

Sport BC Announces PRINCE GEORGE Community Sport Hero Awards' Recipients

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Sport BC recognizes the importance of volunteers in amateur sport. The significant role volunteers play in their community is celebrated through Sport BC's Community Sport Hero Awards. The award is to honour volunteers from Sport BC member and partner organizations who demonstrate the spirit of volunteerism through the years of dedication and commitment they have given to their sport enhancing their local community. The Kamloops recipients will be celebrated during **Sport BC's Community Sport Hero Awards** taking place on **Thursday, October 24, 2024**, in **Prince George, BC**. Congratulations to the PRINCE GEORGE Community Sport Hero Awards Recipients and thank you for all you do for amateur sport in the Prince George area.

Rob Newman, President and CEO of Sport BC says, "I applaud the exceptional recipients of Sport BC Community Sport Hero Awards, each believe in the transformative power of sport and are bringing their various skill sets and talents to the amateur sport organizations for which they have volunteered. Volunteering is the backbone of sport in British Columbia and these recipients are inspiring examples of the exceptional people volunteering to deliver amateur sport in Prince George."

2024 CSHA PRINCE GEORGE

Ben Berland

Vicki Lynn Bobbie

Aaron Flett

Warren & Chantelle Grafton

Katie Gordon

Vonda Hofferd

Emily Holmes

Dennis McCarthy

Julia Shaddick

Keith Sullivan

Elena Thomas

SPORT

Ice Hockey

Gymnastics

Ice Hockey

Karate

Rugby

KidSport Prince George

Basketball

Wrestling

Figure Skating

Ringette

Track and Field

[Ben Berland – Ice Hockey](#)

Ben believes there has never been a lack of talent in Indigenous communities, but rather a lack of opportunity. He believes that you can't do anything unless you take your first step, and he continuously supports hockey development in Prince George by getting athletes on the ice and taking their first step towards loving hockey. He brings so much enthusiasm and passion to the sport, that you can't help but want to play hockey. His commitment to getting kids involved in sport will be his legacy. Ben feels we don't quit playing because we grow old, but we grow old because we quit playing, and he famously states that he hopes to be stepping on the ice for his 100th birthday.

[Vicki Lynn Bobbie – Gymnastics](#)

Vicki has made significant contributions to the Prince George Gymnastics Club over the years as a dedicated volunteer. She has been instrumental in coordinating the annual Prince George Invitational Competition, dedicating countless hours to ensure its success. In addition to her event coordination, Vicki serves on the board of directors, guiding the club's direction and strategy. Her reliability and unwavering commitment make her an invaluable asset to both the gymnastics community and the organization. A huge thank you to Vicki!

[Aaron Flett – Ice Hockey](#)

Aaron is a dedicated leader in the Prince George hockey community, leveraging his extensive career in business and natural resource development to make a meaningful impact. As the longest-standing board member of the Prince George Minor Hockey Association (PGMHA), Aaron has served since 2011 and currently holds the position of Vice President. His commitment to fostering youth sports and community engagement has earned him recognition and respect within the hockey community and beyond.

[Warren & Chantelle Grafton - Karate](#)

Warren and Chantelle have made a tremendous impact on the Nechako Karate Club and the broader community. Over the past decade, they've helped guide athletes at all levels, including newcomers to Canada who faced significant challenges. Chantelle's personal story of resilience has touched and inspired many. Together, Warren and Chantelle's dedication to Karate and their compassionate approach have created a positive environment, helping young athletes build strength, confidence, and a sense of belonging. Their combined leadership has undoubtedly shaped the future of the local karate community.

[Katie Gordon – Rugby](#)

Katie has put her heart and soul into Northern rugby. From the establishment of the 1697s Rugby Club, it was clear that Katie's passion for the game and commitment to player development went beyond simply winning matches. She has a particular focus on inclusion, and a vision that rugby is truly for everyone. This is evident when seeing her speak with schools and at community events. The real victories lie in the lasting impact Katie has made on the players. Her emphasis on sportsmanship, perseverance, and respect has shaped not only better rugby players but stronger, more confident women. Katie Gordon is the embodiment of what a great coach should be: a leader, mentor, and advocate for her players.

