

Sport Aurora honours local excellence at Leisure Complex



Athletes, coaches, builders and volunteers who have contributed countless hours to Aurora's sporting community are being publicly celebrated by Sport Aurora once again - this time at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex.

Members of the Sport Aurora community, an organization that represents 43 local sports clubs, came together at the Complex (AFLC) on Monday afternoon for the unveiling of the Sport Aurora Wall of Excellence.

The Wall of Excellence is a permanent installation at the AFLC recognizing and celebrating the "outstanding achievements, leadership, and contributions of Aurora's athletes, coaches, builders, and volunteers."

"This Wall stands as a tribute to those individuals and organizations whose dedication has strengthened the culture of sport in our community and whose accomplishments have brought distinction to Aurora at the regional, provincial, national and international levels," said Sport Aurora Executive Director Laurie Mueller prior to the ceremony.

Leading the March 2 event was Sport Aurora President - and Ward 1 Councillor - Ron Weese.

Work on the mural, which was led by Mueller and Neil Moore, began when Sport Aurora's displays were displaced from the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex during renovations, including the construction of the facility's gymnasium.

"The Town asked if we would take our displays from the SARC and gave us an opportunity to come here to the AFLC, so we're quite thankful," said Weese, giving an additional nod to John Firman of the Town of Aurora for his help and to a Community Services grant "to help make (the display) pretty."

"The Sport Aurora board approved the move here, so it is partially funded through some of the activities we've done, but really what you're going to see behind [the curtain] is a demonstration of how valuable we think celebration is. Sport Aurora was started 20 years ago - and part of that sustainability has been because we value certain things. We value participation - that's one of our mission statements to increase the total number of people that are participating in health, physical activity, and sport - and the second thing is capacity building. We try to build capacity through people, as well as supporting the development of facilities anywhere, because, as our Town grows, we need to grow with it.

"The other thing we do, of course, is integration. We try to make things efficient amongst our sport organizations. When you have 43 of them, you have to be trying to do things together. What you're going to see here is really that togetherness because we value coaches, we value athletes, we value our sponsors, and it's very important that we recognize them because sport is a very aspirational

thing. We hope when people go by here and they see sponsors who have provided money, when they see volunteers who have provided expertise, when they see coaches who come together and help our athletes, and then we see the athletes which are a result of it, I hope everybody is proud of what happens because it's really something that happens year after year, almost day after day, with Sport Aurora and all of our member organizations.?

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter