

Aurora Sports Hall of Fame's Inaugural Midsummer Celebration BBQ makes history as first event at newly-named Slabtown Armoury



Aurora Sports Hall of Fame President Javed Khan provided a warm welcome to more than 75 attendees at his organization's first annual midsummer barbecue on the patio of the newly-named Slabtown Armoury in Town Park on Friday afternoon.

Khan was "absolutely thrilled" at the turnout and offered a collective appeal to those gathered on the sun-drenched patio: "We're all a part of the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame family and today, we celebrate all of you."

The long-time President of ASHoF was "excited that our midsummer barbecue will be the very first event at the Slabtown Armoury?we're at the head of the schedule" and he introduced the new tenants of the facility "Jason Feddema and Marco Cassano" who took time from food preparation to bring concise and congenial greetings to the assembly.

Dignitaries poured into the event for their rendezvous with history, including Mayor Tom Mrakas, MPP Michael Parsa, and MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy.

Mayor Mrakas complimented the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame as a "great organization that celebrates our community's story."

Mrakas expressed his satisfaction that the Armoury was reopening for business, that the Uxbridge-based Slabtown was locating in Aurora for five years with an option for five more, and the ASHoF was hosting the inaugural event at the revamped events centre.

"I'm so glad to see the Hall of Fame here to have the first event. Let's enjoy some great BBQ."

MPP Parsa kept his address short and sweet, as is his custom.

He warmed up the group by applauding and commending the owners for their quick pre-dinner speeches. After eliciting chuckles from the assembly, the Minister of Children, Community, and Social Services then spoke from the heart about the value of the local sports organization: "The Aurora Sports Hall of Fame inspires younger generations with the stories of great athletes from the community. To Your Worship and all gathered here today?have a great time."

MPP Gallagher Murphy applauded the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame for "giving back to the community" and the resident of Aurora spoke proudly of the organization's contributions to the cultural history of the town.

Over a dozen red-jacketed Hall of Fame inductees were present to hear the Newmarket-Aurora MPP's glowing words, including Lowell McClenny, Steve Vickers, Alan Dean, and Alex Ansell. In addition to praising the inductees for their contributions to the community, Khan warmly introduced podcaster and attendee Andrew Applebaum.

The engaging host of the Toronto Legends podcast mingled with guests and we discussed his upcoming event "An Afternoon with Steve Paikin and Bruce Dowbiggin" which Applebaum will be emceeing at Aurora Town Square at 2 p.m. on Sunday, September 7. Applebaum's podcast focuses on Toronto legends and Paikin and Dowbiggin generated huge followings during their heyday with TVO and CBC, respectively.

By Jim StewartLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter