

WMHA Volunteer Awards 2023-2024 Season

Volunteers are the pillars of the minor hockey experience. Without them, the game's foundation would crumble. Every role is crucial from administrative staff to coaches, trainers, team managers, and parent liaisons. The children in Windsor Minor and our community owe their hockey experiences to your dedication. Plus, it's far more exciting than just being a regular hockey parent, right? Your commitment, time, and determination benefit your teams and the Windsor Minor Hockey Association as a whole. When we look back in 10, 20, or 30 years at the hockey experiences we provided, especially during the two toughest years of our lives, we'll be immensely proud of our collective achievements. So, please, raise your glass and join me in toasting all the volunteers at Windsor Minor Hockey. To the volunteers!

U7 House Coach of the Year

Kirk Young

This U7 House League Coach of the Year is dedicated and lends a helping hand whenever we couldn't be at the rink by grabbing equipment and making sure things were set up and put away. He was head coach at the U7 level and assistant coach with U7 select. His patience with this young group never went unnoticed. He is helping to shape the future of Windsor Minor hockey through his positive influence on our young athletes. Please give a round of applause to Kirk Young.



House Minor Volunteer Award

Justin Garant

This coach's selfless dedication to our house league program is truly admirable. This season he was head coach of U5 and U9. Working with U5 skaters has its challenges but he was out there every week with a positive attitude, continually pushing little ones to skate and learn basic skills. His commitment to WMHA enriches the hockey experience for everyone involved and we thank him for his dedication to these young players. And with that being said, our House Minor Volunteer of the Year award goes to Justin Garant.



U9 Coach Of The Year Award

Derek Bellemore

This U9 Coach of the Year has exceptional coaching abilities. His innovative practices emphasize player development which has led to incredible growth and improvement among his team. His dedication to fostering a positive and supportive environment ensures that every player feels valued and empowered under his guidance. Even when his team lost a game they always came off the ice smiling. The U9 coach of the year award goes to Derek Bellemore.

Knobby Knudsen House League Award

Erik Heino

This volunteer has been a longstanding volunteer to our organization. From the time his kids arrived at the arena, this volunteer was ready to help. He was at the arena more, with 2, and began to volunteer even more. He would run practice, call from the bench, and be the “voice” of the team during games. The development that occurred during the season for all players was amazing - ensuring both of his teams made the Day of Champs - and won! Congratulations to Erik Heino!



**U11 House Coach Of The Year Award
Cole Smallhorn**

This U11 house league coach exemplifies dedication and positivity. Consistently leading their team to the championships the past two years. Even during a challenging season, he continued to make practices fun and engaging in order to develop our house league players. He showed up every week with a positive attitude so please give a round of applause to Cole Smallhorn, our U11 House Coach of the Year!



**Knobby Knudsen Award House League
Wendy and Chris**

Another big contributor to our association is our next award recipient. This recipient was at the arena and supporting at all times. They worked with coaches, board members, and players and solved many problems on the spot. They were always available and volunteered with a smile or a grimace as needed. We couldn't have had a successful season without you. This year's recipients are a duo - Wendy and Chris!



***Knobby Knudsen Award House Award
Jeff Gordon***

This volunteer has been helping WMHA for several years with a smile and a helping hand. He steps in where needed even continuing his hockey courses each year as needed. He is a voice on the bench and the ice during practices. He supports all players, encourages them to improve, and gives clear advice even in the face of loss. This year he stepped up when no one else would, saving the final year of hockey for many players, while still volunteering with an additional team. This year's recipient is Jeff Gordon.



**U15 House League Volunteer of the Year
Kaden Lamont**

This volunteer has stepped up over the past couple of years as he ended his playing career. I knew he would be a good fit for the U15 division as he relates greatly to the age and development of the players. He showed up early each practice and game and always checked in for how to improve, help, or support players and other volunteers. This year he stepped up as a new head coach, helping him on and off the ice. He is a pillar of strength, especially after having faced adversity and recovered. We will always remember 2 years ago when he ended his treatment as we all said WMHA #fightforkaden. This year's recipient is Kaden Lamont!!



President's Award
Kathy McLeod

The President's Award is given to someone who exceeds all expectations of the president, at any one or many jobs performed within Windsor Minor.

