

Helming Sports Hall of Fame is ?dream job? for Nancy Black



By Jeff Doner

As the newly appointed project manager for the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame (ASHoF), Nancy Black is looking forward to getting right to work.

With over 20 years of experience in the community as a coach, athlete, volunteer and founder of the Aurora Master Ducks Swim Club, Black is hoping to channel that into developing and growing the ASHoF going forward.

?It's a great fit for me to be a project manager for the Sports Hall of Fame, imagine that. To be doing this, it's a cliché, but it's a dream job and it really does make sense for me.?

Originally hailing from Ottawa, Black moved to Thunder Bay at just 15 years of age to train for the 1976 Olympic trials in swimming.

She didn't end up making it to the Olympics, but her passion for the sport kept growing and she wanted to help others get involved.

Since moving to Aurora in 1993, Black has been heavily involved in the local swimming scene. She started as a swim coach for children in 1994 and then moved her efforts into creating an adult program.

?The first year that I moved here, there wasn't a masters club, and I eventually worked with the town to start that in 1996,? she said. Over the years she has also acted as the community coordinator for Special Olympics Ontario ? Aurora.

The hiring of Black came over a two month search to find the right person to move the ASHoF forward in the first year of a \$192,000 Trillium Grant.

In promoting and growing the ASHoF, Black said her main priorities will be launching a new website, working with the new Sport Hall of Fame curator Catherine Richards, and, of course, the awards dinner.

?I am so excited to be involved and obviously one of the biggest things about this is that it will become an aspiration for the younger athletes,? she said. ?That's where the education part fits in and getting that legacy and future. I will be advancing, promoting sport and honouring sports heroes, it's awesome that that's what I do for a living now.?

However, Black also stressed the importance of getting nominees in order for the ASHoF to grow.

She said she wants people who are pro-sport, engaged in the community and who believe sport is less about competition and more about getting kids active.

?Sport, to me, is getting involved in athletics versus competition for life,? she said. ?It is an honour for me to have this role and I mean it. When you look at the Sports Hall of Fame and Sport Aurora and how pervasive it can be, it is just a really positive entity.?