

U.S. Olympic Committee announces award winners for 2018 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly

Awards to be presented Sept. 21 at annual Assembly in Colorado Springs

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – The United States Olympic Committee today announced the recipients of six annual awards, which will be presented at a celebratory dinner during the 2018 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly that begins Thursday, Sept. 20 at The Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Friday awards dinner will conclude the Assembly, and feature Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti as the keynote speaker and Olympic ice dance medalists Maia and Alex Shibutani as hosts.

The late Michael Stephens, founder of the Lakeshore Foundation, was named the Olympic Torch Award honoree, while Dr. Patricia DeLaMora was selected to receive the Jack Kelly Fair Play Award. Three-time Olympic freestyle skier Tracy Evans was chosen as the individual Rings of Gold honoree and Game On! Sports 4 Girls was named the program Rings of Gold recipient.

Two National Governing Bodies will be recognized for achievement in diversity and inclusion initiatives. USA Softball was chosen as the recipient of the Advancing D&I Award, while USA Triathlon was selected by its NGB peers as the D&I Choice Award winner for its Paratriathlon Military Engagement Program.

Throughout his career, Stephens pioneered opportunities for countless individuals with physical disabilities to pursue fitness, recreation and competitive sport. He was one of the first to incorporate competitive physical activity in the rehabilitation process, believing that an active life should be attainable for every individual. The nonprofit organization founded by Stephens, Lakeshore Foundation, was officially designated a U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Training Site in 2003, and has since produced 54 Paralympic athletes, coaches and staff members. Stephens also served as a member of the USOC's CEO Leadership Council and as an honorary team captain at the Paralympic Games Athens 2004. In July 2017, Stephens passed away, but his legacy and ideals live on throughout the Paralympic Movement. He will forever be remembered as a true champion of the human spirit.

The Jack Kelly Fair Play Award annually recognizes an athlete, team, coach or official for an outstanding act of fair play and sportsmanship. A beloved physician from New York City, Dr. DeLaMora became an inspiring example of the Olympic ideals at the July 2017 IRONMAN in Santa Rosa, California. As she approached mile 26 of the race on her bicycle, DeLaMora saw a fellow triathlete, Tim Gallagher, unconscious on the side of the course. DeLaMora halted her race to assist Gallagher and administered CPR until emergency medical personnel arrived. It wasn't until she reached the running course that she learned Gallagher had survived. Her selfless act of care saved a fellow competitor's life. For this incredible display of sportsmanship, IRONMAN named DeLaMora an official IRONMAN Ambassador at the 2017 IRONMAN World Championship in Kona, Hawaii.

The Rings of Gold Awards recognize an individual and a program dedicated to helping children develop their Olympic or Paralympic dreams and reach their highest personal potential. Following three appearances at the Olympic Games, Evans turned her focus to service and founded Kids Play International, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting gender equity and Olympic values through sport to children in post-genocide impacted countries. KPI offers mixed-gender, multi-sport opportunities that teach the values of respect, solidarity and gender equality, helping to renegotiate harmful cultural norms. Under Evans' vision and leadership, KPI's has succeeded in creating sustainable, lasting change in communities around the world. She also became the first U.S. Olympian – and one of only five Olympians – to be recognized at the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018 as part of the World Olympians Association's Olympians for Life Project.

Since its inception in 2007, Game On! Sports 4 Girls has been fully committed to creating unique summer camps and school-year programming to empower and inspire young girls through sport. By exposing

participants to a wide range of sports, including 13 Olympic sports, Game On! aims to teach life lessons around themes such as leadership, positive body image, goal setting, and respect for oneself and others. Campers consist of girls between the ages of 4 and 14, and in the organization's 12 years, more than 3,750 campers have attended its life-changing programs. Beginning as a multi-sport summer day camp, Game On! has expanded across three states and now partners with other impactful organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago, Paratriathlon Club Dare2tri, USA Team Handball, USA Rugby, USA Ultimate Frisbee and USA Field Hockey, along with a host of other high-achieving athletes that encourage Game On! participants to dream big.

The Advancing D&I Award recognizes the NGB with the highest annual growth percentage of underrepresented individuals based on diversity data for women, and racial and ethnic minorities. USA Softball led all NGBs and High-Performance Management Organizations with a 6.06 percent increase in membership for women and persons of color from 2016-17. Percentage increases were evaluated based on overall NGB numbers, which includes board members, employees, NGB membership, and national team athletes and coaches. Highlighting the diversity growth for USA Softball was a 30 percent increase in women's national team coaches and non-athlete members, as well as an 11 percent increase in people of color in those same categories.

Now in its fifth year, the D&I Choice Award recognizes an NGB for best practices in advancing diversity and inclusion, as determined by a vote of NGB peers. USA Triathlon's Paratriathlon Military Program pioneered a series of training camps designed to develop paratriathlon engagement among military veterans. Each training camp was free for participants and provided the opportunity to live and train at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. Thanks to the Paratriathlon Military Program, 45 military veterans worked with world-class coaches to build their paratriathlon skills and engage in a potentially life-changing experience.

The Shibutanis experienced a break-out year at the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, winning two bronze medals, one in the figure skating team event and one in ice dance. The brother-sister duo has also medaled at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships for 14 consecutive years, including at every level and every year they competed. Off the ice, the Shibutanis hosted a youth mentorship program with students of Jinbu Middle School as part of the USOC's "Thank You, PyeongChang" initiative. Often referred to as the "Shib Sibs," the Shibutanis are global names, also creating videos for their successful YouTube channel.

Delivering the keynote address, Garcetti led the successful bid to bring the Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games to Los Angeles in 2028, returning the Summer Games to the United States for the first time in more than three decades. His vision focused on developing a New Games for a New Era, building on LA's Olympic tradition to deliver the world's greatest sporting event in a low-risk, fiscally responsible and sustainable fashion. A fourth-generation Angeleno, Garcetti is currently serving his second term as mayor.

2018 Award Winners

Olympic Torch Award: Michael Stephens

Jack Kelly Fair Play Award: Dr. Patricia DeLaMora

Rings of Gold – Individual: Tracy Evans

Rings of Gold – Program: Game On! Sports 4 Girls

Advancing D&I: USA Softball

D&I Choice Award: USA Triathlon's Paratriathlon Military Engagement Program

About the Assembly

The U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly was initiated in 2005 to give a voice to the various member organizations of the USOC; to keep dialogue open between members, athletes, staff and volunteer leadership; and to help further the Olympic and Paralympic movements in the United States. The two-day event welcomes more than 250 participants, representing Olympic, Paralympic and Pan American

National Governing Bodies; U.S. Olympians and Paralympians; Multi-Sport Organizations; the Athletes' Advisory Council; the Paralympic Advisory Committee; and USOC board members and staff.