



SPECIAL OLYMPICS

DULLES PLANE PULL®

DULLES, VA 2021



SPECIAL OLYMPICS VIRGINIA

DULLES PLANE PULL

2021
TEAM HANDBOOK

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THE FLIGHT PLAN

Hi Plane Pull Pals!

We are excited for you to participate in our 2021 Dulles Plane Pull! While we are sad we cannot host the one of a kind Dulles Day Festival we are SO excited that we can finally get back on the ropes with an in-person plane pull! Last year showed us whether, in person or virtual, you and your teammates are passionate about helping the athletes of Special Olympics Virginia! Who would have thought we could have raised over \$100,00 via a virtual event?

So how will this year's event work? This year we will all come together on the tarmac of Dulles Airport to not only pull a plane but also do some team building and support Special Olympics Virginia's athletes. The event will be a Plane Pull only and will only be open to pre-registered event participants. While you may not be able to have lunch with your family onsite or check out vintage airplanes after you pull, but you will still get to play tug of war with a FedEx plane along with your friends just as always! Included in this handbook will have details on how this year will work, how you can earn PLANE AMAZING incentives, and how you can do a lot of good for the athletes of Special Olympics Virginia!

Since we are going back to an in-person plane pull, you will have the amazing opportunity to meet your athlete team captain not only virtually before the event but also on event day! Your team and your captain will motivate, encourage, and celebrate your successes together. We hope that through engaging with our athletes during this event, your company or group will be able to meet your employee or personal wellness initiatives, volunteerism goals, and see a boost in overall team morale!

We hope that athletes and community partners will be able to socialize, practice, and encourage each other through this event like they have over the past 29 years. We can't wait to see you all again and please let me know if you have any questions along the way.

Thanks!

Ellen Head

Plane Pull Princess &

Senior Director of Development

ehhead@spcialolympicsva.org

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ATHLETES TO PARTICIPATE in Special Olympics?!

6.5 million people in the United States have an intellectual disability and **23.6% of adults in Virginia have some sort of disability.** Through **sports, health, and fitness,** we can change the statistics below for people with ID and become a **stronger, healthier, and more unified community.**

2 TIMES as likely to be OBESE		2-4 TIMES as likely to be less PHYSICALLY ACTIVE
	LIFE EXPECTANCY is reduced by an average of 16 YEARS	
5 TIMES as likely to have DIABETES		2 TIMES as likely to have CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE & ASTHMA



DULLES PLANE PULL OVERVIEW

Teams should focus on fundraising and recruitment!

There are two things that teams participating in the Dulles Plane Pull need to focus on in 2021 to win the gold!

- 1. Fundraising!** After creating a team and registering for the event, teams should focus on raising as much money as possible for the athletes of Special Olympics Virginia. \$2,500 gets you on the ropes with 25 team shirts, \$3,000 by August 1 gets your team custom team shirts and \$5,000 by September 1 will get your team's name on the runway. Don't forget, each individual that raises \$100 by September 13 will receive the exclusive Plane Pull medal. Isn't that all PLANE amazing?
- 2. Recruitment!** While a competitive pull team can only have 25 members, your team can have as many fundraisers as you like to help you take your fundraising sky high! Keep asking people to join because the more awareness you bring to your team the more you are helping the athletes of Special Olympics Virginia.



YOUR TEAM CAPTAIN

A good team captain is crucial to the success of a team. The captain of your team should:

1. Act as the **point of contact** between the SOVA staff and their team. SOVA will, for the most part, communicate with the team captain **ONLY** about details such as pull time, shirt sizes etc.
2. **Motivate** each team member to be active in fitness and fundraising.
3. Be willing to assist team members with whatever they might need pertaining to the plane pull.
4. Communicate and engage the **Athlete Captain** with your team.

YOUR ATHLETE TEAM CAPTAIN

We have recruited some of the best athlete leaders in our program to motivate, encourage, and lead your team to success. A SOVA staff member will connect you with your Athlete Captain during the event. See page 11 for some ideas on how your team can engage with your Athlete Captain. Feel free to invite your Athlete Team Captain to compete with you on your team, if you like. They will be there on September 18! Use this opportunity to grow as a group!

YOUR PARTICIPANTS

Competitive Plane Pull teams are made up of 25 members. But teams less than 25 members are welcome! We are happy to fill your ranks with SOVA athletes and volunteers. You can even make multiple teams for your organization if you have a lot of interest so you can compete against each other. All teams, no matter what size will be helping the athletes of Special Olympics Virginia get back on the playing field.

Getting started

1 Create your team & set up your fundraising page
When you register your team via our registration platform, Classy, don't forget to go back in and join the team yourself! Tell everyone who will be joining your team to create a personal fundraising page as well. Raising money online via our registration platform is the easiest and quickest way to have your team reach your goal together.

2 Raise funds
Now you and your team members have personalized fundraising websites and links to share with friends and family! Start by sharing your link on Facebook, sending it via email to your contacts, and tweeting it out to the world! More tips and templates to help you share your link and raise funds are included later in this guide.

3 Secure your pull spot
So your team made it to the \$2,500 fundraising minimum (easier than you expected, right?!), now what? If you reached the goal online, you will receive an email from Ellen Head (your friendly neighborhood Plane Pull Princess) with details about securing your pull time the Friday after you hit your goal. If you reach this goal with offline funds, contact Ellen Head (ehead@specialolympicsva.org) right away on arranging to get in the money so it can be put on your team page. Pull spots fill up on a "first-to-\$2,500-first-served" basis, so the sooner you reach your goal, the sooner you can snatch up your team's ideal time!

4 Aim for the sky (and earn incentives!)
Your team will be pulling a plane...why not aim as HIGH as the sky with your fundraising goals? All participants will receive a snazzy event shirt and each team will receive a plaque. But if you're willing to go above and beyond and raise \$3,000 by August 1, your team can have custom team shirts! Even better, if you as an individual or your team as a group raise \$5,000 by September 1 you will get a star with your name on it on the runway! That's just PLANE awesome! Don't forget, all individuals that raise \$100 by September 13 will receive the exclusive Plane Pull medal mailed to them post event!

5 Ask, remind, follow up.
Regularly share updates about your fundraising progress. If you've got something new to talk about, your donors won't mind hearing from you (remember, they're your friends & family, they LOVE you).

6 Add an incentive for donating.
Are you a phenomenal baker? Can you doodle with the best of them? Offer to bring your donors a cookie if they donate \$10 to your page. Or promise to draw a custom doodle of the two of you if they donate \$20. The more creative and offbeat, the better!

7 PULL!
September 18, 2021 will quite possibly turn out to be one of the most fun (and most exciting, awesome, and exhilarating) days for you and your team. The team captain will receive detailed information about day-of logistics as we get closer to event day. Of course, you can always contact Ellen if you have questions in the meantime.

REGISTRATION

[REGISTER
A TEAM
HERE](#)



Team Registration

Registering for the Dulles Plane Pull is simple and can be done in a matter of minutes on a computer or even a smart phone.

One person, ideally the team captain, will need to register first and create the team via the online registration portal linked to PlanePull.com.

After that, the captain needs to share the team link or name of the team with other potential teams members so they can register and join in on the fun.

All team members need to be registered online prior to September 18 in order to gain access to the event space.

Individuals can earn the exclusive Plane Pull medal by raising \$100.

Teams can earn their spot on the ropes along with 25 team shirts once they raise \$2,500. Teams that raise \$3,000 by August 1 will receive customized team shirts. Teams that raise \$5,000 by September 1 will have their name appear on our walk of fame on the runway.

Teams are encouraged to raise all funds online. If any teams have any cash or checks to turn in, please contact Ellen Head at ehhead@specialolympicsva.org to make arrangements. All offline money needs to be received by Special Olympics Virginia by September 13 in order to be included on the team page prior to the event. While it is highly discouraged, offline funds can be brought to check in on event day.

Please note, anyone that plans on doing this should arrive at team check in early in order to not miss their team's pull time.

