

Celebrating the Stars of Coaching!

ONTARIO COACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

#THANKSCOACH



September 14, 2024
Rogers Centre
Toronto, ON

20 24



ABOUT THE AWARDS

The Ontario Coaching Excellence Awards celebrate the dedication and commitment of exemplary individuals who inspire, innovate and share knowledge of sport with others.

Presented annually since its inception in 2003, over 160 Ontario coaches from over 80 communities representing more than 60 sports have received this prestigious honour to date.

The Inukshuk is chosen as the award for coaches because it symbolizes co-operation, balance and selflessness. As a stone monument erected in the image of humans, one of its purposes was to serve as direction markers. It was a tool of survival and a symbol of unselfish acts.

The Inukshuk reminds us of our interdependent responsibilities to invest in our efforts today, to direct a better way for all of us tomorrow.





SEPTEMBER 14, 2024

*Greetings from the Honourable Neil Lumsden
Minister of Sport*

Welcome to the 2024 Ontario Coaching Excellence Awards!

Ontario's coaches are key to the success of sport in Ontario, and to the development of our athletes both on and off the field. I know first-hand the dedication that goes into coaching, and I truly appreciate the time, effort and unwavering commitment that is required to help athletes achieve their full potential.

Our government is proud to support the Coaches Association of Ontario, and the work they do to ensure that coaches have the tools they need to foster a culture of athletic excellence in our province.

Congratulations to all of this year's award recipients. The impact that you are making on the lives of so many athletes, their families, and your community is remarkable.

Thank you for the Coaches Association of Ontario, the event sponsors, and the many volunteers for making this event a success, and for your commitment to sport.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Neil Lumsden".

The Honourable Neil Lumsden
Minister of Sport



YOUR HUB FOR COACHING SPORT IN ONTARIO



WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

Providing support, recognition and representation for all coaches in Ontario.



DEVELOPMENT

- NCCP Training
- Coaching Resources
- Mentorship Programs
- Safe Sport 101

FUNDING

- Enhancement Funding
- NCCP Coach Bursaries
- Coaching Apprenticeships
- Coach Salary Support

EVENTS

- Leadership Summits
- Coaching Awards
- National Coaches Week
- NCCP Super Clinics

Visit coachesontario.ca and sign up for our mailing list today!

2024 ONTARIO COACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

ROGERS CENTRE - SEPTEMBER 14, 2024



EVENT EMCEE
SIGNA BUTLER
CBC SPORTS

MARCO BIANCHI
BASEBALL

SARAH STEINKE
SWIMMING

JEFF FRANCIS
SOFTBALL

MICHA PATENAUDE
MULTI SPORT

MARK ZARAGOZA
BASKETBALL

KATJA MATHYS
CROSS COUNTY SKI

TRISTIAN REID
VOLLEYBALL

RENEE BAUSCH
GYMNASTICS

SGT. DEREK BROWN
HOCKEY

YULISSA AGUDELO
BOXING

KATHRYN CARLONE
SCHOOL SPORT

ROGER SLOMKE
SCHOOL SPORT

KAYLEE WEDGE
SUSAN KITCHEN TRAILBLAZER AWARD, WEIGHTLIFTING

MICAH BRADNAM
HYDRO ONE SAFE PLAY AWARD, BASKETBALL

JACK SASSEVILLE
ANDY HIGGINS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, CROSS COUNTRY SKI

MARCO BIANCHI

BASEBALL, TORONTO



Coach Marco embodies patience, kindness, and a wealth of knowledge. For the past 12 seasons, he has dedicated himself as a volunteer coach and mentor to everyone he works with.

His primary goal each season is simple: improvement, focusing on personal growth, baseball skills, and team chemistry. Marco's teams are consistently successful, often clinching the TBA championship and most recently securing 3rd place at the 11U A provincial playoffs.

Recognized as Baseball Ontario Coach of the Year in both 2019 and 2022, Marco is celebrated not only for his coaching acumen but the remarkable impact on his players' development, both on and off the field, demonstrating that he was truly born to coach baseball.

“ Marco was born to coach baseball. He has an unparalleled passion for the craft of coaching & the game of baseball.

- COLLEAGUE



SARAH STEINKE

SWIMMING, UXBRIDGE



Coach Sarah's commitment to excellence, compassion, and inspiration distinguishes her as both a renowned coach and community leader. Under her guidance, the Uxbridge Swim Club has grown from 25 to 110 families in just three years, and she has elevated her swimmers from having none at Provincial/National levels to 15 notable talents in Ontario and three making waves across the country.

