



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Brian Belmont, Belmont Partners
(612) 255-1113, brian@bellmontpartners.com

Brandon Sawalich Elected to Special Olympics Minnesota Board of Directors

MINNEAPOLIS, April 8, 2014 – Brandon Sawalich, senior vice president at Starkey Hearing Technologies, has been elected to the Board of Directors for Special Olympics Minnesota (SOMN). Sawalich will join other members of the Board in working closely with SOMN's management team to set strategy, support progress and ensure the realization of the organization's opportunities for service and the fulfillment of its obligations to all its constituencies.

"Brandon is a longtime supporter of Special Olympics Minnesota, and we're thrilled to be able to work even more closely with him to help guide our organization," said David Dorn, president and CEO of SOMN. "His business and philanthropy acumen from his years at Starkey Hearing Technologies, in addition to his passion for our mission, vision and values, make him an excellent addition to our Board of Directors."

From jumping into icy lakes to helping arrange free hearing aids and fittings for SOMN athletes, Sawalich has been a hands-on partner and fund-raiser for SOMN. In 2013, he participated in the inaugural Executive Challenge for the Polar Bear Plunge to benefit SOMN, in which 16 business leaders raised a minimum of \$10,000 each for the opportunity to jump into a wintry Lake Calhoun. He repeated the effort this year. Additionally, Sawalich and Starkey Hearing Foundation have partnered with SOMN on its Healthy Hearing Initiative. In September, 22 SOMN athletes and their families visited the Starkey headquarters in Eden Prairie to kick off the initiative. Each athlete was fit with top-of-the-line, customized hearing aids and met former Minnesota Viking Matt Blair.

"I look forward to taking my support of SOMN to the next level in this role on the Board of Directors," Sawalich said. "I am passionate about this local organization and eager to help set strategy and realize new opportunities for the children and adults served by SOMN."

Sawalich joined Starkey Hearing Technologies in 1994 as an Inside Sales Executive. Since then, he has built expertise in nearly all aspects of sales and marketing in the hearing industry, and today leads Starkey's Sales, Marketing and Customer Relations teams. In his leadership roles, Sawalich has helped the company achieve overall growth and has built excellent teams to tackle the challenges customers and patients face every day.

About Special Olympics Minnesota

Special Olympics Minnesota offers children and adults with intellectual disabilities year-round sports training and competition. Through Special Olympics' athletic, health and leadership programs, people with intellectual disabilities transform themselves, their communities and the world.

About Starkey® Hearing Technologies

Starkey Hearing Technologies is a privately held, global hearing technology company headquartered in Eden Prairie, Minn. The company is recognized for its innovative design, development and distribution of comprehensive digital hearing systems. Founded in 1967, Starkey Hearing Technologies currently employs more than 3,600 people, operates 21 facilities and conducts business in more than 100 markets worldwide. The company develops, manufactures and distributes hearing aids via four distinct brands – Audibel®, NuEar™, MicroTech™ and its original brand, Starkey. For more information, visit StarkeyHearingTechnologies.com.

#