

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

## **2021 ONTARIO LACROSSE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUMMARY**

TORONTO, ON – January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 – The Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) is pleased to announce the outcomes of its 124<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, held at the Hilton Meadowvale Conference Centre on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Chuck Miller, a previous President of the Ontario Lacrosse Association and respected member of the community, served as the Meeting Chairperson.

Five elected positions were open to candidates at the 2021 AGM. Greg Hummel was elected as Vice President Junior-Major, George MacDonald was acclaimed as Vice President Finance, Rick Phillips was acclaimed as Vice President Coaching and Sonya Crossey was elected as Vice President Development; each to a two-year term.

The fifth position, for OLA President, resulted in the election of Doug Luey. Following the AGM, Mr. Luey was determined to be in violation of the OLA's Rules and Regulations based on an appeal. Despite having the opportunity to resolve the violation, Mr. Luey chose not to contest the result of the appeal, and instead chose to remain as Major Series Lacrosse commissioner, which created a vacancy for OLA President. According to OLA Bylaw 6.13, Greg Hummel (VP Junior-Major) became responsible for the President's responsibilities in the interim period, and was formally appointed to the role by the Board of Directors at its first meeting of the 2022 season in late January.

In addition to the five positions on the Board of Directors, two committees were assembled by the membership. The 2022 OLA Audit Committee will be comprised of Jarrett Doyle, Rad Joseph and Paul Vivian, while the OLA Life Member Committee will consist of Marion Ladouceur (OLA Past President), Bill Hutton (OLA Past President) and Dean McLeod (OLA Life Member).

### ***Attendees Confirm Life Membership of Ted Higgins of Peterborough***

The highlight of the meeting was Dean McLeod's nomination of Mr. Ted Higgins, of Peterborough, for OLA Life Membership. Those present voted in favour to honour Mr. Higgins, who was not able to be in attendance. An opportunity for Ted to be formally recognized in front of the assembly is planned for later in 2022.

Two volunteer service awards were presented to clubs in recognition of the efforts and dedication throughout the pandemic. The Niagara Clubs of Zone 9 were presented the Arthur Poitras Promotion & Development Award for their operate a local RTA program featuring players comprised of the Fort Erie Hawks, Lincoln Redcoats, Pelham Raiders, Niagara Thunderhawks and St. Catharines Athletics. The Ken Murray Award, which is presented in recognition of those whose efforts are motivated by a desire to "help the kids", was awarded to the Gloucester Minor Lacrosse Association for their significant and enduring presence throughout the pandemic, including supporting local initiatives and engaging with community members to create a positive impact.

Lacrosse would struggle to function without a strong group of volunteers who fill an array of vital roles within their communities, including coaches, managers, administrators, game day officials (on and off the floor), as well as executive committee members. In return, OLA clubs and leagues provide opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the sport of lacrosse and their local community in a meaningful way.

Volunteering brings together a diverse range of people from all walks of life. Among the benefits for a volunteer is the opportunity to network with like-minded individuals possibly leading to the development of new friendships. Each year the OLA acknowledges volunteers who have been recognized for their terms of service. A total of 31 recipients were nominated to receive volunteer service awards in 2021 across four categories of recognition.

The OLA's President's Award Certificate is presented to each nominated person upon reaching twenty (20) years of volunteer service as a member of the Ontario Lacrosse Association. In 2021, the OLA acknowledged 11 individuals who qualified for the President's Award: Cara Burleigh, Bruce Codd, Steve Dietrich, Paul Falkiner, Sue Finnen, Mike Hancock, Charmain Marshall, John Phillips, Todd Powless, Josh Sanderson, and Phil Sanderson.

Those who have reached thirty (30) years of volunteer service are eligible to receive the Creator's Game Award Plaque. For 2021, there were 10 recipients: Tim Barrie, Jim Bomhof, Jodi Dean, George MacDonald, Sharon McKeachnie, Lynda O'Callaghan, Rick Phillips, Mike Soulliere, Mary Sticca and Bob Wright.

The third term for OLA volunteer service is the Heritage Game Award Plaque, which is presented to individuals in recognition of forty (40) years of involvement. There were 6 recipients in 2021: Mike Jones, Jim Leworthy, Bob Luey, Jim Leworthy, Pat Mackenzie, Ziggy Musial and Mark Vitarelli.

The fourth and final category is the OLA's Golden Stick Award, which is presented to each nominated person upon reaching 50 years of volunteer service. Recipients are awarded a gold lapel pin in the shape of a lacrosse stick with a diamond placed in the pocket to represent the ball. Prior to the 2021 season, only two OLA volunteers had been nominated to receive this award. In 2021, the four recipients were Don Barrie, Barb Cormier, Dave Smith and Lee Vitarelli.

Without question, volunteers are essential to the successful operation of amateur sports' clubs and leagues, and their dedication to giving back to the game over a sustained period is an inspiration to everyone involved. Because of pandemic restrictions in place at the time of the AGM, the 31 individuals who were awarded volunteer service awards were unable to be celebrated together. An opportunity for these contributors to be formally recognized in front of the assembly is planned for 2022.