



# 2018 EXECUTIVE CHALLENGE TOOLKIT

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# EXECUTIVE CHALLENGE TOOLKIT

**Party like it's 32 degrees.** You may have heard about the Polar Plunge from a friend, seen it on TV or even read about it online, but what exactly is this “Plunge” everyone is talking about?

So you're saying you've never jumped into frigid Minnesota waters in the middle of the winter? Well, we can help change that!

Each year, the Polar Plunge challenges thousands of brave jumpers at numerous locations around the state. It's a great way for everyone—individuals, organizations and businesses—to get involved in supporting Special Olympics Minnesota. All funds raised go towards programming and events for more than 8,200 athletes statewide.

Think you have what it takes? The concept is simple: participants raise a minimum of \$75 and take a dip into one of Minnesota's frozen lakes. But the Plunges are so much more than that: They're the kind of fun and thrilling events that you really have to experience to understand. Grab some friends, get pumped and register today!

Polar Plungers can follow this example by bravely taking a chilly dip! Visit **PlungeMN.org** for more information. You can also contact us at **plunge@somn.org** or **800.783.7732, ext. 280**.

## 2018 POLAR PLUNGES

White Bear Lake	January 27	Prior Lake	February 17
Owatonna	January 27	Anoka County	February 24
Willmar/Spicer	January 27	South Metro	February 24
Snow Park	January 28	Alexandria	February 25
Maple Grove	February 3	Minneapolis	March 2-3
St. Peter	February 3	Brainerd	March 3
Snow Park Night Plunge	February 3	Eden Prairie	March 10
Rochester	February 9-10	Mille Lacs	March 10
Woodbury	February 10	Buffalo	March 10
St. Cloud	February 17	Grand Rapids	March 17
Duluth	February 16-17	Warroad	March 17

## WHAT IS THE EXECUTIVE CHALLENGE?

**Chal•lenge** - *something that by its nature or character serves as a call to battle, contest, special effort, etc.*

In 2016, the Executive Challenge was held at the Minneapolis Polar Plunge. More than thirty executives from across the state of Minnesota raised more than \$220,000 dollars by loosening their ties, tossing their suit jackets, and taking an icy dip into, or a brisk walk/run around, Lake Calhoun. This new challenge is definitely becoming one of Minnesota's most exciting and prestigious events during the Polar Plunge season.

Take your pick! The Executive Challenge will involve executives either jumping into the icy waters on Friday, March 2, 2018 at Lake Calhoun; or participating in the 5K the day of the Plunge on Saturday, March 3, 2018. Executives choosing to take the Plunge will jump into the frigid waters, with FOX 9 Chief Meteorologist Ian Leonard, live on the FOX 9 news at 5 p.m. (pending any breaking news). Executives participating in the 5K will lead off the walk/run Saturday morning, and are still invited to the live broadcast on Friday night (you just won't have to take the Plunge!)

Following the Plunge on Friday evening, executives and guests are invited to join us inside our Plunge VIP tent for an evening they won't forget, with guest speaker Ian Leonard and several Special Olympics Minnesota athletes. Executives will receive complimentary access for 10 at the event which boasts great food and entertainment.

On Saturday, the day of the Plunge, executives are encouraged to cheer on their corporate Plunge team, and are invited to the VIP lodge, where free food, entertainment and a live feed of the Plunge awaits, not to mention a warm place to hang out!

To participate, executives must raise a minimum of \$10,000. This can be raised through a combination of pledges (family, friends, coworkers), a corporate gift, an individual contribution, or special event.

### Looking to take the Executive Challenge?

**Contact**      **Kelley Jensen**  
kelley.jensen@somn.org  
763.270.7145

## HOW TO RALLY YOUR COMPANY TO GET INVOLVED

With more than 20 opportunities to take the Polar Plunge, we'd love to see your company become involved to help us continue to grow and expand the Plunges, and raise more funds to support Special Olympics Minnesota. The following are several ways your company can help spread the word about the Plunge, and get your employees excited about being freezin' for a reason:

- Advertise the Plunge around your office by displaying the following\*:
  - Plunge Table Tents
  - Plunge Brochures
  - Customizable Posters/Plunge Posters
  - Plunge Rack Cards

