

# STRIVE

## *Next Gen Initiative*



OLYMPIC DAY AND  
PRIDE PARADES

SETTING UP TEAM  
CANADA FOR SUCCESS

DELOITTE'S GAME PLAN



FOUNDATION  
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## MESSAGE FROM THE CANADIAN OLYMPIC FOUNDATION

Despite there not being an Olympic Games this summer, there's been no shortage of sport events for our athletes – at home and abroad.

Rio 2016 is one year behind us, but our incredible summer athletes have been competing throughout the past several months as part of their world championship season. At time of publication, Canada has won five medals and sits 24th in the world in medal rankings. All of Canada's medals have been won in the pool by our swimmers and divers, headlined by Kylie Masse's gold in the women's backstroke at the FINA world championships.

On home soil, Winnipeg hosted the Canada Summer Games. The Canada Games are this country's largest multi-sport event for young athletes and 2017 marked their 50th anniversary. From July 28-August 13, more than 4,000 next generation athletes competed in 16 sports. More than 40 percent of Team Canada athletes at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games were Canada Games alumni. We can't wait to see what the future has in store for these incredible young people – an Olympic podium, or two, no doubt!

There's never been a better time to support aspiring Olympians. In July, the Government of Canada announced the launch of the Next Generation Initiative. This incredible program will see them match up to \$20 million of private sector funds invested into next generation athlete programs. Looking ahead, the Canadian Olympic Foundation is determined to maximize support to our athletes and is committed to raising these matching funds over the next four years. Your generous support to our athletes will now be amplified and it's an incredible opportunity for us to increase our impact.

There's more exciting changes coming to the COF this fall so stay tuned to Strive, subscribe to our newsletter and follow us on Facebook. Keep cheering on our athletes – PyeongChang 2018 is just around the corner.

**Selga Apse, Director of Business Operations**  
**Canadian Olympic Foundation**

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We would love to hear from you! Please send your comments to:

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# Akeem Haynes

OLYMPIAN PROFILE

## What pushes sprinter Akeem Haynes?

One of Canada's fastest athletes became a sprinter by accident, but has proven that resilience and dedication can propel you to success—and even the Olympic podium.

When Akeem Haynes—a member of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games bronze medal-winning 4-by-100-metre men's relay team—moved to Yellowknife from Jamaica at the age of seven with his mom, a lot changed. "I missed about two months of school because I couldn't get used to the cold," he laughs.

Then, at age 10, his family moved to Calgary, where he began pursuing his first sporting passion: football. The 25-year-old wanted to become a professional football player, and only began running track in high school because of his football coach. "He said [track] would get you faster for football, and I wasn't really interested in track at all. He convinced my mom to ask me as a favour to her and I've been running ever since."

At the end of high school, Akeem was recruited by U.S. colleges for both football and track. Due to a mix-up in his math credits, he wasn't eligible for Division 1 NCAA competition, so he chose to attend Barton Community College and attempt to get a full-ride scholarship in football—but when he got there, he found out they didn't have a football team.

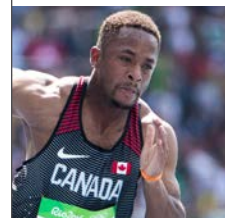
Thankfully, he maintained a positive attitude. "I got over it in a couple days. I figured I might as well focus on [track] so I can get a full-ride and get my school taken care of. So I shifted focus to running because the opportunity wasn't going to be there forever," says Akeem.

Now, the Olympian trains out of Phoenix, Az. His routine consists of daily training and physical therapy, both before and after he runs. "I realized in this sport it's not always how hard you work but how smart you work. And it's very smart to have therapists around you to make sure your body and mind are aligned."

But physical therapy can be expensive for high-performance athletes. That's where donations to the COF can make a real difference in the athletes' careers. "As someone who doesn't come from money, there's a different belief when you're investing in someone. Whether they'll admit it or not, they'll train harder and more focused. It shows you believe in them and that's something as an athlete we love."