Vonda Hofferd – KidSport Prince George

Vonda has been involved with KidSport for nearly 10 years and is currently the Chair of the KidSport Prince George chapter. At the end of 2023, the chapter had funded grants for more than 1,600 kids since its inception, distributing more than \$250,000 to help kids in Prince George experience the joy of a season of soccer, hockey, gymnastics, softball, baseball, figure skating and more. We are grateful to Vonda for her many years of leadership and dedication to supporting kids and thank her for all her efforts on behalf of KidSport Prince George.

Emily Holmes – Basketball

During her time at UNBC, Emily ran countless basketball camps, Junior Timberwolves programs and coached PG Minor Basketball teams. She always had a way to connect with youth athletes and made them feel heard, valued and excited about sport. Since completing her time at UNBC, Emily has been actively involved in developing youth talent through her work with Northern Bounce Basketball League. This is where she began coaching young girls and helping them cultivate their skills and love for the game. Through her mentorship, she has become a beacon of inspiration for young athletes, demonstrating the limitless potential of female athletes in the Northern BC Region. Thank you, Emily!

Dennis McCarthy - Wrestling

Dennis has been a dedicated leader in Prince George and has been instrumental in promoting and developing the sport of wrestling in the region, particularly through his work as the head coach of the Prince George Wrestling Club. McCarthy has been actively involved in growing youth participation in wrestling by organizing camps and fostering young talent. His efforts have helped revitalize local wrestling and inspire the next generation of athletes.

Julia Shaddick – Figure Skating

Julia has exemplified outstanding leadership and commitment as the President of Prince George Figure Skating Club and represents the club for the Caribou North Central Region Board of Directors. Her dedication to the sport and the community is unparalleled. Under her leadership, the club has seen significant growth in membership and participation, fostering an inclusive environment for all members. Julia embodies the spirit of volunteerism, dedicating countless hours to organizing events and supporting fellow volunteers. Her passion for figure skating and unwavering commitment to community engagement make her an outstanding community sport hero.

Keith Sullivan – Ringette

Keith is a mainstay of ringette in Northern BC and through the province. Keith always goes above and beyond. He is willing to do whatever he can, whenever he can and never hesitates. Keith has been a builder, a coach and referee for almost 40 years. Every ringette player in Prince George has been coached by Keith or knows him. He has been inducted into the Ringette BC Hall of Fame and continued to give back even after receiving his induction. His legacy and dedication to the sport of ringette spans generations. He coached his children, his grandchildren and has now even coached the kids of some of his past players. Keith loves ringette, breathes ringette, and he IS ringette for Prince George.

Elena Thomas – Track and Field

Elena's contributions to the Prince George Track and Field Club have been nothing short of transformative. Initially joining as a parent of an athlete, she quickly became a tireless advocate for both the athletes and the program. Elena took on the role of treasurer early on, showcasing her commitment to the club's financial health and transparency. In 2018, Elena stepped up as the society president, a position she maintained even after her own children outgrew the program. This speaks volumes about her dedication to the club and its future. Under her leadership, the organization thrived, with Elena implementing new initiatives that supported athletes and fostered a positive environment. Thank you, Elena!

About Sport BC

Sport BC believes in the power of sport and is committed to building stronger communities through positive sport experiences. Our goal is to enhance and support sport participation in British Columbia ensuring everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Through our KidSport BC, BC Amateur Sport Fund, and BC Women & Sport along with our services Sport BC Insurance, and Payroll and Group Benefits; Sport BC supports our sixty plus member organizations. Keep up to date @SportBC.

Community Sport Hero Awards

Thursday, October 24, 2024
PG Conference and Civic Centre
@SportBC
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