



# 2024 PARTNER IMPACT REPORT

*How Minnesota companies are supporting the inclusion revolution*

---

**Special  
Olympics**  
Minnesota



## TO OUR VALUED PARTNERS

As I reflect on 2024, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible support and dedication you have shown to Special Olympics Minnesota. This year, thanks to your partnership, we have continued to expand opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities to thrive—on and off the field. Your commitment to inclusion and empowerment has helped us reach new heights, and for that, I am deeply thankful.

This year also marks a significant milestone for me personally, as I prepare to retire after 19 unforgettable years as President and CEO of Special Olympics Minnesota. It has been the honor of a lifetime to work alongside passionate supporters like you who believe in the power of our mission.

As I pass the torch to Bill Fish, our Chief Development Officer and my successor, I am confident in the organization's bright future. Bill's leadership and deep connection to the Special Olympics community will ensure that the momentum we've built together continues to grow.

This Impact Report highlights some of the incredible work we've done in 2024, with your support. We hope you feel as inspired as we do after reading through it.

On behalf of our athletes, families and staff, thank you for your unwavering partnership. The impact you've made this year—and throughout my tenure—has been nothing short of transformative. Together, we've changed lives and inspired countless communities.

With heartfelt gratitude,

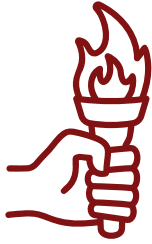
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Dorn". The signature is stylized with a large "D" and a long horizontal stroke.

**Dave Dorn**

President & CEO

Special Olympics Minnesota

# 2024 MISSION IMPACT



**6,467**

Athletes



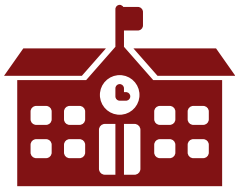
**47**

Events



**3,170**

Volunteers



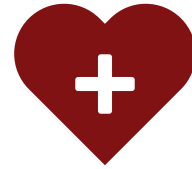
**357**

Unified Champion Schools  
In Minnesota



**3,552**

Young Athletes



**2,683**

Free health  
screenings

---

## THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS MINNESOTA BRAND



Perfect 4-star rating  
from Charity Navigator

**95%**

of consumers believe  
our programs are  
important/very  
important

**87K**

Special Olympics  
Minnesota email  
subscribers

**73K**

Special Olympics  
Minnesota social  
media followers



Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union is a member-owned cooperative seeking to provide meaningful banking experiences while building stronger communities across Minnesota.

# A YEAR-ROUND CHAMPION FOR INCLUSION

## ATHLETE OF THE GAME PROGRAM

Affinity Plus helped shine a spotlight on our athletes at the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities, Duluth, and Bemidji campuses. Athletes were celebrated during men's and women's hockey and basketball games, creating unforgettable moments of recognition and inclusion.

## GOLF PARTNERSHIPS

From the Bad Pants Open to the SOMN Open, Affinity Plus was a proud sponsor of Special Olympics Minnesota's golf events, demonstrating their dedication to our athletes and programs throughout the entire year.

## POLAR PLUNGE KICKSTART CAMPAIGN

In 2024, Affinity Plus inspired thousands to take the plunge—literally and figuratively—by offering a \$50 donation to the first 2,000 individuals who registered with the code "AffinityPlus." This initiative jump-started fundraising efforts and encouraged widespread participation. On top of that, Affinity Plus employees personally raised over \$77,000 by braving the icy waters themselves. Altogether, Affinity Plus contributed a remarkable \$107,400 to support the Polar Plunge in 2024.



**"EVERY YEAR I'M SCARED TO PLUNGE.  
BUT THE SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT I FEEL  
AFTERWARDS ALWAYS MAKES IT WORTH IT."**

