

Caledon Special Olympics set to host second annual community Inclusion Day

Written By JULIA LLOYD

For a second year in a row, Caledon Special Olympics has partnered with five local Tim Horton's stores to help support Canadians with developmental disabilities.

Back in January 2018, many Caledon parents who have children living with a disability created Caledon Special Olympics. It was actually Joe Sassine, Vice Chairperson, who brought the attention to the Town of Caledon that there was no safe space for people with disabilities to play sports in the community.

Sassine moved from Brampton with his family in 2016. It was his daughter Jessica, who inspired him to bring the disabled community in Caledon together. Jessica is 23 years old and has Down Syndrome.

"She is my star," said Sassine.

Brad Stafford, owner of two Tim Horton's locations in Caledon and two locations in Brampton, partnered with Caledon Special Olympics last year to promote Inclusion Day.

Last year, Stafford and Sassine organized having athletes at all four of Brad's locations, as well as one other, to help promote Inclusion Day and the Special Olympics donut. This year, they plan to do it again.

All proceeds made from the Tim Horton's special donut will go towards Special Olympics Canada.

"Brad is a key supporter for Caledon Special Olympics," said Sassine. "Last year, Brad's location finished first in Canada for most money raised and I think that has to do with the fact we had our local Special Olympic athletes at the Tim Horton's locations to help promote the cause."

One of Stafford's staff members is a part of Caledon Special Olympics and her daughter is one of the athletes. Stafford said his staff member was one of the reasons he got involved for the first time last year.

"This day is important for me because I think it is giving awareness. It is fun to see the athletes partaking and helping because we can sit there and advertise it all day long, but when people see the faces of the Olympians it really does help," said Stafford.

In 2016, Tim Horton's signed with Special Olympics Canada to be a platinum national partner. The money that was raised from the partnership went to Special Olympics Canada to support the winter 2018 games.

This year, all Tim Horton's across the province will release the limited edition donut to support and celebrate Global Day of Inclusion on July 20, this Saturday.

26-year-old Special Olympics athlete Tori Ranson, whose creation was chosen from more than 400 submissions, created this year's donut.

Tori's donut will feature a cruller sliced in half and filled with whipped topping and decorated with vanilla fondant and red sprinkles. She is also a member of the Georgetown and Milton Special Olympics club.

Make sure you stop by a Tim Horton's this Saturday and say hello to your local Special Olympic Athletes. The athletes will be at five locations on July 20 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.