Akeem's determination and resilience has since helped him become one of Canada's fastest men. He ran the 4-by-100-metre relay team and won bronze in Rio—and he thinks Canadian sprinters are just getting started.

"Right now, this is the best group of sprinters that Canada has ever had. I think this group of core guys and younger talent coming up is a good time for sprinters. The future's looking really good."



**Left & Above**  
Akeem Haynes competes in the men's 4x100m at Rio 2016.

© Jason Ransom/COC



# Next Gen Initiative powers aspiring Olympians

TRAINING. COACHING. DEDICATION.

**Above**  
The Honourable Carla Qualtrough speaks with media following the announcement.

Adam Pulicichio

It takes all three for athletes to develop into Olympians. And now many of Canada's most talented up-and-comers will be able to more fully dedicate themselves to training and receive high-performance coaching thanks to new funding.

The newly-announced Next Generation Initiative is a \$20 million commitment from the federal government to match private sector funds, such as that from RBC, for the next four years. It's a big step towards making sure that Canada continues to fuel the podium pipeline for future Olympic Games.

Having the freedom to dedicate themselves to sport fulltime is something figure skater Eric Radford, a two-time world pairs champion and Olympic team event silver medallist with partner Meagan Duhamel, can appreciate.

"Just before I started skating with Meagan, and probably in our first year there was a crossroads, or a boiling point. When you know you have the potential to get to where you want to go, but you haven't proven yourself yet. The financial support isn't there yet because you haven't achieved the results yet, but it's in that moment when you

need it the most. There were nights when I'd get so stressed before I fell asleep. Thinking I should be getting a job, I should be working more hours. But it's impossible to work full time and train full time. And skating is the type of sport where working part-time doesn't cover living and skating. It was an extremely stressful time and I know of instances in figure skating where athletes have had to stop because they weren't allowed to realize their full potential because of financial restrictions."

With the funding, Next Generation athletes competing in both





Olympic and Paralympic sports will also have improved access to sport science and medicine as well as enhance their daily training environments.

“When you’re at the highest level, you receive more support from your federation,” says Olympic speed skater and world championship medallist Vincent De Haître. “But if we aren’t supporting Next Gen athletes, then eventually there will be no one to perform at the top. I got lucky, I progressed rapidly through my sport and was able to skip stages of development where it’s hard to find the funding. I think it’s important for younger athletes to spend time with more experienced skaters, to see what the level of professionalism and competition is like, and to inspire them to reach it themselves.”

Next Gen shot putter Sarah Mitton recently won bronze at the Canadian Track and Field Championships. The Brooklyn, N.S. native is tracking well on her

eventual goal of competing at the Olympic Games and she’s heading to Tai Pei this summer as a member of Team Canada for the 2017 Summer Universiade.

“Between competition fees, living expenses like commuting, nutrition, and attending training camps, the costs definitely add up,” says Mitton. “I recently relocated to Toronto to train out of the Athletics Canada High Performance East Hub at York University. I have a fantastic training environment there – with the best coaching, IST [integrated support team] and equipment. This funding will definitely help me continue to progress in my sport.”

RBC has already donated \$1 million to the Canadian Olympic Foundation to support aspiring Olympians. The Canadian Olympic Committee’s oldest partner has already staked a claim in the success of young athletes through RBC Training Ground.

The remaining funds will be raised by the Canadian Olympic Foundation through corporate partners and individual donors.

“

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”

**Left**  
Team Yukon competes at Canada Games in Winnipeg.

**Right**  
Team British Columbia and Team Alberta compete at Canada Games in Winnipeg.

© Canada Games, F. Scott Grant



# A look inside Deloitte's Game Plan

**Above**  
Jon West competing for  
Team Canada rugby.

West family photo 📷

Deloitte became a partner of the COF in 2015 with the launch of the Game Plan program. Game Plan, powered by Deloitte, is Canada's Total Athlete Wellness program. An initiative to help high-performance athletes prepare their transition from sport to the next phase of their lives.

