics Northern California helps provide training for thousands of Special Olympic athletes. The San Francisco Plunge is sponsored by KTVU, Channel 2, K-LOVE Radio, KKIQ/KKDV radio, and the Bay Area News Group.

San Francisco is one of five locations where the annual Polar Plunge® benefiting Special Olympics Northern California will be held on Feb. 27. Polar Plunges also will be held at Millerton Lake in Fresno, Noyo Beach at Fort Bragg, and Clear Lake at Kelseyville. A fifth Polar Plunge will be Saturday, March 20 at Zephyr Cove, South Lake Tahoe.

## **THE EVENT**

Special Olympics Northern California will host the "Freezin' for a Reason" 2010 Polar Plunge® at noon Feb. 27 at Crissy Field in San Francisco. The event also will include entertainment, a costume contest, awards and prizes. Registration begins at 10 a.m., followed by a parade of costumes at noon. The event concludes at 1 p.m. with a post-plunge party. To learn more, visit [www.sonc.org/polarplunge](http://www.sonc.org/polarplunge) or call (925) 944-0594 ext 232.



### **About Special Olympics Northern California**

Special Olympics Northern California is a free year-round sports training and competition program for children and adults with developmental disabilities. More than 13,000 athletes compete in over 170 competitions throughout the region in 12 sports. Find out how you can be a fan and visit [www.SONC.org](http://www.SONC.org)

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