

EMBARGOED RELEASE
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U.S. Olympic Committee announces 2015 award winners

Awards to be presented this week at U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly in Colorado Springs

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – The United States Olympic Committee today announced the recipients of six awards, which will be presented at a celebratory dinner during the 2015 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly that will take place Sept. 24-25 at the Antlers Hilton in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The Friday awards dinner will conclude the Assembly, and feature Hall of Fame basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski as the keynote speaker, and NBC anchor and correspondent Carolyn Manno as host.

Anne Warner Cribbs was named the Olympic Torch Award honoree, while Miles Gould and Trey McDonald were selected to receive the Jack Kelly Fair Play Award presented by BP. Also, Amy Purdy and Figure Skating in Harlem were chosen as the individual and program recipients for the Rings of Gold awards.

New to the 2015 program, the USOC will also present two awards recognizing National Governing Bodies for achievement in the areas of diversity and inclusion. USA Fencing was named the inaugural recipient of the Advancing D&I Award, while USRowing was selected by its peers as the D&I Choice Award winner for its America Rows initiative.

The Olympic Torch Award recognizes an individual who has positively impacted the Olympic Movement by promoting the Olympic Ideals. Warner Cribbs – a 1960 Olympic gold medalist in swimming – has dedicated her career to advancing sport and maximizing opportunities for youth in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. She co-founded the American Basketball League, and was selected as president and CEO of the San Francisco Bay Area Sports Organizing Committee, for which she became the first female to lead a major U.S. Olympic bid with San Francisco 2012. A former vice president of the U.S. Olympians and Paralympians Association, she was also the founding force behind the USOPA's alumni chapter in Northern California, creating an environment for her fellow Olympians to thrive and inspire the next generation.

The Jack Kelly Fair Play Award presented by BP recognizes an athlete, coach or official for an outstanding act of fair play and sportsmanship. When Miles Gould and Trey McDonald faced off in last year's Easton Junior Olympic Archery Development National Championships, their integrity was put to the test. Competing in the elimination quarterfinal round, Gould mistakenly shot at the wrong target – an error that automatically granted McDonald the win. Rather than claim the title for himself, McDonald opted for a one-arrow shoot off, culminating in a win for Gould. In a laudable act of sportsmanship for athletes of all ages, Gould reciprocated McDonald's fairness, granting him the win.

The Rings of Gold awards annually recognize an individual and a program dedicated to helping children develop their Olympic or Paralympic dreams, and reach their highest athletic and personal potential. Amy Purdy, a 2014 Paralympic bronze medalist in snowboardcross, embodies this award through her organization, Adaptive Action Sports, which creates opportunities for individuals with physical disabilities to get involved in snowboarding or skateboarding. One of the leading Paralympic Sport Clubs in the country, AAS is also a pipeline for the U.S. Paralympics Snowboarding Team. Adding to her legacy of Olympism, Purdy helped push for snowboardcross' inclusion in the Paralympic Winter Games program.

Since its foundation by Sharon Cohen in 1997, Figure Skating in Harlem has pioneered in the academic, social and physical advancement of girls throughout upper Manhattan and the Bronx. FSH's strives to empower every girl, regardless of socioeconomic background, with skills to achieve her dreams. The program prioritizes education, and also offers mentoring programs, field trips to cultural institutions, an annual Career Week and summer scholarships for figure skating camps. Endorsed by Olympians such as Michelle Kwan and Scott Hamilton, FSH continues to inspire girls to achieve all-around excellence.

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 Fencing led all NGBs with a 6 percent increase in membership for women and persons of color from 2013-14. Percentage increases were evaluated based on overall NGB membership, including board members, employees, and national team athletes and coaches. Moving forward, diversity criteria will expand to also include people with disabilities and military veterans, beginning in 2016.

Celebrating its second 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. Originally launched in 2010 as a diversity initiative, USRowing's America Rows expanded to include adaptive sport programs in 2014. The program aims to increase opportunities in rowing for underrepresented youth, individuals with disabilities and people of all ages, socioeconomic circumstances and fitness levels. In June 2014, the program established the America Rows Fund to provide the growing number of school and community rowing programs with equipment, training and access to resources.

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, staff and volunteer leadership; and to help further the Olympic and Paralympic movements in the United States. The two-day event – themed "Power of Sport" – 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.