



ONTARIO LACROSSE WELCOMES THREE NEW STAFF MEMBERS

TORONTO, ON – April 5th, 2024 – The Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA, @ontariolacrosse), the Provincial Sports Organization for all disciplines of amateur lacrosse in the province of Ontario, is pleased to announce three new additions to its team. Colleen Grimes joins as Director of Communications and Digital Strategy, Haylee Hutchcraft as Director of Events and Partnerships, and Neil Macdonald as Officiating Director. Each brings a unique skill set and a passion for lacrosse that will undoubtedly contribute to the OLA's ongoing success and expansion.

Colleen Grimes, now the Director, Communications and Digital Strategy, is a seasoned communications professional with over fifteen years of experience in healthcare and corporate communications. A life member of the Mimico Mountaineers Lacrosse Club, she has dedicated over a decade as a coach and administrator and was the founder of the club's Women's Field Lacrosse program in 2010. Serving as the VP of Promotion on the OLA Board of Directors, Grimes has been instrumental in shaping the organization's strategic plan. She spearheaded key initiatives like playlacrosse.com, the Play Lacrosse Public Service Announcement, and Ontario Lacrosse University. Grimes, a Merv McKenzie Award recipient for her outstanding contribution to the promotion of lacrosse in Ontario, has significantly boosted the Ontario Lacrosse Festival's profile through her strategic digital content planning, garnering millions of impressions annually. Her hiring will vacate the VP Promotions seat on the OLA's Board, which may be filled by appointment until the next AGM.

Haylee Hutchcraft brings a rich lacrosse background and over ten years of sports industry experience to her role as Director of Events and Partnerships. A former player with the Milton Mavericks and the Toronto Stars, Hutchcraft currently plays for the Mimico Mountaineers in the Women's Major Series Lacrosse League (WMSL). Significantly, she was a member of the inaugural women's team in Mimico, playing a key role in introducing the team to the community. Her deep understanding of the sport, combined with her expertise in event management and partnership development, positions her perfectly to drive the OLA's event initiatives. Hutchcraft's vision for lacrosse events is to create engaging, dynamic experiences that not only celebrate the sport but also foster deeper connections among players, fans, and partners. Her passion for lacrosse, coupled with her innovative approach to event planning and partnerships, will play a crucial role in enhancing the visibility and growth of lacrosse across Ontario.

Neil Macdonald, in his new role as Officiating Director, brings a 28-year tenure in officiating, covering a wide spectrum in both box and field lacrosse. A former player and now an influential figure in officiating, Macdonald has been the Official in Charge (OIC) of the OLA men's field sector since 2016. His over 15 years as a box and field clinician and multiple stints officiating at league, provincial, and national championships underscore his experience and commitment to the sport. Macdonald's involvement in key programs like the Ontario Lacrosse Festival and the 'A' Qualifier program underscores his dedication to the growth and professional development of officials at all levels. His hiring will vacate the OIC seat on the OMFLL's Board, which has been filled by the appointment of Alex Wagner until the next AGM.

"On the verge of what is already anticipated to be the OLA's strongest season in terms of registrations since 2018, with over 500 minor and girls box teams currently rated for the upcoming season, in addition to a consistently expanding number of teams in both minor field and women's field, our organization is positioned to support the future of the sport by bolstering its staff with knowledgeable, experienced and energetic individuals," said Jeramie Bailey, OLA Executive Director. "Colleen, Haylee and Neil are influential additions to our team, and are aligned with the goals for growth that we share as an association. We are fortunate to welcome them aboard, and excited for what lies ahead."

Colleen, Haylee and Neil can now be reached at colleen@ontariolacrosse.com, haylee@ontariolacrosse.com and neil@ontariolacrosse.com respectively.

About the Ontario Lacrosse Association

The OLA exists to improve, foster, perpetuate and govern the sport of lacrosse within the province of Ontario. In addition to coordinating the administration and operation of the sport, the OLA provides informative resources, technical development programs and additional supplies for those interested in developing the "fastest game on two feet." For more information or to become involved, contact info@ontariolacrosse.com.