Sarah has a remarkable talent for identifying and nurturing individual strengths. By emphasizing respect, integrity, and support, she creates a close-knit and cohesive team dynamic.

With aspirations to join Canada's National Team, Sarah's success is rooted not just in her technical skills but in her profound dedication and character.



“ Her recipe for success is hard to duplicate because at the core of everything she does are her heart & character. ”

- PARENT

JEFF FRANCIS

SOFTBALL, BASEBALL, LONDON

PRESENTED BY: HUMAN KINETICS CANADA

Jeff Francis, inducted into the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame in 2022 after a distinguished 12-year MLB career, has made an extraordinary impact transitioning from pro player to community coach over the past six years.

His unmatched ability to connect with young female athletes and address their unique challenges has led to a sharp rise in softball in the area including leading his team from below .500 to winning Ontario Select Silver.

Jeff is not only an exceptional coach but also an outstanding role model, teaching the importance of community service by encouraging his players to support local seniors. At the heart of Jeff's philosophy is genuine care, compassion, and innovative methods which make him a cherished mentor and friend to his players.

“ He has not only touched our family's life but has also changed the trajectory of our daughter's future. ”

- PARENT



MICHA PATENAUDE

SWIMMING, VOLLEYBALL, OAKVILLE



Micha Patenaude has been a transformative force at École secondaire Gaétan-Gervais in Oakville for the past 13 years. In her first year, she established the region's only French school swimming program, now seeing over 20 swimmers compete. On the court, the junior girls volleyball team won it's first game ever and first regional championship.

Micha's dedication extends beyond coaching; she actively organizes community service projects, advocates for increased resources and opportunities for women in sports, and motivates both students and staff.

Micha embodies the spirit of her diverse Franco-Ontarian community and exemplifies the essence of sportsmanship through her commitment and leadership.



“ In Micha, we don't just have a coach; we have a mentor, a role model, & a force for positive change. ”

- COLLEAGUE

MARK ZARAGOZA

BASKETBALL, SCARBOROUGH



Mark Zaragoza has achieved remarkable success in his 15+ years of coaching on the hardcourt. With an overflowing trophy cabinet, he notably led Humber Men's Extramural Basketball team to three championships, and secured OCAA gold and CCAA bronze as an assistant coach for Humber Men's Varsity Basketball team.

Additionally, Mark coaches the Fil-Can Nation Select youth team, providing Filipino-Canadians with global basketball opportunities.

Coach Mark goes above and beyond to support his players, even using personal resources to ensure the team's logistical needs are met. His commitment, hard work, expertise, and proficiency in the many different facets of coaching demonstrate his deep understanding of the sport and his genuine passion for coaching.

“ *I am thankful that we have him in our organization as he is truly irreplaceable.* ”

- COLLEAGUE



KATJA MATHYS

CROSS COUNTRY SKI, PARRY SOUND

For the past 35 years cross-country ski coach Katja Mathys, has been a significant figure in Ontario's sport scene. Serving as a coach developer for Cross Country Ski Ontario, she mentors new coach developers, holds coaching workshops, and boosts the quality and quantity of trained coaches in the region.

Transitioning to the position of provincial coach development coordinator, she has successfully introduced new coaching standards and advocates for Coaching Athletes with Disabilities certification, promoting inclusivity in ski clubs across the province. Beyond coaching, she has played a pivotal role in enhancing Ontario's officials' development program as the Officials Development Coordinator for Cross Country Ski Ontario, ensuring quality events for athletes.



“ *She’s the catalyst that raises the coaching bar for cross country skiing in Ontario & Canada.*

- COLLEAGUE

”

TRISTIAN REID

VOLLEYBALL, TORONTO



Tristian Reid is a standout example of resilience and determination. For over 10 years, Tristian has distinguished himself not only by his achievements on the court, but also by his deep commitment to his community through the values of hard work and integrity instilled in him from a young age.

He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Inclusion in Canadian Sports Network, where he actively promotes racial equity in sports. His leadership is further exemplified by his role in the Black Talent Initiative, where he helped create an internship and mentorship program benefitting over 100 Black youth.

As coach of a sport less common among Black youth, Tristian inspires the next generation, demonstrating that they can achieve anything they set their minds to.