INCENTIVES

Participants' primary goals should be to use their time after they register for the event to learn about Special Olympics, raise funds to help get the athletes back on the playing field and connect with their Athlete Coach. For being PLANE amazing, participants can earn:

PLANE PULL MEDAL

- Given to all participants that individually raise \$100 by September 13

EVENT T-SHIRT

- Twenty-five (25) shirts are given to each team that raises \$2,500

CUSTOMIZED T-SHIRT

- Twenty-five (25) custom shirts are given to each team that raises \$3,000 by August 1. Customized shirts are event shirts with the teams logo or name printed on the back in one color

RUNWAY STAR

- Given to all teams that raise \$5,000 by September 1

RESOURCES

We want this process to be as easy as possible and fun for you! We are happy to put together resources to help you make it a wonderful experience for your organization and your team! Some examples are:

- Recruitment and Registration E-mail template
- Social Media Graphics and Copy
- Email Signature Banner
- Zoom Background

IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU NEED, LET US KNOW!

Contact Ellen at ehed@specialolympicsva.org

COMPETITIONS

On event day we will be giving out trophies in multiple categories including:

TOP 3 TEAMS WITH THE MOST FUNDS RAISED

TOP 3 FASTEST PULL TEAMS

SLOWEST TEAM

HEAVIEST TEAMS

LIGHTEST TEAM

MOST ENTHUSIASTIC TEAM

TOP YOUTH TEAM

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Does your organization offer grants or funds in exchange for your volunteer hours?

Ask if your participation in the Dulles Plane Pull will count towards volunteer hours! Getting our communities involved and engaged with our athletes is an integral part of our strategic plan and mission, and we can't do that without YOU!



ENGAGE YOUR ATHLETE CAPTAIN

WHAT CAN OUR CAPTAIN DO FOR US?

All of our athlete captains have different skill sets and interests. We recommend asking them how they would like to be involved. Here are a few ideas, to get them started:

- Make a motivational video
- Lead a workout or stretching session
- Virtual or In-Person Meet & Greet - hear their story
- Partner Workouts - pair your captain with a team member to keep each other accountable
- Recipe swap
- Ask them to be part of a meeting!

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR OUR CAPTAIN?

As you get to know your captain you might think of other fun ways to engage with them. We hope these ideas are the start of a lifelong friendship!

- Include your captain in virtual practices / meetings
- Organize a Yappy Hour to socialize and get to know each other
- Make a motivational video for your athlete - they are competing too!
- Keep each other accountable, by assigning an accountability buddy
- Do a healthy activity together on Zoom
- Become an e-buddy - send your athletes emails just to check-in!



FUNDRAISING TIPS

This section contains some helpful tips on how to reach your teams fundraising goals and get the athletes of Special Olympics Virginia back on the playing field!

FUNDRAISING 101

So now, you're probably wondering, what's the secret to raising funds. The answer is easier than you think!

Your potential donors won't know about your PLANE AMAZING plans unless you tell them, and they won't donate to your cause unless you ask. Really, it's that simple! There are TONS of reasons your potential donors should support you; the key is to effectively and consistently tell them why. That's where this Toolkit comes in...

1. So you've got your fundraising page set up. Now make it personal. If you have a personal fitness goal, **share your story**. If you have a family member with an intellectual disability, share your story. If you volunteer for Special Olympics, share your story. Your potential donors know YOU and want to know why YOU think Special Olympics VA is PLANE Amazing.

2. **Make your list.** Who do you know? You never know who will come out of the woodwork and want to support you! The more people you ask, the more donations you'll receive.

3. **Ask. Ask.** And, yes, you guessed it, ask again. Once you've initially shared your fundraising link with your list (and posted it on all your social media channels), make a plan for how often you want to follow up. Update your friends and family when you've made fundraising progress, or if you are reaching some amazing fitness goals. If you have a good reason to update them, your potential donors won't mind hearing from you often.

4. **Follow up.** Some people will just forget to donate to you. They have every intention of helping you out, but just forgot (or they are just so popular that your posts are getting pushed down on their Facebook or Instagram feeds).

5. **Report the facts.** When your team is so close to \$2,500 you can taste it, let your donors know that it won't take much more to get your crew on the ropes. And when you get to \$2,500 send a reminder that you're still accepting donations and would love to win a trophy for top fundraising team and hope that they check in with you to see how you did!

6. Yell **THANK YOU** to your donors. In the end, it's the donors who make your team's participation possible, and who help Special Olympics Virginia build a Bigger, Better Community and get our athletes back on the playing field. We also suggest emailing, posting on Facebook, or making a phone call too! If you're really feeling fine, sending a hand written thank you goes a long way and could be a good project for you and your athlete captain to work on together.

