

April 26, 2017

Alberta's best honoured at sport leadership conference

Banff – Olympian Gilmore Junio will join the Alberta Sport Connection in honouring the 2016 Alberta Athletes and Teams of the Year, and the 2017 [Alberta Sport Award](#) winners for coaching, officiating and volunteer service at the [Alberta Sport Leadership Conference](#) in Banff, Friday, April 28.

“Sport calls out and demands the best in all of us, and that is what we get with these outstanding athletes, coaches and volunteers. The significant contributions these recipients have made to their sport and to their communities have made our province proud,” said Ricardo Miranda, Minister of Culture of Tourism, responsible for sport in Alberta. “Congratulations to all of the recipients of this year’s awards. They are shining examples of what it means to be an Albertan.”

“We’re proud and honoured to celebrate the achievements of these special Albertans with their families, friends, supporters and colleagues,” said Andrew Ference, Chair of Alberta Sport Connection. “Athletes know their achievements can only happen because of the help and support they get along the way. Everyone looks back and remembers the ones who made the difference for them and ASC is pleased to recognize some of the most dedicated and hard-working individuals in sport, our coaches, officials and sport volunteers.”

2016 Athletes and Teams of the Year:

Ms. Erica Wiebe	Open Female	Wrestling	Calgary
Mr. Alister McQueen	Open Male	Athletics - Javelin	Calgary
Ms. Rebecca Smith	Junior Female	Swimming	Red Deer
Mr. Stefan Ritter	Junior Male	Cycling - Track	Edmonton

Biathlon Relay Team	Open Team	Biathlon	Canmore
Mr. Christian Gow; Mr. Scott Gow; Mr. Brendan Green; Mr. Nathan Smith			

Calgary Foothills 02 Girls	Junior Team	Soccer	Calgary
Ms. Aliya Abdallah; Ms. Ruth Adekugbe; Ms. Jayden Berg; Ms. Ally Campbell; Ms. Katie French; Ms. Cassidy Gordon; Ms. Jade Kao; Ms. Olivia Kranjec; Ms. Jenna Lileikis; Ms. Penny Molloy; Ms. Grace Moore; Ms. Robyn Sellars; Ms. Holly Stiel; Ms. Grace Stordy; Ms. Layla Tarraf; Ms. Fran Tartamella; Mr. Jonathan Wheeldon (coach); Mr. Lee Tucker (coach); Mr. Elijah Adekugbe (coach)			

2017 Sport Recognition Award winners:

Mr. Jim Loughlin	Don Watts Coach Developer	Multi-sport	Medicine Hat
Ms. Kelly Wills	Coach Developer - Sport	Gymnastics	Grande Prairie
Mr. Paul Ragusa	Coaching	Wrestling	Calgary
Mr. Graeme Moffat	Coaching	Rugby	Calgary
Mr. Peter Schori	Coaching	Swimming	Lethbridge
Mr. Richard Boruta	Coaching	Biathlon	Canmore
Ms. Caroline Henley	Officiating	Biathlon	Calgary
Ms. Jodi Abbott	Officiating	Figure Skating	Edmonton
Mr. Mikhail Dykman	Officiating	Water Polo	Calgary
Mr. Blair Dunbar	Officiating	Cross Country Skiing	Canmore
Mr. Allan Sattin	Sport Volunteer	Judo	Calgary

Ms. Sandy Hermiston	Sport Volunteer	Cerebral Palsy Sport	Edmonton
Mr. Doug Jones	Sport Volunteer	Baseball	Oyen
Ms. Marilyn Chidlow	Sport Volunteer	Figure Skating	Ponoka

The Athlete and Team of the Year Awards recognize and celebrate significant achievements, performances and contributions of Alberta’s amateur athletes. Award winners are outstanding role models who inspire other Albertans to higher achievements at the recreational or competitive level.

The Coaching Development Award acknowledges the tremendous impact the National Coach Certification Program Multi-sport and Sport Learning Facilitators and Evaluators have on our sport delivery system. The award recognizes significant achievement in developing Alberta’s coaches.

The Coaching Recognition Awards recognize coaches for their outstanding achievements in developing Alberta’s amateur athletes.

The Officiating Awards recognize outstanding achievements in officiating.

The Volunteer Awards recognize the significant contributions of individuals devoting their time and effort to the development of sport.

The awards will be presented at the Alberta Sport Recognition Awards Banquet, beginning at 6:30 p.m., as part of the 2017 Alberta Sport Leadership Conference.

Alberta Sport Connection is a provincial corporation dedicated to the development of sport in Alberta. Its vision is for Alberta to be the premier sport delivery system in Canada. For more information visit www.albertasport.ca or follow [@AlbertaSport](https://twitter.com/AlbertaSport) on Twitter.