**- Dave Larson, CEO Of Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union**



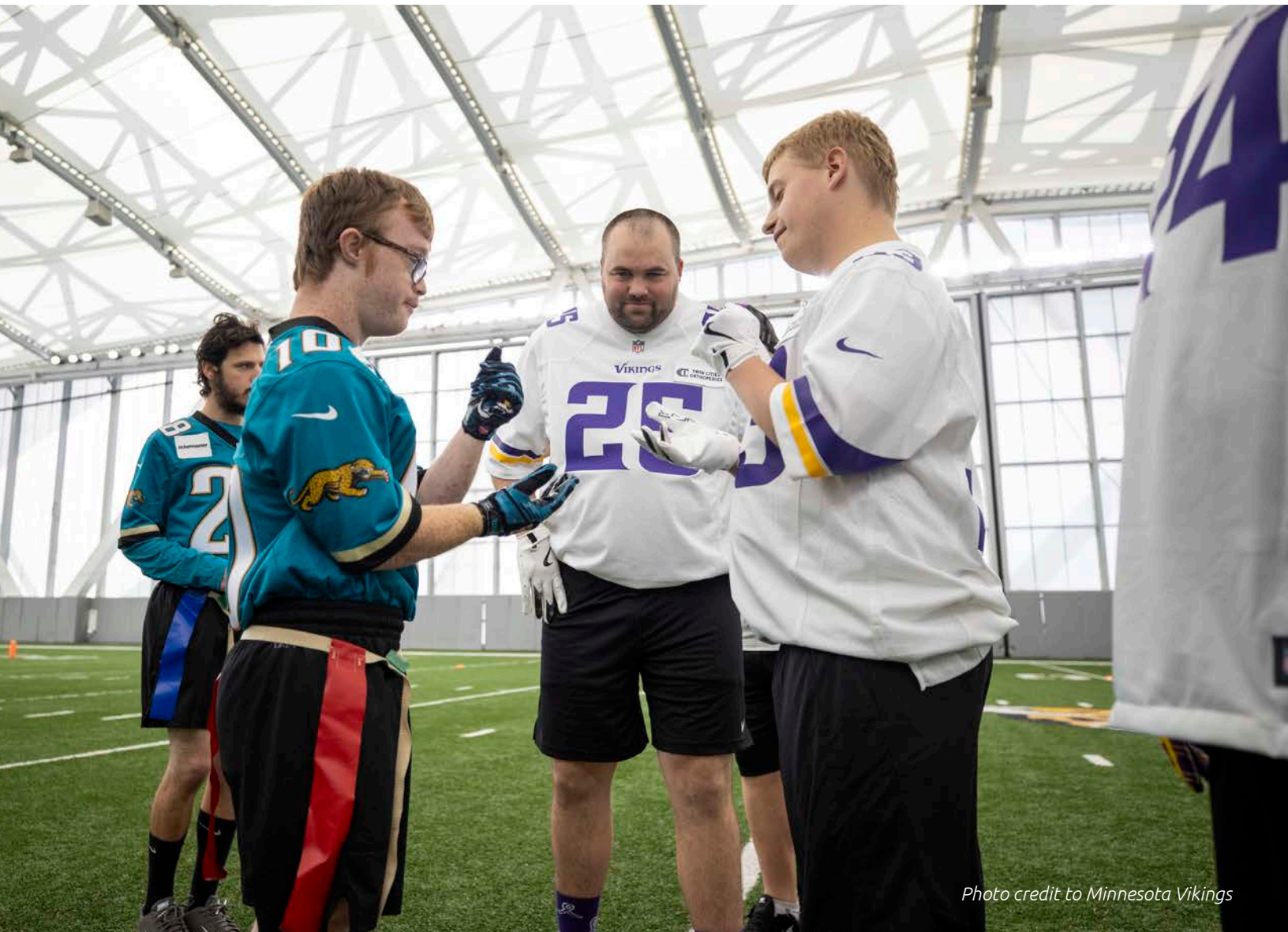
+



**TWIN CITIES  
ORTHOPEDICS**

## CHAMPIONING INCLUSION THROUGH UNIFIED SPORTS

The Minnesota Vikings, in partnership with Special Olympics Minnesota and Twin Cities Orthopedics (TCO), are creating life-changing experiences for athletes through the Unified Flag Football program. Unified sports unite individuals with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team, fostering connections built on mutual respect and camaraderie.



*Photo credit to Minnesota Vikings*



Photo credit to Minnesota Vikings



SCAN OR CLICK



TO SEE MORE!

For over 12 years, the Unified Flag Football program has thrived in Minnesota, with the 2024 season engaging over 600 athletes and Unified Partners statewide. This powerful collaboration with the Vikings has elevated the program, providing athletes unique opportunities to feel like part of the team—such as signing contracts with Head Coach Kevin O’Connell, practicing at TCO Performance Center, and participating in scrimmages and press conferences.

Since 2022, the Vikings Unified Flag Football team has traveled to face other NFL Unified teams, creating unforgettable moments of competition and friendship. The Vikings Unified Team, presented by Twin Cities Orthopedics, highlights the transformative impact of Unified sports on players and communities alike.

Through their commitment to inclusion and empowerment, the Minnesota Vikings and Twin Cities Orthopedics are breaking down barriers and proving that sports have the power to bring people together.



Treasure Island Resort & Casino and the Prairie Island Indian Community have contributed \$25 million to thousands of non-profit and civic organizations throughout the region since 1994.