*\* Plunge tools are described in detail on pages 7–8*
- Host a Plunge booth. Recruit team members or pledges by handing out Plunge materials.
- Host Snowflake P. Bear, the Plunge mascot, for a few hours or the entire day. Contact [plunge@somn.org](mailto:plunge@somn.org) to see if Snowflake is available.
- Ask for support by posting your team information on the company's website or intranet with a link to your Plunge team page.
- With permission, set all employee's home pages to either PlungeMN.org or to your team page.
- Email employees information about the Plunge and instructions on how to join the team.
- Include Plunge information in your email (e.g. email tag line).
- Social Media: Use Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, blogs, etc. to recruit team members, bring awareness to your Plunge, and ask for pledges!
- Feature a team member, a.k.a. Plunger, weekly/monthly. Highlight their Plunge story, pledges raised, their 2017 Plunge plan including costume and more!
- Hold Plunge contests within the company to see who can raise the most pledges. E.g. Frost the Boss: Management will Plunge if a certain amount of pledges are raised or the President will Plunge if a certain number of employees will Plunge and/or raise a certain amount of pledges. Don't forget to make the contest competitive yet fun!
- Form teams within your company to raise the competitive spirit. Set goals such as recruiting the most Plungers or raising the most pledges. Increase the excitement by offering incentives!
- Dress for the Plunge Day: employees who pledge can dress casual, in their Plunge costume, etc.
- Plunge Icons: Sell Plunge icons to supporters. Icons can be placed throughout the office showing the names of those who support the Plungers and Special Olympics Minnesota.
- Challenge another company to take the Corporate Challenge. Everyone enjoys friendly competition.
- Remember: Your Plunge team does not need to consist of only employees. Invite your family and friends to join in on the freezin' for a reason, as well.

**The options are endless to spread the word out about the Plunge!**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **I registered online, now what do I do?**

- Spread the word! Inform your family, friends and coworkers.
- Utilize the Plunge Tools (found in your folder).
- Start raising money towards your 10,000 dollar goal!

### **What do I wear to the Plunge?**

- Suit and tie? A costume? Corporate t-shirt? Feel free to get creative!
- You **MUST WEAR SHOES** while Plunging.
- Remember to bring a towel and warm clothes/shoes to change into afterwards!

### **Will my head go under water?**

- We do our best to place the Plunge hole so water depth is waist level for adults.

### **How are my donations accounted for exactly?**

- SOMN will have the list of all online donations made in your name.
- If you have any offline donations, remember to bring those with you as well.

### **What do I do when I get there?**

- Check in at the VIP tent. We will make announcements and head to the ice together. There will be time to change or you may already come in you plunge outfit.

### **Can I bring people to come and watch?**

- Yes! Bring your family, friends, coworkers, etc. You also receive access for ten to the VIP tent and program afterwards.

### **Is it okay to have someone taking photos for me?**

- Yes, however please arrange in advance with Kelley ([kelley.jensen@somn.org](mailto:kelley.jensen@somn.org)).

### **Can I come on Saturday too?**

- Absolutely. Come cheer on your corporate team and hang out in the VIP tent!

### **If I am doing the 5K, can I still come to the Executive Challenge Plunge on Friday?**

- Of course! Come watch and support the other executives and attend the program!

### **How will I warm up after the Plunge?**

- We have heating tents waiting for our executives after the jump!

## PLUNGE TOOLS



### TABLE TENTS

The table tents have proved very successful for companies involved. Table tents only take up about six inches and can be easily wiped off. Display them on cafeteria tables, reception areas, offices, break rooms and anywhere else you can think of! Special Olympics Minnesota will supply these to your team at no cost. This tool is an effective way to spread the word about your company's involvement and a great cause!

### CUSTOMIZABLE POSTERS

The customizable posters are 8.5 inches by 11 inches and can be customized for your company, school, group or team. They are great for displaying in public areas so that people can easily grab the information they need to know to register to join your team. They can also be posted on doors and walls to display why you are freezin' for a reason. These can be received from Special Olympics Minnesota or downloaded at PlungeMN.org.

### POSTERS

The Plunge Posters come in two different sizes: 8.5x11 inches and 11x17 inches. These posters are great for displaying in public areas to bring awareness of the Polar Plunges. These can be received from Special Olympics Minnesota or downloaded at PlungeMN.org.



## RACK CARDS

The Plunge Rack Cards are two-sided display cards that can be given to anyone interested in learning more about the Polar Plunge. The rack card is essentially a condensed brochure and are a great way to spread the word about the Plunge. Display them in a common areas for people to take or hand them out at a staff meeting to let everyone know what you'll be participating in. Special Olympics Minnesota will supply rack cards to your team at no cost.



## EMAIL ICON

The Plunge Email Icon is a photo that can be included in your email signature. Not only does it promote the Plunge, but also can hyper link to PlungeMN.org or even your team page. Put this in your email to bring awareness to your plight! This can be downloaded at PlungeMN.org.



