

2017 Junior Male Athlete

Noah Higgins (Disc Golf)

At age 14, Noah is the youngest upcoming disc golf athlete in Alberta, and possibly in Canada. He excelled quickly at the sport, and now competes at an advanced level provincially, nationally and at world competitions. Noah has become an ambassador for the local club, and represents the sport with professionalism. Noah volunteers regularly to help at tournaments, league, and special events. His love of disc golf is unsurpassed. Noah is committed to the sport and always displays respect for others and the rules. In 2017, Noah competed at the Junior Disc Golf World Championships in Illinois, where he placed 12th in the world in his age division. He was the only Canadian Junior disc golfer at the World Championships, and represented Lethbridge, Alberta and Canada with great pride.

2017 Junior Female Athlete

Grace Holowiski (Taekwondo)

Grace started Taekwon-Do when she was 8 years old and is now a first degree black belt. With the World Championships in Ireland as her goal, Grace worked hard as a color belt and learned as much as she could. At Nationals in Montreal last June, she achieved her dream and made the Canadian Team, and was awarded Top overall Jr. Female Athlete. This qualified Grace to represent Canada as an individual and team competitor in sparring, specialty breaking and power breaking at the World Championships in Ireland this past October. Grace was the only Canadian to win two individual medals. In November, Grace went on to win Gold in Patterns, Sparring Heavy Division, Specialty Breaking and Power Breaking at the 2017 Western Championship. Grace also has an active role as an instructor in her taekwondo school, and works hard teaching younger athletes. She is a dedicated hard worker and a role model that persevered through every obstacle that was in her way to achieve her goals.

2017 Senior Male Athlete (Sponsored by University of Lethbridge Men's Horns Hockey Alumni)

Peter Millman (Track and Field - Shot Put) Co-winner

Over the past five years Peter Millman has exemplified what it means to be a student-athlete. Excelling on the track, being a five-time Canada West Champion, three-time CIS/U SPORTS gold medalist. Multiple Canada West and CIS/ U SPORTS Field Athlete of the year awards. Peter was a three-time Academic All-Canadian and named both the 2017 Canada West and U SPORTS Student-Athlete Community Service Award. In addition to athletics and academics, Peter has spent numerous hours volunteering in the university and Lethbridge communities with Lethbridge Family Services, Jr. Horns - Run Jump Throw program, Operation Red Nose and as a member of the Pronghorns Student Athlete Council.

2017 Senior Male Athlete (Sponsored by University of Lethbridge Men's Horns Hockey Alumni)

Aaron Hernandez (Track and Field - Triple Jump) Co-winner

Aaron Hernandez' list of accomplishments on the track are numerous, and in 2017, Aaron saw even more successes he added his third USport national championship as well as being the Team Alberta flag bearer and winning a silver medal at the 2017 Canada Summer Games. In addition to his athletic achievements, it is his involvement and leadership in the community that makes Aaron stand out. Aaron has a passion for giving back to his community as he has been a tireless volunteer in many schools and organizations, where over the past four years he has played a vital role in growing the sport of athletics by leading and organizing dozens of school clinics across Southern Alberta. In addition, Aaron is also the head coach for the U-15 boys' soccer program in Coaldale, works as support personnel for individuals with disabilities, and is a member of the Athlete's Council at the University of Lethbridge where he is a student and Academic All-Canadian.

2017 Senior Female Athlete (Sponsored by University of Lethbridge Pronghorns Athletics)

Sunder West (Basketball)

Sunder was a fundamental member of the Lethbridge College Women's Basketball team from 2014 - 2017. Most importantly, during the 2016 – 2017 season, Sunder was named to the ACAC First Team, the ACAC Conference Championships Most Valuable Player, and named the 2017 CCAA National Championship Tournament Most Valuable Player. This was done while leading her team to an undefeated regular season (21-0) that was capped with a National Championship. Sunder is a hardworking and knowledgeable basketball player, but what sets her apart from your average "star" is her team-play focus. Being the top scorer on an undefeated team garners the attention of opposing defenses as expected. However, with Sunder this was never an issue because she was happy to distribute the ball to

her teammates, whom she had the utmost confidence in as players. When she stepped on to the court she was ready for battle and whatever the game would throw at her, Sunder was always willing and able to embrace the challenge. Sunder embodies what it means to rise to the occasion and perform at the highest level.

2017 Master Athlete

Deborah Williams (BMX)

A multiple time National Champion, Deb was one of 300 Canadians that qualified to compete at the 2017 BMX World Championships in Rock Hill, South Carolina last July. Only 4 Canadians made it all the way through qualifiers to the finals in their respective classes. Deb was one of those athletes, receiving the bronze medal in the Women's 40+ Cruiser class. Back home Deb also won the National Championships in both 25+ Women for 20" bikes and 40+ Women's Cruiser. In addition to her athletic accomplishments, Deb gives back to the sport as much as she can. She puts in as many hours training as she does coaching, even in the off season. There is never a workout or coaching session missed. Deb has also been working towards her Introduction to Competition NCCP certification.

