

Special Olympics Kansas

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NEWS RELEASE

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Topeka Det. Kristi Powell Receives Richard LaMunyon Award Recognized for Outstanding Service

Mission, KS.—Topeka Police Department, Det. Kristi Powell, was recognized by the Kansas Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) as the Richard LaMunyon Hall of Fame Recipient, June 2, at the Opening Ceremony of the Special Olympics Kansas (SOKS) Summer Games in Maize. The LaMunyon Hall of Fame is named after LETR founder and former Wichita Police Chief Richard LaMunyon, and is the highest award bestowed by the Kansas LETR. Only one candidate is inducted annually. The award recognizes outstanding individuals who have significantly contributed to the statewide success of the Law Enforcement Torch Run benefiting SOKS athletes.

Powell has been involved with LETR for several years. In approximately 2000 she was dispatched to a call of an out of control male that his social worker could not get through to. "For some reason he responded to me when I talked to him and we got things worked out without having to use physical force," said Powell. A few days later, Powell got a call from the social worker and asked her if she liked sports. She explained she coached a Special Olympics track team and there was a practice on that Saturday morning, and invited her to come. Powell showed up to the practice and after 10 minutes was hooked and became a Coach.

She became involved with the LETR a year later by participating in the Torch Run and selling t-shirts. She has recruited agencies for LETR and has been a leader in fundraising. Kristi has also been a key organizer in the Polar Plunge event for Topeka, the torch run, and numerous other fundraisers. She attends numerous competitions and events and makes sure that no athletes ever leave without a smile on their face. Powell was also selected to represent her agency and the state of Kansas at the Final Leg at 2015 World Summer Games in Los Angeles, California.

Jeff Bragg, State Director of Kansas LETR stated, "Kristi Powell became the 22nd law enforcement officer inducted into the very prestigious Richard LaMunyon Hall of Fame. The work she does in the Topeka community, her region, and around the state is inspirational. She is well deserving of this honor."

"Kristi is a true leader in LETR, and I have been given nothing but great words from other LETR members from around the country," Sgt. Chris Moore of the Pittsburg, KS Police Department said in his nomination of Powell. "She is one of the most humble people that I know, and if she knew she was being nominated for this award, she would tell people she doesn't deserve it and that she doesn't want any recognition. I can't think of another officer who is more deserving of this honor."

The Law Enforcement Torch Run began in Wichita, Kansas in 1981 with six runners and has grown to an international program that involves thousands of Law Enforcement personnel raising millions of dollars annually to benefit Special Olympics programs in the United States and abroad. The Torch Run is the largest grassroots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle for Special Olympics. For more information about LETR and Special Olympics Kansas, visit www.kssso.org. ###