



The Kuni Foundation Makes Three-Year Commitment to Special Olympics Oregon

Generous donation will provide \$300,000 to support Special Olympics Oregon programs

PORTLAND, OREGON, USA, May 5, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Special Olympics Oregon](#) (SOOR) is delighted to share that it has received a three-year commitment of \$100,000 per year from [The Kuni Foundation](#). The funding will support the critical services Special Olympics Oregon provides to enhance the lives of thousands of children and adults living with intellectual disabilities across the state of Oregon.

"We are honored to support the important work of Special Olympics Oregon, which creates connection, builds community and enhances the health and wellbeing of individuals and their families throughout the state," said Greg Goodwin, Board Chair of The Kuni Foundation. "This work is needed now more than ever as people who experience intellectual disabilities face even greater isolation than their neurotypical peers as a result of the Coronavirus."

As co-founder of The Kuni Foundation, Joan Kuni was a pioneer in advocating for her two sons and for other individuals with an intellectual disability. At a time when parents of disabled children were encouraged to institutionalize them, Joan quietly blazed a trail of inclusion, lifelong enrichment and empowerment for individuals who experience intellectual disabilities. More than five million Americans have some form of intellectual disability, and Joan was committed to ensuring that individuals could age in place within a vibrant, inclusive and supportive community.

"We serve people with IDD starting at age 8 and we stay with them their entire lives – we have an athlete in Eastern Oregon in her 80's," says Britt Oase, Chief Executive Officer for Special Olympics Oregon. "Through sport, we provide people with a connection to community, the ability to develop friendships, health and fitness benefits, and even leadership opportunities. We are active in every community across the State through our 30 volunteer-run local programs and 150 schools across the Oregon through our Unified Champion Schools program. This is a powerful mission with much more depth than people often realize – and for many of the athletes we serve, it is a cornerstone in their lives."

The Kuni Foundation was an early contributor to the pooled fund founded by the Oregon Community Foundation. Impressed by the impactful progress made by the Special Olympics staff and board, combined with the organization's commitment to rebuilding trust and resiliency throughout the SOOR community, the foundation extended its general operating support for another three years.

Special Olympics Oregon conducted a 2019 Fall season (soccer, volleyball, aquatics and bowling) a Winter season (basketball, powerlifting and snow sports) that each served over 2,000 athletes. Athletes never pay for registration fees, uniforms, practice venues or for transportation, lodging and meals associated with competitions. SOOR relies on funding from philanthropists, foundations, donations, corporate sponsorships and events the community can get involved in - like Polar Plunge - in order to fund services to the athletes.

"We need to make sure people and organizations understand the importance and value of the work we do. To see the Kuni Foundation make a long-term investment in our athletes is so

wonderful," shares Britt. "On behalf of the SOOR staff, board, volunteers – and most importantly the athletes – we would like to thank the board and leadership at the Kuni Foundation for their belief in what we do and their trust in our ability to do it."

Special Olympics Oregon has also launched a new website, <https://soor.org> and gratefully acknowledges the contribution of Roger That agency for its design and creation.

About Special Olympics Oregon

Special Olympics Oregon serves thousands of children and adults with a wide spectrum of intellectual disabilities throughout Oregon. Using sport as a platform, an underserved population is provided with opportunities to be engaged in their communities, improve their health and fitness, develop meaningful friendships, and positively impact their self-esteem. The work of Special Olympics Oregon also creates communities and schools that embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion and foster cultures of respect, making Oregon a better place for all people to live. Visit: <https://soor.org/>.

About the Wayne D. Kuni & Joan E. Kuni Foundation

Based in Vancouver, Washington, The Kuni Foundation funds cancer research and supports housing and initiatives that enhance the lives of adults who experience intellectual and developmental disabilities. Visit: <https://www.kunifoundation.org/>.

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