



## Funding boost helps support Special Olympics Prince Albert athletes

**J**ACOB GOULET LOVES PLAYING SPORTS — including golf, bowling, and bocce ball, to name a few.

He's so passionate about these sports that he plays them regularly with Special Olympics Prince Albert, which is an organization in Saskatchewan that provides sport opportunities to those with intellectual and physical disabilities.



PRINCE ALBERT,  
SASKATCHEWAN

**Canada**

This project is funded by  
the Government of Canada



Special Olympics Prince Albert Golf Team at the Venue we use weekly.

But, the cost of renting local facilities where athletes like Goulet can practice — in addition to storing all the sports equipment year-round — can quickly add up. That's why Special Olympics Prince Albert recently sought funding to help cover these costs through the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Reaching Each and Every One: A Community Sport Intervention program. This program, which was funded by Sport Canada's Community Sport for All Initiative, seeks to remove barriers and increase sport participation rates for equity deserving groups across Canada.

Tyler Kowalski, a board member of Special Olympics Prince Albert, says that the funding specifically covered the cost of the bowling alley, golf course, soccer fields, and equipment storage lockers that the organization uses to deliver its sports programs to the community.

He adds that these facilities are very important because they provide a space for athletes to practice and compete. Additionally, they are spaces where Special Olympics athletes in Prince Albert can build their skills to try out for the provincial and Canadian teams.

Since these facilities are a necessity — and quite expensive — the organization has recently had to increase participants' registration fees to help offset the costs of the facility rentals.

But now, thanks to the funding secured through this CPRA program, Kowalski says that it has sparked a great ripple effect within the organization. It has freed up funds to go towards other expenses, and has kept registration fees low for participants.



Special Olympics Prince Albert Bowling Team at the Venue we use weekly.

“One of the biggest barriers for athletes to train is funding,” he says. “This funding has made it way cheaper on our athletes. Without it, they would have to pay more out of their own pocket to be able to have those venues.”

Kowalski says the funding also meant that Special Olympics Prince Albert could cover the cost of new equipment for its athletes, which also adds up fast and poses another cost barrier.

“This has allowed the organization to gain more funds, so we can provide athletes with the best equipment available to them so they can do their best,” he says. “Our floor hockey team and bocce team, for example, are going to really see a big boost in their equipment.”

Kowalski says he was thrilled that the organization received funding this year, particularly because it helps athletes who have intellectual or physical disabilities connect with much-needed sports opportunities. This funding, he says, means that Special Olympics Prince Albert will be able to continue to provide those opportunities for years to come.

Goulet, who plays all the sports offered by the organization except for soccer, says that he plans to continue playing with Special Olympics Prince Albert — especially since the funding for facilities has kept his registration fee low, and allowed for him to use new equipment to play his favourite sports.

Above all, he says being part of Special Olympics Prince Albert has helped him stay active and meet new people.

“I feel like I'm more connected with my community,” Goulet says. 🍁