LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN® FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS

LETR 2025 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE MICHIGAN



November 5-7

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

WELCOME TO GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Airport and Hotel Information..... 3
- Transportation to Hotel..... 4
- Welcome Night..... 5
- T-Shirt Exchange..... 6
- Host Night..... 7
- Live & Silent Auction..... 8
- Torch Run..... 9
- Polar Plunge..... 10
- Unified Pickleball Experience..... 11
- Friday Night Celebration Night..... 12
- Local Establishments..... 13
- Local Stores and Essentials..... 14
- Michigan Tidbits..... 15



AIRPORT AND HOTEL



GERALD R. FORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

(GRR)

AMWAY GRAND PLAZA

187 Monroe Ave NW

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

COURYARD BY MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN

11 Monroe Ave. NW

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

The Amway parking ramp is right outside the hotel on Pearl St. Parking charges can be added to your guest room, allowing in-and-out privileges. We hope you enjoy safe travels to Grand Rapids. If you are driving, you will find on-site self-parking at the Amway Grand for a fee of $41 per night (plus taxes) and at the Courtyard for a fee of $29 per night (plus taxes).

Secure parking for buses is offered in the private lot on the corner of Fulton and Market Street with a $75 per bus charge. Arrangements for bus parking need to be made prior to arrival. To make bus arrangements, contact Kami Delameter at kdelameter@specialolympics.org.

GETTING TO THE HOTEL

Complimentary transportation between Gerald R. Ford International Airport and Amway Grand Plaza will be provided during the following times:

November 4: Shuttle service from the airport to Amway Grand Plaza will run from 11:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

November 8: Shuttle service from Amway Grand Plaza to the airport will run from 4:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Any changes to these times will be communicated through the app.



WELCOME NIGHT

Wednesday, November 4
4:00 PM–9:00 PM
Unified Sports & Inclusion Center

Don’t miss this unforgettable night!

Join us at the Unified Sports & Inclusion Center for the Women’s Unified 3x3 SONA Basketball Finals. While visiting Michigan’s one-of-a-kind Unified Sports & Inclusion Center, you’ll enjoy live music, food trucks, cash bar, facility tours, merchandise, cornhole and so much more!

Transportation will be available to and from Amway Grand Plaza starting at 4 PM with the basketball finals tipping off at 6 PM.

Make sure to bring your ID to Welcome Night!

When the tournament ends, keep the fun going at our after-party in downtown Grand Rapids! We’ll gather at local bars within walking distance of the hotel to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.



T-SHIRT EXCHANGE

Thursday, November 5
4:00 PM–5:00 PM

Submit your LETR program's T-shirt for the 3rd annual contest during the T-shirt Exchange. A panel of Special Olympics athletes will judge and select the top 10 shirts for recognition and bragging rights. The winning design will be revealed at the general session on Saturday morning.



Ship your T-shirts to:
Special Olympics Michigan
Attn: LETR T-Shirt Exchange c/o *Your Program*
1120 S. Mission St.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859

Receiving dates: Sept. 14–Oct. 23

If you are bringing your shirts to the conference instead of mailing them, contact Heather at heather.fox@somi.org by October 23, 2026 to reserve a table for your Program.

HOST NIGHT

Thursday, November 5
5:00 PM–10:00 PM
GLC LIVE at 20 MONROE



Join us at GLC Live at 20 Monroe, a state-of-the-art live entertainment venue located in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan, managed by Live Nation and operated by a local team of West Michigan natives. Located just a short walk from the Amway Grand Plaza, the venue features a unique Art Deco atmosphere and a strong, community-focused culture. You're in for an unforgettable night of fun!

LIVE & SILENT AUCTION



Friday, November 6
4:30 PM–6:30 PM

Get ready to bid, win, and make an impact.

Now accepting donations!

Programs should ship auction items to:
Special Olympics Michigan
Attn: LETR Auction
1120 S. Mission St.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859

Auction items being shipped must be received by October 23. If you are bringing an item to the conference, a table will be available near registration for drop-off.

For all auction donations, please email Heather at heather.fox@somi.org with a description and estimated value of your item. This information will allow us to list your item on the bidding site before the conference begins.

Register to Bid

TORCH RUN®

Saturday, November 7

10:30 AM

Downtown Grand Rapids

Starting line: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum

RUN: 3.2 miles WALK: 1 mile

Ending location: Lyon's Square

$40 Registration Fee

Includes long-sleeve Torch Run® T-shirt and lunch at Lyon's Square. Participants who registered by October 1 are guaranteed a T-shirt. T-shirts for registrations after October 1 will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

REGISTER



SPLASH & DASH

Register for the Torch Run® and Polar Plunge®
and save $10!