TOP 10 FUNDRAISING TIPS

- 1 Share YOUR story. Make your fundraising page as personal as possible with text, photos and videos.
- 2 Remember that anyone is a potential donor. Your team is supporting Special Olympics Virginia when we need you most...EVERYONE should know that. It's BIG news!
- 3 Aim high. Ask for a \$50 donation and settle for \$25, instead of asking for \$25 and settling for \$10.
- 4 Donations are tax deductible. Don't forget to share this fact with your potential donors.
- 5 Steal our photos, logos and other content. That way everyone knows what you are up to! Don't forget to tag us by using #2021DullesPlanePull
- 6 Ask, remind, follow up. Regularly share updates about your fundraising progress. If you've got something new to talk about, your donors won't mind hearing from you (remember, they're your friends & family, they LOVE you).
- 7 Add an incentive for donating. Are you a phenomenal baker? Can you doodle with the best of them? Offer to bring your donors a cookie if they donate \$10 to your page. Or promise to draw a custom doodle of the two of you if they donate \$20. The more creative and offbeat, the better!
- 8 Let them vote with their dollars. A \$25 donation is a vote for you to wear a crazy hat on one of your teams social media posts . A \$50 donation votes for a clown costume. \$100 donation? You'll be Superman!
- 9 Request matching gifts. Many companies will match donations, so be sure to let your donors know to apply if they can.
- 10 Have fun. It's cheesy, but it's true. Doing a team building activity is different but different is fun, right? So make the fundraising fun too! The sky's the limit when it comes to creative ways of making an ask!

FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

Sample Emails

Not sure where to start when it comes to fundraising? Here are a couple sample emails you can use to help spread the word. Also, don't forget to check out the next page for more ways to show your donors how their dollars are making an impact! And always add in a link to your own personal fundraising page!

This September I'll be pulling a plane for Special Olympics Virginia!

Did I get your attention?

**Make the
Initial Ask!**

You heard me correctly...I plan to pull a 164,000 pound plane with 24 of my friends at Dulles Airport all for Special Olympics Virginia. While I'm pretty excited to hang out on an active runway, I'm more pumped up to be able to support a cause I care about.

Did you know Special Olympics Virginia provides year-round sports training and competition as well as health services and opportunities for inclusion for more than 22,000 athletes with and without intellectual disabilities at no cost to the athletes or their families? Still, Special Olympics Virginia has touched just a small percentage of the people in Virginia with intellectual disabilities. Your donation will get me one step closer to the ropes, but it will also help Special Olympics Virginia build a bigger, better community.

Check out my personal fundraising page (click the link below!) to make your donation. Link:

Best,

FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

Follow
Up!

Apparently more people think I have superhuman strength than I thought!

In fact, my team is only \$xxx away from raising \$2,500 for Special Olympics Virginia. That also means we are only \$xxx away from REALLY pulling a plane at Dulles Airport!

Here's another fun fact: On average, it costs about \$280 a year for one athlete to participate in Special Olympics Virginia programs. By the time my team reaches our minimum donation fundraising goal, we'll have given SEVEN more athletes the opportunity to shine, compete, be healthy and be included!

Here's a link to my fundraising page – your donation is greatly appreciated! Link:
Best,

FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

New!

facebook

New THIS YEAR! Our online registration and fundraising platform, Classy, now integrates seamlessly with Facebook to make it easier than ever to get donations from family, friends and colleagues.

To help you set it up, we have put together a simple how to video that walks you through the steps [HERE](#):

<https://youtu.be/QSxGrqnYBnA>

If you prefer to see the steps written out, you can view those instructions [HERE](#):
<https://support.classy.org/s/article/how-to-create-a-facebook-fundraising-page>





Purchases a uniform for one athlete.



Buys enough medals for a regional Special Olympics competition



Sends three athletes to a state competition

\$10

\$25

\$50

\$100

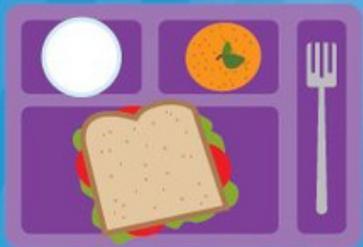
\$200

\$600

Provides two meals at a Special Olympics state competition

Helps offset the cost of a Young Athletes activity kit

Helps support expansion of Unified Sports in schools



ANY DOLLAR AMOUNT HELPS TO GET THE ATHLETES BACK ON THE PLAYING FIELD!