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 Sport Recognition Awards



2016 Athletes and Teams of the Year

2016 Open Female Athlete of the Year

Erica Wiebe – wrestling

Erica began 2016 with an Olympic test event where she placed 2nd. A first place finish at an Olympic Qualification Tournament in March 2016 secured her spot at the Games. Erica also competed at the German Grand Prix and the Canada Cup that year, placing 1st in each event. Erica then dominated the competition in Rio, bringing home an Olympic gold medal. 2017 started with Erica going 6-0 in the Indian Wrestling League. She hopes to bring home more gold medals to Canada over the next 4 years.

2016 Open Male Athlete of the Year

Alister McQueen – para-athletics, javelin

In 2016, Alister won the Canadian Track and Field Championships in Edmonton, and the Desert Grand Prix in Phoenix. At the Rio Paralympic Games, he threw for two Canadian records and broke the Americas record en route to a silver medal in the javelin T44. Alister is a 22-time Canadian Champion, and a three time Canadian record holder in the 100m, 200m, and javelin. He currently holds the Americas javelin record.

2016 Junior Female Athlete of the Year

Rebecca Smith – swimming

Rebecca represented Canada at the 2016 Junior Pan Pacific Swimming Championships where she won five silver medals. At the Canadian Age Group Championships, she earned five gold medals. She went on to claim two silver and one gold medal at the Canadian Summer Nationals. Rebecca received both the 2015 and 2016 Junior Swimmer of the Year – Female Award from Swim Alberta.

2016 Junior Male Athlete of the Year

Stefan Ritter – track cycling

In 2016, Stefan was the Junior National Champion in the Keirin, sprint, and kilo time trial. Later that year he competed at the World Junior Track Championships in Aigle Switzerland where he earned Bronze in the sprint and a gold medal in the kilo time trial. He is the first Canadian to win gold at the Junior Track World Championships. Stefan was born and raised in Edmonton. His home cycling club is Juventus Cycling Club, and he is currently training with Cycling Canada. Stefan's goal is to compete at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

2016 Open Team of the Year

Canadian Men's Relay Team – biathlon

Albertans Scott Gow, Nathan Smith, Christian Gow, and NWT native Brendan Green made history when they won Canada's first ever World Championship relay medal in March 2016. The squad picked up the bronze medal in the 4x7.5-kilometer relay with a time of 1:13:40.2. The team trains in Canmore under Matthias Ahrens, the National Team Head Coach.

2016 Junior Team of the Year

Calgary Foothills 02 Girls – soccer

In July 2016, the Calgary Foothills 02 Girls travelled to Gothenburg, Sweden to compete in the Gothia Cup. The team won seven straight games, losing only in the final, to earn a silver medal. The team finished the Calgary Minor Soccer Association outdoor season in 1st place, and went on to provincials in August. The girls went undefeated to claim the provincial championship. The season culminated at the National Championships held in Moncton New Brunswick, where they once again went undefeated to win the U14 Cup and the National Championship title.

2017 Sport Recognition Award winners

Coach Developer

Don Watts Award – Jim Loughlin

Jim has over 20 years of coaching experience at the post-secondary level. He has been facilitating coach education for a similar number of years, and is a chartered professional coach and a master coach developer. Jim is currently the Manager of Coach Education with Alberta Soccer and is working towards a Doctorate of Education in Adult Learning.

Sport Award – Kelly Wills

Over the past 40 years, Kelly Wills has been involved in the sport of gymnastics as a gymnast, parent, coach, judge, committee member, and sport developer. Kelly's knowledge of the sport has served her well as a NCCP level 3 gymnastics coach, national level Artistic Woman's Gymnastics judge, course conductor and facilitator for Gymnastics foundations, Artistic gymnastics, Active Start, Trampoline and Competition Introduction. She was a committee member for Canada Games 1995 and Gymnastics Western. She has been involved with the Arctic Games as a coach, judge and Mission staff. She is dedicated to developing future coaches and judges throughout Alberta and NWT.

Coaching

Paul Ragusa – wrestling

Paul has been the high performance coach of the Dinos Wrestling Club for 15 years. In 2016, Paul made coaching history by being the first Canadian coach to have two Olympic champions in different Games participating in different individual events. He coached Carol Huynh to gold in Beijing in 2008 and Erica Weibe in Rio in 2016.

Graeme Moffat – rugby

As the head coach of the Prairie Wolf Pack, Graeme guided the team to their first ever MacTier Cup in 2015. He was a skills coach for Canada at the 2015 Rugby World Cup and has worked with the Canadian Men's Senior team at the Americans Rugby Championship and Pacific Nations Cup. He was previously an assistant coach for Canada's Men's U20 team, and is currently an assistant coach with the Canadian Senior Men's National Team.