## WEBSITE

The Plunge website is back -- and it's better and more intuitive than ever this year! PlungeMN.org will continue to be the go-to place for Plungers to get all the latest updates, news, fun facts, photos and tools. Maybe you'll be featured on the home page, and as always, we are happy to promote any upcoming Plunge fundraisers that you may be hosting!

## EMAIL OUTREACH

Email is an incredibly effective fundraising tool, reaching people all over the world with the click of a button. It is a great way to spread the word about your Plunge participation, and to ask others to join your team or pledge your cause.

### TIPS & TRICKS

- Make it personal: Tell your story. Share with others why you participate, whether it's because you are Plunging for fun or because you love Special Olympics Minnesota.
- If you've Plunged before, share a picture of your previous jump to frozen glory.
- If it's your first time, share your nerves and excitement!
- Have fun with it! Make a contest or game out of it - the first person to donate, or the largest donation gets a gift from you!
- Follow-up. Be sure to say thank you to donors after they make their donation, and again after you take the Plunge. Send them a picture of you Plunging with the results from the event.

### SAMPLE TEXT

*It's gonna be frigid! This winter I will be taking the Plunge to support Special Olympics Minnesota. You might be asking yourself what this Plunge is? Well, I will be raising money so I can jump into a frozen Minnesota Lake. The Plunge into the water may be a little frigid, but I don't mind because I am supporting the amazing athletes of Special Olympics Minnesota.*

*To jump into the frigid waters, I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$\$ (amount), and I need your help to reach it. I'm hoping you'll make a donation to Special Olympics Minnesota on my behalf and support my Polar Plunge. Don't you want to see me be freezin' for a reason?*

*You can support my Plunge several ways. The best and easiest is to visit [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org) and pledge online. My personal page can be found at [PlungeMN.org\(personal url\)](http://PlungeMN.org(personal url)). You can check this page to see my goal, pledges raised and a photo of me after the Plunge!*

*If you prefer not to donate online, you can also give your donation directly to me, or mail it in to Special Olympics Minnesota at the address below. Please make sure to include my name with your donation so I receive credit for the pledge.*

*Special Olympics Minnesota  
900 2nd Ave S, Ste 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55402*

*If you can't support my Plunge through a donation, why not consider being bold in the cold and join me in taking the Plunge? You can join my team online now! To learn more about the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Minnesota, visit [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org).*

### EMAIL TAG

Include an email tag at the bottom of your email talking about your Plunge participation. It can be a sentence or two about the Plunge, or use the Plunge photo icon to show potential donors exactly what you'll be doing! You can even hyper link the image to your personal Plunge page. To use, visit [PlungeMN.org/tools](http://PlungeMN.org/tools), right-click the image and choose "save image as."

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat are incredibly powerful tools for fundraising. It has become common practice for Plunge participants to do all of their fundraising entirely through social media. They are easy tools to use and a personal way to connect with friends and family all over the world with a minimal effort.

### FACEBOOK

- Like us on Facebook: [Facebook.com/PlungeMN](https://www.facebook.com/PlungeMN)
  - Share a post from [Facebook.com/PlungeMN](https://www.facebook.com/PlungeMN)
- Add a link to your online Plunge page to send people directly to fundraising page from Facebook
- Make your Plunge an event on Facebook and invite friends to join you or donate to your efforts
- Update your status:
  - Share why you are Plunging and what your goal is.
  - Update you fundraising progress each time you continuously until you take your Plunge
- Let your pictures do the talking:
  - If you've Plunged before, post a picture of your jump along with your donation request
  - Set your profile picture and timeline photo to a picture of you taking the Plunge, or the costume you'll be wearing to Plunge
- Shout outs: post a shout out to your donors when they pledge!
- Don't forget to use the [#PlungeMN](#) hashtag

### INSTAGRAM

- Follow us on Instagram: [Instagram.com/PlungeSOMN](https://www.instagram.com/PlungeSOMN)
- Repost a photo from the Plunge Instagram account
- Add a link to your online Plunge page in your profile to send people directly to your fundraising page from your Instagram account
- If you've Plunged before, post photos of your previous Plunges!

### TWITTER

- Follow us: [Twitter.com/PlungeMN](https://twitter.com/PlungeMN)
- Retweet a tweet from PlungeMN and/or your followers - be sure to use the [#PlungeMN](#) hashtag!
- Upload Photos: tweet a photo of you taking the Plunge, if you've done so before. If you're a rookie, tweet a photo of your costume. Don't forget to ask for support!
- Create an engaging 140 character message that shares why you are taking the Plunge
- Shout outs: tweet each time you receive a new pledge!
- Set your profile picture and header image to a photo of you Plunging

### SNAPCHAT

- Snap your Plunge experience! Share your Plunge prep, costume ideas and, of course, all the fun you have at the actual Plunge
- Look for Polar Plunge geofilters when you're out at a Plunge!