2017 Athlete with a Disability

Joshua Baerg (Swimming)

Josh represented Canada at the 2017 Deaflympics in Turkey as a swimming athlete. He had the best performance of all the Canadian athletes and was named the Closing Ceremony flag bearer. Josh made the finals in the 100 m Breast stroke, finishing 7th in the world, and in the 200 m Breast stroke, finishing 8th in the world. He was part of the team that set a new Canadian record in the 4 x 100m freestyle relay.

Josh swims with the Lethbridge Pronghorns. He has been an all-Canadian Academic award winner each year including 2017. Josh was on the Youth Council with the Federal Sports and Disability Minister and advocates for improving the conditions for deaf athletes and seeking equality for Deaf Sports in the Paralympic movement. Josh sets high standards for himself and strives to meet his goals. He is a leader among the athletes and encourages his teammates.

2017 Amateur Team

Lethbridge College Kodiaks Women's Basketball Team

Besides the perfect season and the team & individual accolades that this incredible group of student athletes earned, this year's team had the 2nd highest team GPA in the athletics department, they were continually relied on throughout the school year to be involved in any and all the departments & colleges community expectations and events. The most incredible quality of this team is how they accomplished what they did by working together. Everyone understood their individual and team goals and responsibilities and got the job done – day in and day out. They were not the most athletic team in conference play or at the national championships but their maturity, competitiveness and pure desire to do what it takes to win a national championship shined on every stage. This is a very deserving squad of amazing athletes that did something that only occurs every once in awhile – a perfect season at the college level.

2017 Coaching Excellence

Russ Gallant, (Judo)

Russell Gallant has been a huge part of the Lethbridge Judo Club as a coach and as a mentor for the International and National Athletes. He has developed and produced some of the best young Judoka that represent Canada at International and World Events. The Lethbridge Judo Club is currently ranked the Number Two Club at the Elite Invitational which had Olympic and World athletes competing. Russ's athletes include, 2017 World Junior Team Virginia Nemeth and Hana Kuno, and World Cadet Team Members Kiera Westlake, Joel Demaere, and Annabelle Darlow. His confidence and determination is reflected in his coaching. Russ is well respected by his athletes, parents, and colleagues.

2017 Officiating Excellence

Deirdre Coburn (Figure Skating)

For the past decade, Deirdre has been a valuable component of figure skating not only in Lethbridge, but also in the rest of Southern Alberta, the Alberta NWT/Nunavut Section of Skate Canada, and even at the National level. Locally, Deirdre has been an evaluator at numerous test days, has volunteered her time at Canskate Element Events which introduces young skaters to competition. She regularly attends simulation sessions to provide feedback to skaters

preparing for testing or competition, and has been the Technical Representative for the annual Chinook Open competition for at least a decade. Deirdre is involved with the training and mentoring of new officials as well. In 2017 Deirdre was the Tech Rep for the Skate Canada Alberta/NWT-Nunavut Sectional Championships held in Lethbridge, facilitated multiple STAR 1-4 judging clinics, was involved in the Sectionals trial judging program, judged at numerous other competitions around Alberta and beyond and was invited to participate in the inaugural Skate Canada Coaches and Officials Apprenticeship Program. Deirdre also trains and competes in Olympic Weightlifting, is a member of the University dragon boat team, 'Fiat Lux', and remains active as an adult figure skater. Her passion and dedication are unmatched.

2017 Volunteer in Sport

Dave Overes (Football)

Dave was the Chair of the 2017 Football Canada U16 Western Challenge held in Lethbridge this past July, with teams from the four Western Canadian provinces competing. With only a few month's notice, Football Canada and Football Alberta asked that Lethbridge host the tournament, and Dave accepted the challenge. He assembled a small committee and provided outstanding leadership in hosting a very successful event. Dave understands the benefits that young athletes can receive from participation in sport and has dedicated countless hours to ensuring that well organized football programs are available to youth in Southern Alberta.

For many years, Dave has served as a coach and administrator for various Southern Alberta football organizations. He has coached minor football and high school football. He has coached in the Alberta Summer Games, provincial all-star teams and in international challenge tournaments and is currently a position coach with the Coaldale Spartans minor football team. Dave has served as Director of the Lethbridge Minor Football Association and Commissioner of the Southern Alberta Minor Football Association for many years and is currently the Southern Alberta representative to Football Alberta.

2017 Sport Administrator

Cherise Eaves (Speed Skating)

Cherise is the Club Registrar and Meet Coordinator for the Lethbridge Speed Skating Association. Both positions are quite involved, yet she ensures all new skaters feel welcome when they first start up; she's on hand to make sure they have the proper equipment and she always keeps everyone in the club well informed. As Meet Coordinator, Cherise counts countless hours making sure the club's home meet runs smoothly. She was instrumental in expanding the local meet to 2 days, which made it more feasible for clubs that have to travel long distances to attend. Earlier this season, Cherise was able to obtain a sanction for a small 'mini-meet' so that skaters who were unable to compete early in the season could obtain a qualifying time for the Alberta Winter Games. She also invited skaters from Medicine Hat to the meet so they would have a chance to qualify as well. Cherise has attended and completed several Speed Skating Officials Certification courses, is always on the lookout for new opportunities and fundraising options for the club, as well as new ways to promote the club and recognize sponsors.