“ *Being a coach in a sport that is 'not the norm' for Black youth, he continues to show the next generation you are capable of doing anything.* ”

- COLLEAGUE



RENEE BAUSCH

GYMNASTICS, RED LAKE



Renee Bausch has been coaching 17 and under kids at the Mat Cats Gymnastics Club in Red Lake for five years. She stands out not only for her coaching, but also for her initiative in introducing a nutrition program that teaches her athletes about healthy eating—an essential focus in a community with limited access to nutritious food options.

Renee's commitment extends beyond training sessions; she is a supportive role model who creates an inclusive environment for her gymnasts. Her empathy and compassion shine through, whether she's comforting a young athlete feeling excluded due to her age or supporting a colleague who's dealing with an injury.

Renee's impact is evident throughout the club, from promoting healthy lifestyle choices to managing facility operations and organizing events. Her dedication and genuine care make her a respected and inspiring figure in the Red Lake community.



“ Her dedication, hard work, and genuine care make her a pillar of our club and an outstanding role model for all. ”

- PARENT

SGT. DEREK BROWN

WOMEN'S HOCKEY, TRENTON

Sgt. Derek Brown's nine-year coaching tenure with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) at 8 Wing Trenton has been extraordinary. His leadership and dedication were pivotal in leading the team to gold at the 2023 Regional and National Championships.

Derek is a vocal advocate for women's hockey and gender parity in CAF sports and this passion is reflected in his focus on recruitment, retention, and equal opportunities. His ability to motivate, train, and educate has made him a respected leader and champion for women in sports.

Beyond his impressive achievements on the ice, Sgt. Brown has fostered a positive environment that has allowed many women, previously new to the sport, to thrive and grow as athletes.

I've played hockey most of my life and I can say without a doubt Derek is the best coach I have ever played for.

- ATHLETE



YULISSA AGUDELO

BOXING, LONDON



Coach Yulissa Agudelo is a transformative figure in the boxing world, making a significant impact in a traditionally male-dominated sport. As a dedicated coach and mentor, Yulissa goes beyond conventional coaching, creating an inclusive and supportive environment where every athlete, regardless of experience level, feels valued.

Her innovative approach includes organizing fundraisers to minimize costs for her students and infusing classes with fun, dynamic activities, from sparring to water balloon games. With a profound commitment to both her athletes' development and their personal growth, Yulissa has guided novice boxers to national titles, all while balancing her own time and resources.

Her enthusiasm, empathy, and tireless dedication have not only fostered skill development and confidence in her students but have also established her as a remarkable role model and coach in the boxing community.



“ Since the first day our kids started with coach Yuli, we knew we were at the right place.

- PARENT



KATHRYN CARLONE

SCHOOL SPORT, BURLINGTON



Kathryn Carlone is a dedicated teacher and coach at Assumption Catholic Secondary School, where she has been passionately supporting students for over 25 years.

Kathryn teaches the importance of physical activity and healthy choices while coaching just about everything, including flag football, ultimate frisbee, rugby, senior girls' basketball, coed ice hockey, and soccer. Despite being a busy mother of three, she selflessly volunteers to ensure teams do not fold due to a lack of staff.

Known for her caring and proactive approach, Kathryn supports her athletes by always prioritizing their well-being and growth. Her commitment to providing opportunities for all aspiring athletes and her willingness to step up whenever needed make her a remarkable and inspirational figure in her school community.



“ Kathryn has never not stepped up to fill in as a coach & without her there'd be no teams. ”

- COLLEAGUE



ROGER SLOMKE

SCHOOL SPORT, THUNDER BAY



Roger Slomke is the cornerstone of athletics at St. Patrick High School and the Thunder Bay area minor hockey, where he has dedicated 30 years to coaching and mentoring.

As a coach of cross country running, girls' hockey, badminton, and athletics, Roger's impact can be seen for kilometers. He also serves as the Instructional Lead in the Phys. Ed Department and Athletic Director, balancing his professional roles with coaching his own children in community hockey.

His extensive volunteer work has led to significant success, including nine NWOSSA titles in 13 years and spearheading the launch of girls' high school hockey in Thunder Bay in 2020. Roger's unwavering dedication and innovative contributions make him an irreplaceable figure in both his school and community sports organizations.

