

FOR RELEASE  
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## **Yukon athletes recognized at Government of Yukon first annual Celebration of Sport Excellence**

Government of Yukon celebrated athletic achievement in 2016 at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre last week.

Yukon athletes who competed at major games as well as other regional, national and international competitions were awarded medals of recognition and excellence for their dedication to sport.

Rennes Lindsay and Matt Jacobson won the inaugural Aboriginal female and male athlete of the year award while Trena Irving and Les Johns were recognized with Aboriginal coach of the year awards.

Olympic and Paralympic recognition awards were also given out for the first time. These awards celebrate Olympians, Paralympians and Olympic support staff from Yukon who have competed or participated as support staff at the Olympic Games. There were 17 awards in this category this year as the government looked all the way back to 1948 at our Olympic participation.

### **Quotes**

"Congratulations to all of Yukon's athletes. They have shown amazing dedication to their sports. Yukon sport and recreation organizations are stronger and more resilient with leadership and inspiration from these individuals. I look forward to seeing what Yukoners will achieve this year in sports including at the North American Indigenous and the Canada Summer Games."

*–Minister of Community Services John Streicker*

"The Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle was pleased to be able to partner with the Government of Yukon in a Celebration of Sport Excellence. Success in sport, like anything in life, requires courage and commitment. We are proud of the many athletes, coaches and parents who put in many long hours in pursuit of these dreams. These awards recognised this hard work and achievements. We were excited to be able to present beautiful pieces designed and carved by local artist Calvin Morberg to this year's recipients."

*–Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle president Gordon Reed*

### **Quick facts**

- Winners of the Premier's Awards of Excellence and the Minister's Awards of Recognition have achieved medal standings at provincial, western Canadian, national or international competitions. The athletes are nominated each year for these awards by their sport governing body.
- The awards for Aboriginal Athletes are presented to individuals who have achieved excellence in high performance sport, are regarded for their leadership qualities, and are recognized as community role models both on and off the field of play.
- Awards of Olympic and Paralympic recognition were given out to athletes since 1948 who lived in Yukon at the time and attended an Olympic or Paralympic Games.
- In addition to athletes, this awards night also recognized Yukon officials who travelled to Vancouver in 2010 and other Yukoners who have worked at the Olympic and Paralympic Games in a support role.

**Learn more:** Community Services Sport and Recreation Branch, Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle

### **See backgrounder.**

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## **Backgrounder: Government of Yukon Awards of Excellence Winners**

### **Premier's Awards of Excellence**

#### **Athletics – Para wheelchair**

Jessica Frotten

#### **Canoe and Kayak**

Mael Provonost

Pelly Vincent-Braun

### **Cross Country Skiing**

Dahria Beatty  
Ernest Chua  
Natalie Hynes  
Knute Johnsgaard  
Darby McIntyre  
Owen Munroe  
Kendra Murray  
Emily Nishikawa  
Amanda Thompson

### **Curling**

Thomas Scoffin

### **Figure Skating**

Bryn Hoffman  
Tijana McCarthy  
Michael Sumner

### **Freestyle Skiing**

Etienne Geoffroy

### **Hockey**

Kaine Comin  
Johnny Elias  
Jonas Leas  
Benjamin McClelland  
Josh Tetlich

### **Orienteering**

Leif Blake  
Blake Pia  
Ross Burnett  
Afan Jones  
Caelan McLean  
Forest Pearson  
Sabine Schweiger

### **Minister's Awards of Recognition**

#### **Athletics**

Jack Amos  
Brenda Dion  
Bonnie Love  
John Storms  
Don White

#### **Basketball**

Ryan Hindson

#### **Cycling**

Ava Irving-Staley

#### **Hockey - Bantam**

Bryce Anderson  
Joshua Austin  
Aimery Barrault  
Marcel Barrault  
Oscar Burgess  
Kyrn Crosby  
Kirk Gale  
Saul Gale  
Marco Harwood  
Liam Hudson  
Wyatt Peterson  
Eric Potvin  
Oscar Sawicki  
Kyle Schwantz  
Dawson Smith  
Brett Walchuk  
Isaac Williamson  
Joshua Zaccarelli

#### **Hockey – Pee-Wee**

Sawyer Adams  
Ty Beacon  
Hugo Burgess

Connor Cooper  
Cole Cowan  
Connor Cozens  
Mike Cozens  
Mason Driscoll  
Errol Ekholm  
Jake Jirousek  
Sasa Jirousek  
Austin Larkin  
Landon Marsh  
Nolan Matthews  
Joshua Schenk  
Joey Schultz  
Ryder Twardochleb  
Ashton Underhill  
Michelle Underhill  
Joshua Wanless

#### **Judo**

Cassi Jensen  
Shayne Melanson

#### **Orienteering**

Leif Blake  
Nesta Leduc

#### **Swimming**

Rennes Lindsay

#### **Wrestling**

Daniel Toner

#### **Awards of Recognition – 55 + Games**

#### **Darts**

Gary Hewitt

#### **Scrabble (Category A)**

Tyrner Colleen

#### **Scrabble (Category C)**

Shirley Clark

#### **Track & Field**

Rose Leenders  
John Hall  
Naomi Hall  
Donna Jones  
Hank Leenders  
David Kalles

#### **Track & Field and Micro-Marathon**

Allan Benjamin  
Bryan Craven  
Brenda Dion  
Don White

#### **Awards of Recognition – Arctic Winter Games**

#### **Alpine Skiing**

Charlie Hawes  
Shane Orban  
Katie Vowk

#### **Arctic Sports**

Matt Jacobson  
Robyn Poulter

#### **Biathlon Ski**

Liam Adel

#### **Biathlon Snowshoe**

Aidan Adel  
Marika Kitchen  
Hannah Korn  
Francis Reid  
Bruce Wilson

#### **Cross Country Skiing**

Simon Cash  
Hannah Deuling  
Derek Deuling  
Alexis Gee  
Natalie Hynes

#### **Dene Games**

Alyssa Clooten  
Jedrek Dendys  
Thaeron Green  
Kadin Hare  
Jessa Klugie  
Ryan Long  
Maureen McGinty  
Terrence O'Brien  
Tyler O'Brien  
Tony Tessaro

#### **Snowshoe**

Jack Amos  
Breda McIntyre

#### **Olympic Recognition – Athletes**

Emily Nishikawa	Cross Country Skiing
Lucy Steele-Masson	Cross Country Skiing
Jane Vincent	Cross Country Skiing
Zach Bell	Cycling
Andy Gilpin	Hockey
Ross King	Hockey
Jeane Lassen	Weightlifting

#### **Olympic Recognition – Support Team**

Alain Masson	Cross Country Skiing - Head Technician / Technician
Stephen Wattereus	Cross Country Skiing - Massage Therapist

#### **Olympic Recognition – Officials**

Ted Dean	Biathlon
Claude Chabot	Cross Country Skiing
Marg White	Curling
Cynthia Onions	Short Track Speed Skating
Agnes Reidiger	Short Track Speed Skating
Barry Sugden	Short Track Speed Skating

#### **Paralympic – Support Team**

Graham Nishikawa	Cross Country Skiing Team – Guide
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#### **Paralympic – Commentator**

Stephanie Dixon	Canadian Paralympic Committee Broadcast Team
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