2017 Sport Organization

South West Little League

Through solid leadership at the board level through to their volunteer coaches, South West Little League provides instruction and excellent baseball play opportunities for boys and girls ranging from 4 years old to 15 years old. In 2017 South West Little League was proud to support, coach and lead 597 registered players in winter camps, spring, summer, all-star and fall leagues, providing developmental opportunities during all seasons. South West Little League work to the best of their abilities to remove any obstacles that may prevent a child from participating and/or enjoying the sport of baseball. With a long-term athlete development point of view South West Little League helps all players reach their potential with developmentally appropriate teaching of skills, and they promote athlete health, wellness and safety through implementing programs such as pitch count safety and fair play rules, helping make sure that no athletes are over or under utilized. South West Little League has had great success at retaining participating athletes in the entry levels (tee ball and coach pitch) indicating that these young athletes are having a great introductory level sport experience. It is through these great experiences that year after year South West Little League is able to witness athletes achieving their bests whether it is through winning a Junior National Championship or pitching in their first game. We look forward to the good work South West Little League will continue to do in our community.

2017 Knud Petersen Spirit of Sport (Sponsored by Lethbridge Sports Hall of Fame)

Will Smith (Figure Skating)

Will's is a story of passion for learning new skills, challenging himself, and being active for life. Over the last 6 years, Will has attended public skating nearly every day, sometimes 2 or 3 times a day. In one year, he attended 351 public skates. He learned skating skills from books, the internet, and from examining video of himself skating. In the spring of 2017 Will decided that his goals were too big to achieve on his own so he enlisted the help of professional skating coaches at the Lethbridge Skating Club. Will is working on landing his axel, double loop and double flip. Will jumps and spins both ways and never lets insecurities get in the way of performance. He performed in the Lethbridge Skating Club carnival in March of 2017 and competed at his first skating competition at the Calgary STARSkate Invitational in December. He was in the Men's Bronze interpretive Adult category where he placed 2nd with a score of 9.71. In addition to the on-ice training, Will has been working very hard with an off-ice regime at the University of Lethbridge gym, working to build enough strength to help him jump. Will has inspired many adult skaters including his coaches, to remember that you are never too old to skate and you should always stay in shape for life and challenge yourself doing something you love.

Servus Credit Union Outstanding Sport Citizen

Peter Millman

Although we told you already about Peter's athletic accomplishments, the Servus Credit Union Outstanding Sport Citizen award focuses on a different aspect of excellence. In his time as a student athlete at the University of Lethbridge, Peter has demonstrated dedication and commitment in and out of the classroom while working his way to becoming the top shot putter. Peter has volunteered his time with Lethbridge Family Services, Operation Red Nose, the Campus Coulee Crawl, the Moonlight Run and numerous camps and clinics. Perhaps most notably Peter has been involved in other initiatives such as the *Bell Let's Talk* campaign, and as a leader in the *Student Athlete Mental Health Matchup Program* fundraising initiatives. After opening up about his own struggles with depression and anxiety, Peter is now a mental health advocate with a desire to foster the physical and mental health of athletes in Southern Alberta. Peter demonstrates a great love of sport, respect for others, a commitment to fair play and ethical sport and a desire to mentor and grow sport.

Business and Sport Excellence

Rob Smith, ATB Financial

Many companies put their support behind an initiative or two, and do a tremendous job of it, but Rob has grown ATB's support in Lethbridge to a higher level. As chair of the ATB South Market sponsorship and donation committee, Rob has advocated for and been involved in decisions which have probably touched every single person in our community. Rob showed a keen interest in the facilities within what is now named ATB Centre. He was interested in the sports that would be offered there and how it would allow our community a balance of recreational opportunities, but at the same time, hold sporting events that would allow our athletes to compete at the local, regional, provincial and national level. The ATB sponsorship of this facility created opportunity for all levels of athletes through the grassroots sports that ATB Centre will support to world class events that will be held there. Thanks to Rob, ATB has been a key supporter of dragon boating for the past 17 years, the Tour of Alberta, the Lethbridge Hurricanes, the Lethbridge Pronghorns, and campaigns for youth athletics and team sponsorships for groups ranging from the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign to KidSport. In all, ATB's financial support of sport in Lethbridge is nearing the \$2 million point.

Not only has Rob said yes when Lethbridge needed support, but he has actively sought out opportunities to make a difference by giving time, resources and money where it was needed most. Rob's passion for his community and the people of Lethbridge is evident, and he is regarded as a humble but fierce leader.