



Special Olympics
Oregon
Eugene/Springfield

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Over the years, the Eugene Emeralds Baseball Team has been an outstanding partner with Special Olympics Eugene/Springfield (ESSO). The Ems have totally embraced ESSO's mission of offering sports training and competition for local individuals with intellectual disabilities. Attending Ems games are a major and affordable social event for our athletes. You can't go to a game without running into several groups of our athletes.

The Ems have supported ESSO in several ways. Each year we have raised much needed funds through the sale of Ems' tickets. This allows our athletes to sell game tickets to community members who would not normally come into direct contact and interact with our population. It also gives our athletes a sense of responsibility knowing they must ensure the money raised is turned into our fundraising manager and all tickets are accounted for. At the game the tickets are sold for, it is Special Olympics Community Spotlight. Our top ticket sellers get the opportunity to "throw out the first pitch", a huge thrill for the athletes and all the supporters at the game.

Support is also shown by the Em's putting together a staff team who take part in the annual Special Olympics Polar Plunge. They are one of the top fundraisers each year and their efforts have raised thousands of dollars.

The Em's have also supported our program at other fundraisers with the appearance of the ever popular Sluggo.

Several of our athletes have been employed by the Ems. This has instilled confidence and a sense of responsibility knowing they have a job to do.

By locating the new stadium in downtown Eugene, it would be another possible venue for local, regional and state competitions. ESSO could use the stadium as a training site. Many of our athletes use public transportation and since it will be on a regular bus line it would be perfect. If Special Olympics Oregon were to hold regional or state competitions at this facility, it would bring athletes and their families from all over the state, supporting lodging and dining at local businesses as well.

We are excited by the prospect of the Emeralds getting a new stadium within our community that will ensure our athlete population continued access to a very supportive organization.

Ted & Kristi Barker
Volunteer Local Program Coordinators
Eugene/Springfield Special Olympics

Training for Life