Peter Schori – swimming

Peter has been a coach in Alberta for 20 years. Two of Schori's swimmers were nominated to represent Canada at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games (Rachel Nichol, and Zack McAllister). Peter was recognized by Swim Alberta for his coaching achievements, receiving the International Coach of the Year for a Female Swimmer, International Coach of the Year for a Male Para Swimmer, Outlying Coach of the Year, and was nominated by his coaching peers to receive the Alberta Coaches Council Desperado Award.

Richard Boruta – biathlon

After graduating from a 5-year Masters Degree and a 2-year professional coaching program in Prague, Richard coached the Austrian Junior National team and B-team Seniors from 1994 until he came to Canada in 1998. Richard began coaching the Rocky Mountain Racers in Canmore, and became the Canadian National Team coach in 2002. He coached these athletes until the 2006 Olympics, after which he moved back into to the developmental level of coaching. Richard started coaching at the Biathlon Alberta Training Center in 2011, where he still works today.

Officiating

Caroline Henley – biathlon

Caroline has attended several Canada and Alberta Winter Games, as well as many provincial events. She worked with many other staff at the Canmore Nordic Center Provincial Park to certify the range to International Biathlon Rules. She also assisted in preparing for the 2010 Winter Olympics. Caroline enjoys working with all of the athletes and volunteers as she watches them fulfill their dreams of competing in World Cups events.

Jodi Abbott – figure skating

Jodi became certified as an international judge in 1999 and as a World/Olympic Judge in 2005. Jodi has been assigned to many World Figure Skating Championships, Grand Prix Finals, and two Olympic Winter Games. She has served on the Skate Canada Board of Directors and various national committees for over 10 years. In 2011, she was included in the CAAWS list of Canada's top 20 most influential women in sport. She is also a two-time recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for her contributions to sport and post-secondary education.

Mikhail Dykman – water polo

Mikhail has been officiating water polo since 1985 and became a FINA international referee in 2003. Mikhail has officiated at water polo matches around the world, including at the Pan American Games, World Leagues, World Cups, and World Championships. As a Referee-in-Chief for Alberta, Mikhail runs numerous courses for new and returning referees across the province. He is certified by Water Polo Canada as a master-evaluator, which allows him to mentor referees all over Canada.

Blair Dunbar – cross-country skiing

Blair's 46 years of involvement in cross-country skiing began whilst living in Inuvik and continued as he moved to Fort Smith, Yellowknife, and Canmore. Blair has been involved in organizing and officiating in club races, Western Canadian Championships, Arctic Winter Games, World Cup races, provincial, and national championships. He has achieved Level 4 FIS Certification and in 2013 became the Chief of Competition for the Parar Nordic World Cup.

Volunteer

Allan Sattin – judo

Allan began teaching and coaching in 1971, which is the same year he began his administrative and leadership work with Judo Alberta. Allan has also taken on many administrative roles within Judo Canada and has attended multiple international events. Allan has also played key roles in organizing the Alberta Winter Games, Western Canada Summer Games, and many National Judo Championships. Allan was inducted into the Judo Canada Hall of Fame as a Builder, and appointed Life Member of Judo Canada in 2014.

Sandy Hermiston – cerebral palsy sport

Sandy began volunteering in 1997 and has been president of the Alberta Cerebral Palsy Sport Association (ACPSA) since 1998. Under her leadership, ACPSA has developed a thriving para soccer and boccia programs as well as partnerships with Paralympic Sports Alberta, the Alberta Bicycle Association, Swim Alberta and the Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta. She has served on the Cerebral Palsy International Sport and Recreation Association's Executive Committee, and has worked with the International Paralympic Committee. Sandy continues her work to ensure there are meaningful high performance opportunities at the international level for athletes with cerebral palsy.

Doug Jones – baseball

Doug has been a leader in the baseball community for over 30 years. Doug has volunteered his time with the Canada Summer Games baseball teams, the Alberta Amateur Baseball council, and the Baseball Canada Planning Committee. He helped establish the Prairie Baseball Academy, Vauxhall Academy of Baseball, and the Badlands Baseball Academy. He also founded the Western Major Baseball League, which is now a thriving 12-team premier league.

Marilyn Chidlow – figure skating

She has held executive positions with the Ponoka Skating Club, Skate Canada: Alberta-NWT Nunavut Section, and Skate Canada. As Skate Canada Vice President, Marilyn was instrumental in the development of CanSkate, Canada's leading learn-to-skate program. In 2000, she was elected Skate Canada President, and served as past-president from 2006-2013. Marilyn was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002, and was inducted into the Alberta Sports hall of Fame as a builder in 2016.