## HOME RUN PROMOTION

For the second year in a row, Treasure Island and the St. Paul Saints teamed up to create a fun and impactful campaign that benefited Special Olympics Minnesota. Treasure Island pledged to donate \$500 for every home run hit throughout the Saints' season, totaling \$8,000.



## SLOT TICKET DONATION

In July, guests of Treasure Island casino demonstrated their generosity by donating unclaimed slot tickets. The collective effort resulted in a \$35,000 donation for Special Olympics Minnesota. The initiative not only showcases the power of community engagement but also highlights how small contributions can collectively make a substantial impact.

## BAD PANTS OPEN TITLE SPONSOR

Year after year, Treasure Island reaffirms its commitment to supporting Special Olympics Minnesota by serving as the title sponsor for the Ian Leonard Bad Pants Open charity golf tournament. This tournament, featuring a foursome scramble format, places an emphasis on fashionable fun while contributing significantly to the ongoing success of Special Olympics Minnesota initiatives.

## POLAR PLUNGE & MUSIC BY THE MISSISSIPPI

Treasure Island brought the heat—and the cool—for Special Olympics Minnesota with a themed weekend on July 26 and 27! The festivities kicked off with Treasure Island's first-ever mobile Polar Plunge, where over 50 participants took the Plunge to cool off on a scorching 90-degree day. The excitement continued with the Music by the Mississippi concert. Together, these two events raised \$15,000 to benefit Special Olympics Minnesota!

# **SCHEELS®**

Scheels is a leading all-sports retailer known for its wide selection of sporting goods, outdoor gear, and apparel. With a strong focus on community and customer experience, Scheels is dedicated to inspiring active lifestyles and supporting local initiatives.

## **AN EXCLUSIVE-EDITION COLLABORATION**

Special Olympics Minnesota and Scheels Eden Prairie teamed up for an exclusive promotion that celebrated the spirit of inclusion and community. Together, they created a limited-edition SOMN hat, available only at the Scheels Eden Prairie location. With just 500 hats produced, this one-of-a-kind item generated excitement among SOMN supporters and the local community.

The promotion invited customers to visit Scheels Eden Prairie, spend \$25 or more, and present their receipt at the customer service counter to receive the limited-edition hat for free. This initiative not only rewarded shoppers but also increased foot traffic to Scheels while amplifying the SOMN brand with a unique and meaningful apparel item.

Through this creative collaboration, SOMN and Scheels showcased the power of partnerships in advancing the inclusion revolution, proving that even small purchases can make a big impact.





Waggle is a MN-based golf apparel brand known for its vibrant designs and high-quality gear. With a mission to bring fun and individuality to the golf course, Waggle inspires golfers to express themselves while playing their best.

# A HOLE-IN-ONE PARTNER FOR INCLUSION

## 24-HOUR HOLE-IN-ONE CHALLENGE

For three years, Waggle has been a committed partner of Special Olympics Minnesota, bringing creativity, enthusiasm, and unwavering support to our mission. From the start, Waggle dove in headfirst, helping to make a difference in the lives of our athletes.

Their signature event, the Waggle 24-Hour Hole-In-One Challenge, is no ordinary charity golf event. Inspired by a simple idea: 24 hours to hit a hole-in-one. Make one and you win awesome Waggle merch. Miss, and you take the Polar Plunge. Over the past three years, this challenge has captured imaginations and raised significant funds.

**2022:** Despite an unusually cold and snowy day, the inaugural event raised nearly \$7,000.

**2023:** Held on a warmer summer day, it brought in nearly \$10,000.

**2024:** The event raised over \$25,000 and continues to grow in popularity.

So far, participants have achieved eight holes-in-one (not that anyone's counting!), making this challenge a thrilling and impactful tradition.





## SWAG FOR GOOD

Waggle's commitment doesn't stop at fundraising events. They've gone above and beyond to support Special Olympics Minnesota's National Invitational Golf Team, providing stylish Waggle shirts and hats that earned the team recognition as the "best-dressed" on the course.

In 2024, Waggle's generosity extended to the Polar Plunge, where their Polar Plunge x Waggle hat became one of the most sought-after incentive items.



And in true Waggle spirit, the entire team continues to take the Polar Plunge each year, embodying the courage and dedication that define Special Olympics Minnesota's mission.

**Through Waggle's diverse and extensive partnership, they are helping make sports and Minnesota more inclusive for people with intellectual disabilities—one swing, one hat and one Plunge at a time!**

*Special Olympics Minnesota's*

# 2024 PARTNERS & SPONSORS



Learn more about Special Olympics Minnesota's partners at [somn.org/sponsors](https://somn.org/sponsors)