

Written by Kathy Shayna Shocket Reports on the People Who Make a Difference.  
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What an amazing groundbreaking ceremony for Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ) !

That's **Gov. Doug Ducey** pictured above, congratulating **Tournament Chairman Chance Cozby** and **Douglas Steele** of the **Peoria Police Dept.**, who is the Executive Board Chair of SOAZ.

Not only did the Thunderbirds (hosts of the Waste Management Phoenix Open presented by the Ak-Chin Indian Community) raise a record \$13.2 million for local charities from its 2019 tournament - - but a record-breaking donation of \$1 million has been gifted to Special Olympics Arizona.

It's the largest single gift handed out by Thunderbirds Charities since its inception in 1937.



The donation will help support the building of a new Special Olympics Arizona state office and distribution center adjacent to Perryville Prison in Goodyear. The 2019 WM Phoenix Open **Tournament Chairman Chance Cozby** says the Thunderbirds are honored and humbled to have such a strong giving presence in the Valley.



This new state office and distribution center will provide programs, services and equipment to 25,000 athletes and Unified partners across the state of Arizona," said **Jamie Heckerman, CEO of Special Olympics Arizona**, who is pictured above, middle. "We are grateful for this partnership with The Thunderbirds and the Arizona Department of Corrections to make this much needed project possible."

"We're extremely proud of every charitable contribution we make to our local communities, but this gift to Special Olympics Arizona – the largest in our organization's history – is extremely special," adds **Cozby**. "This gift is only possible through the incredible support we receive from our corporate partners and from the best fans in golf who attend the WM Phoenix Open each year."



This much needed new facility, which will be led by **JE Dunn Construction**, will provide statewide support for programs and events that are not just for Special Olympic athletes and personnel, but also for the community and sporting events that focus on inclusion. It will provide a center for distribution services, uniform production, equipment, and an efficient facility for youth and inclusive sports in the state of Arizona.

Congratulations on this history making event!



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