Game Plan is founded on the idea that, "If you're going to be an athlete, there's an opportunity for you to be set up for success after sport, which would in turn encourage more people to put their kids in sport. We saw that cycle and the impact we'd have on broader Canadian society, but we also recognized this was a big problem we couldn't solve on our own," says Gavin McTavish, Partner, Global Offering Lead – Corporate and Business Unit Strategy, Deloitte.

Deloitte has partnered with stakeholders including RBC, the COPSIN network and the Smith School of Business at Queen's University to provide athletes with the ability to enter the workforce as well-rounded potential employees after their athletic career has ended. High performance teams are assigned a Game Plan advisor to work with the athletes on their development.

The five pillars of the program are education, career, skill development, network and health. Jon West, a former rugby player who was part of the Rugby 7's development program, believes the networking

opportunities available through the Game Plan program were most impactful in helping him find work post-sport.

"Talking to your Game Plan advisor and going to different seminars or meeting people, getting a coffee and hearing about what other people are doing in different career paths is something simple but could have massive opportunity," he says.

One of the biggest challenges athletes face is finding excitement through an avenue other than sport, he explains. "When [athletes] try to transition into something that's not sport it's so difficult because it's so foreign. Some of their challenges in day-to-day, they feel unfulfilled in what they're doing or they struggle to get that same excitement or rush. It's a struggle to find that new goal and new lifestyle."

Thankfully, through his Game Plan advisor, Jon accessed a job opportunity that he loves—working on the Game Plan program at Deloitte. "There are a lot of qualities of athletes that make them stand out; things like dedication and determination, perseverance, these are qualities employers will openly advertise for, but that athletes may not think they're qualified for. So I think athletes are in a much better position than they might think."

To learn more about Game Plan visit: [mygameplan.ca](http://mygameplan.ca) or email [info@mygameplan.ca](mailto:info@mygameplan.ca)





### Olympic Day 2017

Olympic Day celebrations are an opportunity to bring the Olympic Movement to Canadian communities and promote active living and the Olympic values of excellence, friendship & respect.

Thanks to our partners and the new online portal, this year's edition has been a great success so far. The celebrations reached over 64,000 youth across the country, getting them active and introducing them to the Olympic values and new sports. More than 34 Olympians and hopefuls were involved in sharing their experience and passion. 5 partnered events were held in Nova Scotia (Sport Nova Scotia), Newfoundland (2 events) (Sport Newfoundland), Quebec (INS Quebec), and British Columbia (Via Sport) and 8 community celebrations were hosted via the Olympic Day portal.

Events will continue to happen as the portal is open for registrations year-round and partners continue to support and celebrate Olympic Day.

**Left**  
Olympian Rossie Cossar enjoy Toronto Pride with Komak.

**Below**  
Olympians Alex Duckworth, Eric Mitchell, John Fennell and friends walk in the Toronto Pride Parade.

Adam Pulicchio

# Summer fun with the COC Education Team



### Pride Parades

This year was a record year in participation at Pride Parades for the COC. Pride Parades are part of the COC's efforts to be a leader of inclusion and diversity in the community and to provide safer and more inclusive sport environments for all.

Marching under the You Can Play banner along with other partners such as the NHL, CFL teams, and more, Team Canada's contingent participated in 7 parades this season and still has 3 more to go. Over 300 participants joined the fun including Olympians, national team athletes, and COC partners and staff. The COC also established itself as the first National Olympic Committee to change its logo to the Pride colors.

*Follow Komak on Twitter and Facebook to hear all about Education, Youth, Community Outreach new projects!*

**"The steps towards diversity and inclusion taken by the Canadian Olympic Committee following Sochi have changed my life."**

John Fennell, Luge, Sochi 2014

# Setting up Team Canada for success



**Right**  
Marie-Andrée presents to athletes at the 2017 Olympic Lab in Calgary.

Dave Holland 

Like many young girls, Marie-Andrée Lessard dreamed of going to the Olympic Games. In 2012, she got her wish when her and beach volleyball partner Annie Martin qualified for the Games in London.