## ADDITIONAL WAYS TO FUNDRAISE

You've sent out emails to friends, called your Grandma asking for her support, and inundated your social media accounts with all things "Plunge!" You've raised the \$75 minimum, but you still want to do more. Great! There are several other great ways to get the word out about your Plunge efforts and fundraise for your cause. Most of all, have fun with it!

### HOLD YOUR OWN FUNDRAISER

Whether the fundraiser is for your personal efforts or a team fundraiser, it's a great way to get people together and raise funds AND awareness for the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Minnesota. Some ideas for fundraisers are below ... you can use these models and make them your own! Be sure to send any fundraisers you are hosting in to Plunge Headquarters at [plunge@somn.org](mailto:plunge@somn.org) and we will post the details to our upcoming events calendar.

- Host a bake sale at your office, in your neighborhood, or posts your items for sale on Facebook!
- Hold a garage sale with proceeds going to your Plunge team.
- Work with a local restaurant to provide a meal for customers at a set cost, with half of it going to your Plunge efforts.
- Hold a silent auction or raffle.

### WORKPLACE GIVING

- Before hitting up your coworkers for a donation, see if you can form a company team instead. It's a fun team building opportunity for companies, and wearing your company t-shirts is a great way to maximize exposure at the event too!
- Find out about matching gift policies at your company. Some companies match employee fundraising, while others match donations made by employees. This is an easy way to double your donations!
- Have your donors find out about their companies matching gift policy to see if their donation will be matched.
- To check if a company offers matching gifts, visit [www.matchinggifts.com/specialolympics/](http://www.matchinggifts.com/specialolympics/)
- Host a Casual for a Cause day at work. Employees can donate a set amount to wear jeans (or better yet, Plunge gear from previous participation) and funds raised goes to support your Plunge.
- Additional workplace fundraising ideas include:
  - Set out a candy jar and ask for change each time they take a piece; purchase bottles of water and pop at wholesale and put in the company lunchroom. Charge \$1 for drinks and any profit can go to your fundraising efforts.
  - Ask your boss if they'll get in on the fun! If your company raises X amount, they'll take the Plunge with you!

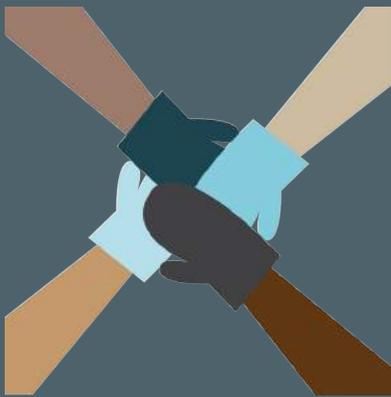
# PLUNGING IS EASY!

## STEP 1 REGISTER

**Step up and help a cause that's worth freezing for.** Face the cold and register for the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Minnesota.

Collect all the courage you have and take a dip in one of Minnesota's beautiful lakes in the middle of the winter. Visit [PlungeMN.org](http://PlungeMN.org), click REGISTER and sign-up today!

REGISTER



**There is no "I" in Plunge, but there is a "team" in Special Olympics Minnesota.**

Don't have all this fun by yourself — form a Polar Plunge team!

One thing we know for sure is that Plunging is even more fun when you have a crew doing it with you. Throw on those costumes, get those creative vibes flowing and form a team! Grab your best buds, teammates, family members or co-workers and Plunge together. Set your goals high and blow it out of the water! Make this fundraiser a party!

## STEP 2 FORM A TEAM

## STEP 3 TELL THE WORLD

**We know you don't want to jump in a frozen lake in the middle of the winter without telling everyone.** Spread the word!

Share what you're doing on social media, call your grandparents (or grandkids—and hey, if that's the case, good for you!), e-mail your friends and tell your neighbors. Let them know what that you're PLUNGING for Special Olympics Minnesota. There's no doubt they'll support you!

I'm taking the Polar Plunge! #PlungeMN



**Here comes the awesome part!** Every dollar you raise helps one of our amazing Special Olympics Athletes, so get out there and raise that cash!

Make it your own personal mission to surpass your goal. See how much Polar Plunge gear you can earn by raising all the money you can for the more than 8,100 Special Olympics Minnesota athletes across the state.

## STEP 4 RAISE \$\$