$70 Registration Fee for both events!

POLAR PLUNGE®

Saturday, November 7

11:30 AM

REGISTER



Plunge into the Plungester

Location: Lyon's Square

$40 Registration Fee

SPLASH & DASH

Register for the Torch Run® and Polar Plunge® and save $10!

$70 Registration Fee for both events!

First 200 people to register for the Polar Plunge get a towel! There will also be towels for purchase on site.

Show off your creativity in our judged Polar Plunge costume contest! The winner will take home a prize, so get creative, have fun, and make a splash!

UNIFIED PICKLEBALL EXPERIENCE

Saturday, November 7

1:00 PM-4:00 PM

DeVos Place Convention Center

Join us as we showcase our newest Unified Sport, pickleball! Sign up for a time slot and you'll be randomly paired with a Special Olympics athlete to compete in a Unified doubles match against another Unified pair. Teams will compete in a 20-minute match with 5 minutes to warm up. So be sure to pack that athletic wear and join us as we showcase the true spirit of Special Olympics through this Unified Pickleball Experience.

REGISTER

FRIDAY NIGHT | CELEBRATION NIGHT



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING FUN TO DO FRIDAY NIGHT?

Head over to Founders Brewing Co. for a fun evening of live music and Special Olympics camaraderie!

Michigan's own President & CEO will take the stage with his band, OWL, along with special guest appearances from fellow Special Olympics supporters.

LOCAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Looking for a bite to eat during your free time? We've compiled a list of local restaurants and dining options to help you explore and enjoy the area during your stay.

CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE RESTAURANT GUIDE



NEED SOMETHING?
LOCAL STORES AND ESSENTIALS

Meijer Bridge Street Market
Grocery Store
405 Seward Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Zellar's Bottle Shop
Convenience Store
168 Louis Campau Promenade NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

WellCare Urgent Care
1618 Leonard St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

MICHIGAN TIDBITS

What to Wear in November in Michigan

November in Michigan: Expect the unexpected! You could see sunshine, rain, wind, and even snow all in the same week, and sometimes on the same day! Our advice: layers!

The Wolverine State

Michigan is known as the Wolverine State, but here's the funny part: you probably won't see an actual wolverine! The nickname comes from Michigan's early history, when residents were known for being tough and scrappy. Today, the wolverine lives on as a proud symbol of Michigan spirit!

Mackinac Island: A Step Back in Time!

Ready to slow things down? On Mackinac Island, cars aren't allowed! Instead, you'll get around by foot, bike or horse-drawn carriage. Add some famous fudge and beautiful views, and you've got one very charming Michigan getaway.





Grand Rapids: Beer City, USA

Welcome to Beer City, USA! Grand Rapids is known for its thriving craft beer scene, with breweries around nearly every corner. Even if beer isn't your thing, you can still enjoy the city's great food, music and lively downtown!

Unsalted and Shark-Free

Michigan is surrounded by four of the five Great Lakes—that's a lot of water! We have beaches, waves and epic sunsets!



Mackinac Bridge

Known as the "Mighty Mac," the Mackinac Bridge connects Michigan's Upper and Lower Peninsulas and stretches nearly 5 miles (8 km) across the Straits of Mackinac. It's one of Michigan's most iconic landmarks and definitely worth a picture if you make it that far north!

Michigan says "Pop"

In Michigan, it's "pop," not "soda!" And don't forget: canned and bottled drinks come with a 10-cent deposit that you can get back when you return your empties. A little Michigan lingo and a little money back!

Hand Map

Every Michigander uses their right hand as a built-in map of the Lower Peninsula's mitten shape.



Happy Deer Season!

In Michigan, November 15 is basically a holiday. It's Opening Day of firearm deer season, which means hunters head to the woods, schools and workplaces may be a little quieter, and "deer camp" becomes the place to be. Whether you hunt or not, you'll quickly learn that deer season is a very Michigan tradition!



What's a Yooper?

People who live in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP) are proudly called Yoopers. If you live "under the bridge" in Michigan's Lower Peninsula, you're a Troll. Whether you're a Yooper or a Troll, you're definitely a Michigander!

Detroit: Music and Motor City

Detroit put the world in motion and on the dance floor! Known as the Motor City for its role in the auto industry, Detroit is also the birthplace of Motown, one of the most influential music movements in American history. Cars and music? That's very Detroit.