“My experience in London was amazing. The venue was mythical – right in the middle of the historic Horse Guards Parade. You could see Big Ben from the court,” says Marie-Andrée. “The journey was equally as moving for us. It was important for us to prove that we could compete at a high level truly as a team, being authentic and honest with one another in order to perform on demand when it mattered most.”

That said, it wasn't all smooth sailing. The team qualified for the Games very late which hindered proper planning. Obtaining their team bathing suits was a scramble, and both athletes ended up ironing on their Canadian Olympic Team mark themselves. Amongst a lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities within the staffing team, their coach and therapist didn't receive a full accreditation, and both Marie-Andrée and Annie were receiving treatment outside of the venue. To top it all off, on the opening night, it was rainy and cold and the governing body for beach volleyball neglected to allow the athletes to compete in warmer attire.

In the end, Marie-Andrée and Annie went 0-3 in tight matches and failed to advance out of pool play. Marie-Andrée isn't one to look back and speculate, but she recognizes that there were a lot of external distractions, which she only recognizes now that she works at

the COC and sees how the environment can support ultimate performance when proper planning is in place.

Fast forward five years – Marie-Andrée has retired from competitive beach volleyball and works as an Olympic Performance Manager at the Canadian Olympic Committee. Her job, along with two other retired high-performance athletes (Olympic speedskating multi-medallist Tania Vicent and decorated racquetball athlete Josée Grand'Maître) is to manage a portfolio of national sport organizations (NSOs) and help them prepare for the Olympic Games.

“We help them navigate through the process of Olympic planning; from accreditation, transportation, travel, everything related to the Games experience. Though we don't manage the actual bookings (the COC has various functional areas that manage logistics), we oversee the creation of the plan and liaise with the high-performance directors to ensure that their athletes are appropriately prepared and able to perform.”

When Marie-Andrée retired from competitive sport, she received some advice from Olympian and friend Sylvie Fréchette. The advice was to work within your passions, but don't try to find the same thrill in your daily life as you did in your competitive career. Marie-Andrée took it to heart. While being an Olympic Performance Manager isn't as intense as diving in the sand for a dig, she's helping other athletes achieve their ideal Olympic experience. For now, she can't picture herself doing anything else.





# Emma Gray

## NEXT GENERATION ATHLETE

Emma Gray, like many young Canadians, will be attending university this fall to pursue her bachelor's degree. But, she's not an average student; she's a decorated member of Canada's national rowing team and hopes to compete at the 2024 Olympic Games.

Raised in Winnipeg, Emma was competing in Olympic weightlifting before being discovered in her high school gym class by the Row to Podium program. Rowing Canada identified her exceptional potential in the sport through classroom testing, and the then-16-year old decided to give the sport a shot. Two years later, it seems she made the right decision.

Emma competed at the 2016 Junior World Championships, where she placed ninth in the women's double sculls, and has won several national medals—including one gold and two bronze medals at the 2017 Canada Games in her hometown of Winnipeg, where she was the flag bearer for Team Manitoba.

She says the opportunity to compete in her hometown and be a flag bearer was an extraordinary experience. "Rowing's a small sport, especially in Manitoba, so it was an honour to be able to bring attention to my sport. It was an honour to represent so many amazing young athletes that competed for Canada Games."

Although she's achieved enormous success at the age of 19, Emma stays humble. When she was carrying the flag, "I just kept thinking 'don't trip, don't trip.' Rowers aren't notoriously coordinated so that was stressful."

Along her rowing journey, Emma has benefitted from funding received through RBC Training Ground, where

she was identified at the Montreal testing in 2016. She says the funds allow her to "go to every competition that would work in my training schedule without worrying about whether I could afford it. It takes one less stressor out of the way because there's so much you have to balance to train and go to school full-time. It relieves a lot of burden financially."

Emma is one of Canada's brightest young stars in rowing, but she's not in a rush to get to the Olympic Games. She's transferring from the University of Manitoba to the University of Victoria in fall 2017 to pursue her degree in Earth and Ocean Science and Chemistry. She'll be closer to the water and will row on the school's varsity team, but she wants to focus on school.