A little over two seasons ago, this volunteer stepped up to help on the WMHA board. For many new board members, it can be an intimidating challenge to learn what any given role requires. From the time commitment to board meetings, communicating with fellow board members, the unending emails, and continuous conversations with parents and volunteers... all typically leaving new board members looking like "Deer in headlights". Not this board member. No matter what we threw at her she smiled and took care of it, always attending events, helping with our annual Christmas party, tryouts, our annual Probert tournament, and just about any other event that we host. Her dedication and commitment were no more apparent than when one of our executive positions was suddenly left vacant, and without hesitation, she stepped into one of the most challenging positions on the WMHA board, Registrar and OMHA rep. She still holds two positions on the board and I would be willing to bet that she would love it if someone would come along and take the Director of Fundraising off of her plate. It is my honour to present Kathy McLeod with the WMHA Presidents Award.



Rick Murdoch Award
Derek Treverton

The Rick Murdoch Award is given each year to a volunteer who goes above and beyond their role as a parent or volunteer. Like Rick Murdoch, affectionately known as “Murdy” and past VP of Travel for WMHA, this person continues to give of his time beyond his children’s teams, beyond his role, and steps in wherever needed.

This volunteer has been selflessly given his time in multiple roles for years. He is someone who has had a positive impact on our association as a whole and also someone who I have learned a great deal from. As a coach, he is fair and straightforward and as a board member, his honesty and candor are irreplaceable qualities. We have had many debates and discussions which usually ended with all parties involved having a deeper understanding of how to look at any given situation from more than one perspective. In my time on the Windsor Minor board, I have always known that we can count on this person to give us the honest and unbiased truth. This is a rare quality these days and I have great respect for him for this. It is my honor to present the Rick Murdoch Award to our devil’s advocate and, friend, Derek Treverton.



***WMHA Bob Probert Community Award
David Morrison (Canadian Tire)***

The Bob Probert Community Award is given yearly to a business that has greatly contributed to the WMHA association in monetary and/or community ways.

Canadian Tire and David Morrison, contributed to our association in such a way that it greatly reduced the cost of our house league as well as our travel tryouts. Giving back to the community is a focus for Morrison, making sure to allow more access to sport for all that choose to try it. We thank Mr. Morrison and his dedication to Windsor Minor Hockey and look forward to more collaboration in the future.



U21 Charlie Durning Volunteer of the Year Award



The 2022-2023 volunteer of the year for U21 was one of the most committed volunteers I have seen. He took the time to get to know the kids and other volunteers and he knew his hockey. He had extensive experience with hockey and truly loved the game. He was unmatched in his dedication to the U21 division, even though he had no child or need to be there - only because he wanted to help where needed. We honestly couldn't have done it without him. Charlie Durning!

**Unfortunately, only days after the 2022-23 event, Charlie passed away in his sleep. We thank him and his family for his immense dedication and an excellent example of what a volunteer truly is. Moving forward, the U21 Volunteer Award will now be named, "The Charlie Durning Memorial Award".

Barrie MacDonald



This year's recipient is another long-term volunteer of the association. They were at the rink even though they weren't taking their child there. They may have a connection with the players and work alongside the coaches and volunteers to ensure a calm, safe, and positive playing environment. Even though he has taken a long hiatus from coaching in WMHA, duty called and he stepped up to the challenge. Much like Charlie who this award is named after, he stepped up because he wanted to help make a difference - and that he did. This year's winner of our award is Barrie MacDonald.

Coach Carl Olender – Travel Coach of the Year Award



****Only days after the 2022-23 event, our longest-serving Coach of WMHA, Coach Carl Olender, passed away in his sleep. He represented what it was to volunteer and give of himself, all the while coaching the player and the person. He taught the players that once they were on a team, they were hockey “family”. His string activity taught the players they were tied together, supporting and sticking with each other forever. Once hockey family, always hockey family. Moving forward, this award will be called, “The Coach Carl Olender - Travel Coach of the Year Award”.**

As many of you know, shortly after the 2023 awards banquet, long-time WMHA coach, and friend, Carl Olender, passed away. At that time, we decided to name this award in his honor. From this point forward, the award will be called the “Coach Carl Olender Memorial Award” and be presented to the Travel Coach of the Year.

Frank Providenti



Several Travel team coaching staffs were in consideration for this award and a very close second this year, such as last year’s award winner, Kerry Knight, and his U13 staff who were only a single point away from an OMHA semi-final appearance, or the young up and coming staff of the U12 team lead by Ryan Sterling who were only two points out of the OMHA semifinals. In the end, the decision was clear, and while these teams had tremendous success, the Carl Olender Travel Coach of the Year award for 2023/24 goes to Coach Frank Providenti of our OMHA Semi-Finalist U15C team. Coach Frank took the U15C team for the third straight season, and first as a non-parent along with assistant coaches Rob Guthrie, and Mike Crow, trainer extraordinaire, Craig Poole, and assistant Trainer, Dave Tramontozzi. Together with the players, they had an extremely successful season. The group had a fantastic tournament season, finishing second in both the Belle River Pre-Season Challenge and the Halton Hills Memorial Tournament before winning Gold in the Irish South Bend Cup in Notre Dame and The Buckeye Classic tournament in Columbus. The group then rattled off a perfect Round Robin playdown schedule going 6-0 on route to being the association’s only OMHA semifinalist. In the semifinals, they battled extremely hard against a tough Talbot team that would eventually move on to win an OMHA title. The staff had their players playing a tough physical brand of hockey and all buying into their system. Coach Frank commands the respect of his players and brings an unwavering dedication. Congratulations Frank and staff.

2023-2024 Windsor Minor Hockey Player Awards

Each year, WMHA recognizes key players on teams within our house league programs. These players exemplify resilience, leadership and a true sense of team. The three main awards are for: Most Team Spirit, Most Improved and Most Dedicated. Please continue for this year's award winners!

U13 House League Most Improved Player
Isa Abdelhameid



Isa played on the Gold team this year in the U13 division and his first year playing hockey in WMHA. He practiced well and developed his skills throughout the season. He improved greatly from the beginning to the end of the season in skating, stick handling, and gameplay. Congrats on being the most improved player in the U13 division, Isa!

U13 House League Most Team Spirit
Eva Pidhoresky



Eva played for Team Green this season in U13. She entered and left the arena with a smiling face. She always talked before games and remained positive the whole time. She loves the game and inspires others (coaches and players) to do the same. Congrats on winning the Most Team Spirit Award, Eva!

U13 House League Most Dedicated Player
Nadjiwon Wright



It was Nadjiwon's first year in WMHA hockey and she rarely missed an event or practice. He listened to his coaches and worked hard to improve on each drill and each shift. She was motivated and engaged in the game and was a difference-maker. Well done this season, Nadjiwon!

U15 House League Most Improved Player
Joshua Pare



Joshua has been a goalie for WMHA for many years. It is a difficult position and one that Josh has stuck with. This year was a huge year of growth and confidence with his team, and one he should be proud of as he moves on to next year. Well done on being U15's Most Improved Player!

U15 House League Most Team Spirit

Noah Melanson



Noah always enters the arena full of energy and ready to play each weekend. He spent many hours at the arena - playing, timekeeping, volunteering, and watching his brother play. He was willing to talk strategy and knew how the other teams played. He was passionate and motivated to try hard each practice and game. Congrats on the Most Team Spirit Award!

U15 House League Most Dedicated Player

Trevor Demmans



Trevor is a U15 player who shows up to each game and practice with a smile and no complaints. He encourages his teammates and listens to his coaches and teammates. He works extremely hard during his games and strives to improve at every practice. He is a great kid to coach, play with, or play against. Congrats on being the Most Dedicated U15 Player, Trevor!

U21 House League Most Improved Player
Sebastian Rail



Sebastian has been a goalie for WMHA for many years and this is his first year in the U21 division. He has been resilient and stuck with his position through highs and lows. Last year he played U15 select and improved greatly, but this year was truly a breakout year. He had a goalie partner, Ethan, that worked so well with him, inspiring him to work hard, and challenging him to be the best version of himself. Congrats on being the U21 Most Improved Player!

U21 House League Most Team Spirit
Noah St. Denis



Noah has been with WMHA from the beginning of his hockey career when he was just a tyke! He has grown into a young man who has respect for the game, coaches, and his teammates. He encourages all players on his team and others and brings calm and confidence to his team. He even scored a few goals along the way. As Noah moves onto life after minor hockey, we wish him the best and hope to see him back on a bench someday soon. Congrats, Noah!

U21 House League Most Dedicated Player
Spencer Wilson



Spencer has been a goalie with WMHA since he began hockey. He has stuck with it through COVID-19 and beyond. This year, there were 2 goalies on the team and he scored his first goal in years after playing “out”. Spencer even created a “special stick” for playoffs! He has worked hard to improve each week and shows up rain, shine, or sickness. He is dedicated to his team, coaches, and his teammates. Congrats on being the Most Dedicated Player for U21!

Youth Volunteer of the Year
Alex McKellar



Alex has been an amazing and dedicated volunteer for WMHA over the past 2 years. She has helped with the U11, U13 and U15 house league as well as First Shift which helps brand new children experience hockey. She also played WMHA U21 house league and Sun Parlour U22 hockey! This is not the easiest of tasks to manage, but Alex faced it all with a smile, passion, and commitment to the game. Many little hockey players improved and began to love hockey with her leadership. Congrats on being WMHA's Volunteer of the Year!