FAQ

- 1. WHEN SHOULD MY TEAM ARRIVE?** Arrival details will be shared with team captains closer to the event. In general, we ask that you plan to arrive 1 hour prior to your pull time to give enough time to park, gather as a team in the parking lot, have all 25 team members individually check in, be escorted through security and arrive at your team tent to wait for your turn to pull.
- 2. WHERE SHOULD MY TEAM MEET?** Your team should gather in the parking lot designated for teams. Please gather all 25 team members before you present yourself as a group to one of the team check in tents.
- 3. CAN MY TEAM BRING OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINKS?** No outside food or drinks are allowed in the event. Teams will be offered water and a small snack immediately after they pull take with them as they leave. We will also plan to have a food vendor or two in the parking lot for teams to purchase food before or after their pull.
- 4. WHAT IF I CAN'T GET 25 PEOPLE FOR MY TEAM?** No worries! As long as you have at least 10-15 team members you should be ok! We will have volunteer pullers available at the event to help fill in the ranks.
- 5. WHAT IF I HAVE MORE THAN 25 PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BE ON MY TEAM?** That's great! If you have more than 25 people your pull will just be for fun and not in the running to win the fastest pull competition. If you have more than 35 people, we recommend you trying to put together a second team as there won't be enough room on the rope.
- 6. CAN CHILDREN BE ON MY TEAM?** Kids can participate too! We leave it up to the parent/guardian to decide if it is an age appropriate activity. We do feel it is best for the older middle schooler/high school age range, though to participate.
- 7. WHAT IF SOMEONE GIVES OUR TEAM CASH OR CHECKS?** Please feel free to mail or drop off "offline" donations to our office at 11350 Random Hills Rd C-140 Fairfax, VA 22033 so it can be included on your team page and count towards your team goal. If you are mailing it, please make sure to note what team it is for. We ask that all offline money be turned in by September 13 to be included on your team page by event day. While it is not recommended, you can also bring the money to team check in on event day. We just suggest that you arrive earlier to make sure you are checked in well in advance of your team's pull time.
- 8. WHAT IF OUR TEAM DOESN'T RAISE THE MINIMUM DONATION?** In order for your team to be eligible to pull, you must raise at least \$2,500 by event day. If you do not reach the minimum, you will not be permitted to pull. The donations you received will not be refunded and will go to support the mission of Special Olympics Virginia. If you would like to ensure your team's participation at the event you can authorize Special Olympics Virginia to charge a team member's credit card for the amount equal to the difference of what you raise by event day, up to the \$2,500 requirement. For example, if you have raised \$2,000 by event day, you can authorize Special Olympics Virginia to charge your card for an additional \$500 and you will be permitted to pull. The maximum amount that will be charged to your card would be \$2,500 if you do not raise additional funds prior to event day and you check in your team on September 18. If you register for the event but do not reach the fundraising minimum (\$2,500) and you do not check in your team, your credit card will not be charged anything. Credit cards will be charged one month after event day to allow you additional time to fundraise post-event.
- 9. WHAT TIME WILL MY TEAM BE PULLING?** Once a team reaches the minimum donation you will receive a link via email to pick your approximate pull time. We will send this link out weekly on Friday. Your team can choose to pull earlier or later in the day to accommodate the schedules of team members, but because of the way the event runs, we will not be able to tell you exactly what time you'll be pulling. You will, however, know the order of pullers so you can plan accordingly.
- 10. HOW DOES MY TEAM GET CUSTOMIZED T-SHIRTS?** Teams who raise and turn in \$3,000 by August 1 are eligible to receive event shirts that have a one color logo or text on the back. Logos in vector format (.eps or .ai ONLY) along with shirt sizes must be received by August 1
- 11. HOW DO I GET MY TEAM'S SHIRTS?** Shirts are ONLY available for pick up at team check on event day. Only the team captain or a designated team member can pick up the box shirts. We will not give out individual shirts to team members.