



Special Olympics
Massachusetts

Someone You Should Know...

Athlete Profile: Melissa Lunden



Melissa Lunden, SOMA volunteer, personally writes notes of thanks to all SOMA donors.

For five years, Melissa Lunden, 32, a Special Olympics athlete has come to the state office in Danvers where she personally writes thank you notes to our valued donors...

*“Hello,
I would like to thank you for your continued support of Special Olympics Massachusetts. As someone who has competed as a Special Olympics athlete, I can assure you that it has made a significant difference in my life!
Sincerely,
Melissa”*

Three times a week for the past five years Lunden has generously donated her time to Special Olympics Massachusetts. She has her own desk in the office conference room which houses her thick list of donor

names and addresses as well as thousands of Special Olympics envelopes and cards. She hand addresses each note. Each time she visits the office, The Ride picks her up and drops her off. She likes to keep busy and has found this volunteer position to fit well.

“Bob (Special Olympics Massachusetts President and CEO) is a nice boss. He’s always there for me,” says Lunden.

The feeling is mutual. With Lunden in the conference room, the Special Olympics staff always has a lunch buddy or a person to chat with during a break. She is the first to jump up and greet the postman or an office visitor.

It took Lunden nearly a year to learn the text for the thank you note and these days she can write it from memory.

“It’s in my head now,” she says.

Lunden, a one time Special Olympics state champion bowler, keeps busy with various activities other than Special Olympics. She bowls in a women’s league, she is active with her church and she works at a nursing home during the evenings and plays bingo with the patients. She also hand crafts bracelets and homemade chocolate lollipops which she sells. Her profits are usually given back to a charity that is dear to her heart or spent on her favorite treat, a Dunkin Donuts blueberry iced coffee.

This past fall, Lunden sold her bracelets and chocolate lollipops to friends, family, neighbors and her church and raised more than \$200, which she donated to the Special Olympics Ride with the Champions event.

--contributed by Lauren Ebstein



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A few years ago, Lunden received a *thank you for the thank you*.

“I still remember that day,” she says.

When Lunden opened up her own thank you card, sent from George Burke, she found two Celtics tickets inside. Lunden and her dad attended the Celtics game and she was even able to meet Lucky the mascot.

It was a nice surprise and well deserved to a valuable team player at Special Olympics Massachusetts. Thank you Melissa for all of your help, your hard work, and ability to brighten our days!