Even after she graduates, she doesn't want to push to get to the 2020 Olympic Games; she'd rather catch her breath and wait for 2024. She says she wants to, "Get my undergrad done and take a couple years off before going to grad school because I'm very passionate about my career as well. I want to make sure that if I go to the Olympics, it's my only focus. I'm 19, I've got time."



**Top**  
Emma Gray competes in women's doubles at the 2017 Canada Games.

**Above**  
Emma Gray at RBC Training Ground in 2016.

© Kevin Light

The Road To The **CANADIAN CULINARY  
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

# GOLD MEDAL PLATES

Presented by **Deloitte.**

## 2017 Cities

MONTREAL Tuesday Oct 10

EDMONTON Thursday Oct 12

REGINA Saturday Oct 14

HALIFAX Thursday Oct 19

ST. JOHNS Friday Oct 20

VICTORIA Thursday Oct 26

SASKATOON Saturday Oct 28

WINNIPEG Wednesday Nov 1

CALGARY Thursday Nov 2

OTTAWA Thursday Nov 9

TORONTO Thursday Nov 16

CANADIAN CULINARY  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

KELOWNA February 2-3, 2018

CELEBRATING  
CANADIAN  
EXCELLENCE ON  
THE ROAD TO  
PYEONGCHANG



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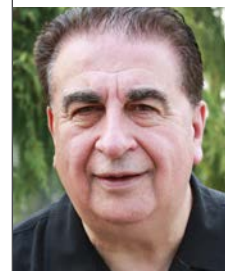
## DONOR PROFILE

# Michael R. Williams

When the Canadian Olympic Foundation approached me for an interview I was a bit surprised. My story does not include a competitive sports background, children competing in sports or volunteering with sporting organizations or teams. I played football, basketball and hockey growing up but now I am just a sport enthusiast. I attend as many sporting events as I am able, supporting my hometown Vancouver Canucks and BC Lions. From amateur to professional, I enjoy watching all athletes in various sporting endeavors, and I truly believe that it is very important for youth to be involved in sport, to learn sacrifice, dedication, and how to be a team player. These are same attributes that I look for in the business world. Being involved in sport sets our youth up for success in all aspects of their lives.

I have supported the Olympic movement since Canada hosted its first Games in 1976 in Montreal. I am so proud of the success Canada has experienced since those Games, having won no gold medals at our home Games in Montreal and Calgary, to 14 medals in Vancouver and I enjoyed attending these three Canadian Olympic spectacles. Since 2010, our athletes continue to perform well, especially in winter sports, but we still have work to do.

As a country, we all feel prestige when we win. Our citizens feel a national pride that inspires their commitment to Canada and our athletic programs. Our athletes have the talent and desire, but they need our support to help them cross the finish line. By supporting the Canadian Olympic Foundation, I feel I am doing my part to ensure our athletes have the best coaches, innovative training environment, and sport resources to give them a competitive edge against the best athletes in the world. We need to lead the world's athletic community in as many winter and summer sports as possible and continue to build on this base.



**Left**  
Michael Williams with his nephew.

**Above**  
Michael Williams.

 Williams family photos

# Upcoming competitions

Please see the calendar below for some of the upcoming sporting events across Canada.



**Right**  
Isabela Onyshko on beam at Rio 2016.

Jason Ransom/COC

DATES	SPORT	TITLE	CATEGORY	LOCATION
September 27-October 9, 2017	Gymnastics	Gymnastics (Artistic) World Championships	World Championship	Montreal, QC
December 2-10, 2017	Curling	Roar of the Rings Canadian Curling Trials	Olympic Trials	Ottawa, ON
January 2-7, 2017	Curling	Canadian Mixed Doubles Curling Trials	Olympic Trials	Portage la Prairie, MB
January 4-9, 2017	Speed skating	Olympic Team Trials - Long track	Olympic Trials	Calgary, AB
January 8-14, 2017	Figure skating	Canadian Tire National Skating Championships	Olympic Trials	Ottawa, ON







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