

Breakfast of Champions celebrates sports heroes of the future



By Jake Courtepatte

With a unique variety of sports opportunities and talent, it only seems right that Aurora's top athletes receive the appreciation they so rightly deserve.

Hundreds of members from across the Sport Aurora organization packed the ballroom at King's Riding Golf Club in Aurora on Sunday morning for the Breakfast of Champions, an annual event put on by Sport Aurora.

In front of a room full of invited guests, coaches, and parents, athletes received medals to commemorate their achievements of the past year, at levels ranging from local to international.

Though slated emcee Jim Thompson was unable to make the event, a number of speakers from both within and outside the Aurora community brought spirited messages to the room full of coaches and athletes, including Dr. Ivan Joseph, the Director of Athletics at Ryerson University.

The three-time Coach of the Year in the Heart of America Athletic Conference offered up supporting words to motivate Aurora's talent.

'It's wonderful to be recognized, and for others to applaud your achievements, but you have to remember, 'I am the master of my fate,' said Joseph. 'Those are the words you need to live by.'

The organizations within Sport Aurora add up to over 10,000 members, an astounding number ranging in sports from swimming, to gymnastics, and to no surprise, hockey.

Members of the Aurora Tigers, in their recognizable white and yellow jerseys, lined the front row for Joseph's speech.

'It doesn't matter whether it's the OJHL, OHL, or NHL,' said Joseph. 'The fact of the matter is, everyone here has given their best, and that alone is worth appreciating.'

Cameron Morrison, who was named in August as Aurora's first Athlete of the Year, was also officially commemorated with a plaque presented to his parents Allison and Stewart early in the ceremony. Morrison, a second round draft pick of the NHL's Colorado Avalanche, is currently in the United States on a college hockey scholarship.

Morrison, an Aurora native, spent one full season with the OJHL's Tigers in 2014-15, playing at a point-per-game pace as a 16-year-old before heading south to the United States Hockey League.

Sport Aurora, the umbrella organization for close to thirty clubs and teams throughout Aurora, will next host the annual Aurora Sports Hall of Fame induction dinner at St. Andrew's College next Wednesday. Four new members will be sworn in, namely skier Karen Stemmler, hockey coach Mike Kitchen, hockey player and coach Mike Murphy, and figure skating legend Sheldon Galbraith. Tickets are still available, with more information found at www.aurorashof.ca.