“ Our school & city is incredibly lucky to have an individual like Roger. He simply is irreplaceable. ”

- COLLEAGUE



KAYLEE WEDGE

SUSAN KITCHEN TRAILBLAZER AWARD

WEIGHTLIFTING, KAPUSKASING

Named after the founder of the CAO, Susan Kitchen, the recipient of this special award is a coach who pushes the envelope, invents new approaches to old challenges and breaks through barriers, blazing a new path for others to follow.



Founder of the Kapuskasing Weightlifting Club, and national athlete and coach in her own right, Kaylee Wedge is a pioneering figure in Canadian weightlifting. Her coaching philosophy, rooted in the belief that "there is never losing, only learning", has driven athletes to achieve international success.

Kaylee selflessly dedicates extensive personal time to organizing fundraisers, sourcing equipment, and traveling to support athletes, all while managing the challenges of living in a remote community. Kaylee's own journey of overcoming injury and returning to the national stage showcases her resilience and compassion, making her an inspiring role model for everyone.



“ *She is a “small time” coach, in a small-town BUT there is nothing “small time” about her commitment to us.* ”

- ATHLETE

MICAH BRADNAM

HYDRO ONE SAFE PLAY AWARD

BASKETBALL, KITCHENER

Through the Safe Sport 101 partnership between the CAO and Hydro One, this special award is given to one recipient who practices positive, inclusive, physically and emotionally safe sport through their leadership role.



Coach Micah is a standout figure renowned for creating a safe and supportive environment. His coaching approach goes beyond the court, emphasizing the importance of balance, self-care, and mental well-being.

Known for fostering a positive team culture of empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect, he also engages his team in meaningful community service, including food drives, clothing donations, and writing letters to those in need.

Micah's infectious positive energy and unwavering commitment inspire his young athletes to excel both as players and individuals.

“ He always has lots of positive energy, always believes in me & is my favourite coach ever. ”

- ATHLETE



JACK SASSEVILLE **ANDY HIGGINS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** **CROSS COUNTRY SKI, ORO-MEDONTE**

This special award is given to one outstanding coach who has made a significant contribution to coaching in Ontario over a sustained period of time - 20+ years. A coach who dreams big, looks for the possibilities, and focuses on a lasting legacy.



Jack Sasseville, a cornerstone of Canadian cross-country skiing, is a 13-time Canadian National Team coach, including four Winter Olympics, and currently leads Hardwood Ski & Bike with a comprehensive 48-week yearly program.

With nearly 50 years of coaching experience, Jack exemplifies a commitment to lifelong learning, continually updating his knowledge with the latest techniques and exercise science. Above all, Jack's profound dedication to his athletes extends beyond performance, focusing on their overall growth and development as individuals, making a lasting impact both on and off the field.



“ While he strives for excellence on the playing field, he lives by his personal mantra “I am making better people.”

- PARENT





NATIONAL COACHES WEEK IN ONTARIO

Coming Sept 16-22, 2024, NCW is a week to celebrate the tremendous positive impact coaches have on athletes and communities across Canada. This is an opportunity to recognize coaches for the integral role they play by saying #ThanksCoach.

HOW YOU CAN TAKE PART

SAY #THANKSCOACH

Join the conversation on social media using #CoachesWeek and #ThanksCoach.



SEND A VIP THANKSCOACH BOX

Featuring items from local Ontario businesses, purchase this limited edition box for a coach you know or buy it for yourself!



COACHES SUMMIT SERIES

A virtual summit featuring top sport experts from around the world. Coming Sept 17-20.



ONTARIO COACHES

Summit Series

About The Event

An unparalleled opportunity to learn, engage, & connect with top experts shaping the future of sport for coaches & leaders alike.



VIRTUAL

September 17–20



\$0 Until Sept 4

\$5 After Sept 4



Tyler Gillium

Head Coach,
Savannah Bananas



Dr. Dana Sinclair

Top Performance
Psychologist & Author



Jhanelle Peters

Pepperdine Athletics &
Clinical Director

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Businesses in Ontario are offering exclusive savings for National Coaches Week! Scan our FREE virtual event bag for discounts on sport events, local businesses, attractions, & more!

EATABLE™



A Classic Snack with Flavours of Happy Hour



Adventure Through the Trees with Treetop Trekking



The Thrill of the CFL & the Hamilton Tiger-Cats



Information Leader on Sport & Physical Activity

... AND MUCH MORE!

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