

NEWS LOCAL

Kingston man carried flame for Special Olympics

WYATT BROOKS
FOR THE WHIG-STANDARD
Wednesday, May 16, 2018 3:49:46 EDT PM



Charles Hawes, Correctional Officer with Joyceville Institution in Kingston ran the last leg of the Flame of Hope Torch Run before the start of the 2018 Special Olympic National Bowling Championships in Prince Edward Island that ended Tuesday. Wyatt Brooks for the Whig-Standard/Post Media Network

Kingston correctional service officer Charles Hawes of Joyceville Institution has been selected to represent Ontario at the Special Olympics National Bowling Championships Flame of Hope Torch Run before the games.

the Flame of Hope was carried across Prince Edward Island by members of Law Enforcement Officers from across Canada to spread awareness for the Special Olympics. Hawes, a correctional service officer since 2001, has volunteered extensively with the Special Olympics since 2004, participating in fundraising events such as the Kingston Polar Plunge, OHL Big Ticket Nights and has volunteered with three Special Olympics Provincial Summer Games in Kingston, Peel Region and Guelph. Hawes will be completing the last leg of the journey with torch in hand to start the games.

"I like the environment of the volunteer work," Hawes said. "I like meeting the people, and I love the partnership between law enforcement and the athletes competing in the games. The athletes say we teach them, but truly they teach us."

The Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics engages law enforcement worldwide, promoting ideas of acceptance and inclusion for those with intellectual disabilities in their own communities. The torch run has been partnered with

Special Olympics Canada since 1987 and has raised more than \$35 million for the organization, with 97,000 members of law enforcement from around the globe participating and volunteering with the Special Olympics.

“The feeling I get volunteering for the Special Olympics is indescribable,” Hawes said. “In York Region, I watched the first-place runner go back and cheer the last person on, and didn’t quit until the last person was across the finish line. The sportsmanship can’t compare. Their heart and soul is in it. And it’s genuine.”

All of the funds raised through Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run events are put directly into programs that support communities and those involved with Special Olympics Ontario. Funds are used to help pay for various expenses of the games, including travel, accommodation, meals and grants for new community programs.

The Special Olympics Canada Bowling Championships are the first major event in North America, kicking off the 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics, with 13,435 participants across the board. Being one of Special Olympics Canada’s original sports, bowling also features the most registered athletes at the games, with 90 people representing Ontario alone, including local athletes John Kirkman and James Hartell in 10-pin events.