



40th U SPORTS Annual Meeting and 2017 Conference: Dheensaw, Dufresne, Hrycak and Zimmerman honoured

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TORONTO (U SPORTS) – Trailblazing basketball coach Olga Hrycak, reporter Cleve Dheensaw, long-time athletic director and basketball bench boss Coleen Dufresne, and late football advocate and business leader Adam Zimmerman were honoured Wednesday night at the U SPORTS Awards Gala as part of the 40th Annual Meeting and 2017 conference.

PHOTOS: [Dropbox](#)

Olga Hrycak, Jean-Marie De Koninck Coaching Excellence Award

Hrycak took home the Jean-Marie De Koninck Coaching Excellence Award, which honours since 2007 an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to university sport as demonstrated by long-term commitment and leadership as a coach at the local, provincial, national and/or international levels.

The first woman in North America to coach a university men's basketball team, Hrycak served as bench boss of the UQAM Citadins from 2003 to 2015, coaching over 300 games, and winning RSEQ Championships in 2006 and 2010. A member of the coaching staff at the Los Angeles 1984 Olympics, Hrycak was inducted into the Canadian Basketball Hall of Fame in May.

"The decision to integrate UQAM to the RSEQ basketball circuit was intrinsically linked to Olga Hrycak's presence," said UQAM coordinator of sports excellence Daniel Methot. "She had the most experience and was the most respected coach at the college level. For UQAM's program to start successfully, we needed Olga."

Cleve Dheensaw, Fred Sgambati Media Award

Dheensaw received the Fred Sgambati Media Award, presented to a member of the media in recognition of major contributions to the development and growth of Canadian university sport.

Dheensaw has covered sports on Vancouver Island and its athletes for 36 years at the Times Colonist, since joining the paper in 1981. The Victoria, B.C., native has also covered nine Olympic, Commonwealth and Pan Am Games, and has been a familiar face in the Vancouver Island high





school, college and university scene, including coverage of seven national championships hosted by the Victoria Vikes since 2011.

"There's no one more deserving of the Fred Sgambati Award than Cleve Dheensaw," said Times Colonist sports editor Brian Drewry. "Born and raised in Victoria, he understands the importance of varsity sports at UVic and what the school means to the community and the province. His coverage of the Vikes, whether it be basketball, soccer, field hockey or track and field, is always thorough and entertaining for our readers."

Coleen Dufresne, Austin-Matthews Award

Dufresne merited the Austin-Matthews Award, presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to interuniversity sport, as demonstrated by long-term commitment and leadership as a coach, director, chairperson and/or executive committee member at the local, provincial and/or national levels.

Dufresne retired in August 2016, after serving as athletic director for the Manitoba Bisons since 2001. Prior to her executive role, she was head coach of the women's basketball team at Manitoba (1984-2001) and UNB (1980-84), winning three U SPORTS championships in 1988, 1996 and 1997 and earning national Coach of the year honours in 1983, 1988 and 1998. Dufresne has also attended six Universiades, a pair of World University Championships, and has served on the FISU Executive Committee as well as the U SPORTS Board of Directors.

"Everyone involved with Bison Sports at the University of Manitoba over the past few decades recognizes the name Coleen Dufresne, and knows how integral she has been to the success of the Bisons," said Manitoba associate athletic director Curt Warkentin. "I am so pleased that Coleen is being recognized at the national level for her leadership and success as a basketball coach and sport leader. The 2017 Austin-Matthews award is a fitting honour to recognize Coleen's outstanding career in Canadian university sport."

Adam Zimmerman, L.B. "Mike" Pearson Award

Zimmerman was honoured posthumously with the L.B. "Mike" Pearson Award, presented to a distinguished Canadian citizen of outstanding achievements who, having participated in interuniversity athletics, has by his/her personal accomplishments exemplified the ideals and purposes of interuniversity athletics and amateur sport.

A former Varsity Blues football player who graduated in 1949, Zimmerman was a founding member of the Friends of Football Alumni group, which led the fight to help save the University of Toronto's football program. He later became a chartered accountant, serving as president and





vice chairman of Noranda Mines, where he made his mark as a leader in the business world. Zimmerman was also the founder of the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), a long-time director of SickKids and an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Additional Information:

[Previous U SPORTS Honours Award Winners](#)

About U SPORTS

U SPORTS is the national brand for University Sports in Canada. Every year, over 12,000 student-athletes and 500 coaches from 56 universities vie for 21 national championships in 12 different sports. U SPORTS also provides higher performance international opportunities for Canadian student-athletes at Winter and Summer Universiades, as well as numerous world university championships. For further information, visit usports.ca or follow us on:

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