



## **SOPEI President's Report - 2023**

Each year, at this time, we - as an SOPEI collective - are afforded the opportunity to gather and reflect on the past 12 months, highlight both our successes and challenges, and look to a busy and inspired year ahead as an organization - providing all Islanders with an intellectual disability access to sport.

Alongside our community programming happening Island-wide throughout the year, there were many outstanding sport competitions underway - with 2024 Winter Games qualifying competitions, participation at both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick's Provincial Winter Games, Nova Scotia's Provincial Summer Games at Acadia University - as well as an incredible trio of SOPEI athletes representing us as part of Team Canada at the 2023 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Berlin. Most recently, Team PEI selection has been finalized - with a dedicated contingent of Athletes, Coaches and Mission Staff preparing to represent SOPEI on the national stage at the 2024 Special Olympics National Winter Games in Calgary this coming February, 2024.

As always, Special Olympics PEI continues to maintain stalwart financial stability, thanks to the continued support of our long-time sponsors, the generosity of Islanders throughout the province - at both the individual and corporate level, and the incredible fundraising successes of the Enriching Lives Gala, motionball's Marathon of Sport PEI, and LETR events throughout the year.

Only recently coming out on the other side of what was - and continues to be - the global COVID 19 pandemic, I am astounded by the incredible spirit of resilience, tenacity, and innovation that SOPEI has shown in the face of what was once considerable uncertainty. First and foremost, this success is thanks to the formidable staff leadership that governs SOPEI daily. A sincere thank you goes out to Charity and her passionate team - Matthew, Genna, Sarah, and Ellen for their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication to SOPEI's operations.

I have been fortunate to wear many hats during my 15 years as part of the Special Olympics movement, both at the national and chapter level, and this past year has been an incredible experience as your Board President, working alongside an amazing group of hard-working and dedicated fellow board members. While this continued to be a year a year of rebuilding, I am proud of the many successes, achievements, and inspiring SOPEI stories. As we continue to build our sport programs, enhance our volunteer programs, and deliver high-quality sport experiences for our athletes, I look forward to continuing to work side by side with the amazing members of the Special Olympics PEI family.

Please accept my sincere thank you to each and every one of you who strive every day to achieve and uphold the ever-so-important SOPEI mission:

***"Special Olympics PEI exists so that the lives of Islanders with an intellectual disability will be enriched through sport."***

Regards,

*Craig Watson*

Craig Watson  
President, Special Olympics PEI Board of Directors