

## Scholarships to be lasting legacy of Sweden vs. Switzerland match



Hockey fans descended on the Aurora Community Centre on Sunday to see Team Sweden battle it out with Team Switzerland.

A pre-tournament game as part of the IIHF Women's World Championship, Aurora was a sporting destination over the weekend as the elite athletes not only demonstrated their prowess, but engaged with and inspired the athletes of tomorrow through on-ice sessions and autograph opportunities.

As such, a lasting legacy of the game will be an IIHF Scholarship in support of the Recreation and Healthy Active Living Leadership Course for girls and gender-diverse youth in Aurora.

The scholarship was launched March 29 as the Town hosted Team Sweden and local sport leaders for a special dinner at the Aurora Armoury.

“The Town of Aurora is absolutely honoured to host Team Sweden,” said Mayor Tom Mrakas at last Wednesday’s event. “The Town of Aurora is twinned with Leksand, Sweden, so it is particularly meaningful that we’re able to host Sweden in our hometown this week. The Town of Aurora is also a very strong supporter of sports. Under the guidance of the Town’s Sports Plan, the work that is being done to strengthen our sport for women and girls in sports, create a strategic approach to sport tourism, develop more sport opportunities and provide workshops to further enhance the sport community. Of course, we’re working hard to cultivate the journey of young female athletes.

“Hosting a game of this magnitude in our community helps inspire and support women and girls in sport. They provide to our community with real life examples of how anyone can be a coach, athlete, leader and sports administrator and reach success at an international level.”

The IIHF Scholarship for Recreation & Healthy Active Living Leadership Course will be given out to 25 girls and gender diverse individuals over the next five years, and will serve as a high school credit.

“This high school credit course aims to empower, educate and reach more girls and gender-diverse youth to help advance women and girls in sports,” said Mayor Mrakas. “I am excited to see the future impact of these scholarships on our youth in sports and great achievements they can reach.”

Sponsors for the scholarship include the Central York Girls Hockey Association, Ontario Women’s Hockey Association, Key Advantage Team, Jennifer Di Paolo Real Estate, and Crossfit Aurora Central.

Through the Sport Plan, the Town of Aurora is committed to supporting more female and gender diverse leadership roles in sport, said the Town in a statement following the announcement. This university/college preparation course is a unique, blended-learning opportunity that involves 110 hours of combined in-person, online, and community mentorship experiences. Successful completion of this course provides students with a Grade 12 credit towards their high school diploma and certifications for youth leadership positions in recreation and sport, including HIGH FIVE Sport, Emergency First Aid, National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), Fundamental Movement Skills, and Leaders in Play.

For more information on the course, visit [aurora.ca/sport](https://aurora.ca/sport) and select Courses & Workshops.

If you are interested in the opportunity to provide a scholarship for the course, contact Sponsorship Coordinator Louise Dyer at [ldyer@aurora.ca](mailto:ldyer@aurora.ca).

Wednesday's welcome dinner included representation from the Swedish Consulate, an exchange of jerseys between Team Sweden and the Town of Aurora, a shout-out to Holiday Inn Express for hosting the team at their location near Wellington Street and Highway 404, and dishes prepared by Niagara College's Canadian Food & Wine Institute, which calls the Armoury home.

By Brock Weir  
Editor  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter