

Nyron Higgins Excellence in Athlete Development and Coaching Award

Established in memory of Nyron Higgins, a beloved Durham Athletics coach who instilled a passion for track and field in his athletes while supporting them in realizing their potential on and off the field of play, the **Nyron Higgins Excellence in Athlete Development and Coaching Award (NHEADCA)** recognizes track & field (T&F) coaches who have made a significant impact on their athlete's lives by fostering a love for the sport.

The award celebrates coaches who demonstrate inclusivity, supportiveness, and selflessness in their coaching approach, inspiring their athletes to reach their full potential on and off the track, by providing additional support for their coaching education. Through their dedication and guidance, these coaches structure an environment that nurtures the growth and development of athletes, helping them develop into well-rounded individuals and successful competitors.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the **NHEADCA**, nominees must meet and exhibit the following criteria:

1. Be an Athletics-Ontario registered coach in good standing, with a minimum of one full year of verifiable coaching experience, and actively coaching during the year of nomination.
2. Have a minimum of three years of coaching experience.
3. Be an advocate for inclusivity and participation.
4. Demonstrate the key attributes outlined below.

Key Attributes

Nominated coaches for the **NHEADCA** will embody the following key attributes:

1. **Cultivates a Love for Athletics:** Instill a genuine passion for track and field in athletes, creating a positive and engaging environment that fosters a lifelong love for the sport.
2. **Inclusive:** Promote inclusivity and diversity, welcoming athletes of all backgrounds, abilities, and skill levels, and ensuring that each athlete feels valued and supported.
3. **Supportive Mentoring:** Provide personalized guidance, mentorship, and motivation to athletes, nurturing their physical, mental, and emotional well-being, and encouraging them to set and achieve ambitious goals to realize their full potential.
4. **Selfless Dedication:** Exhibit selflessness, placing the needs and aspirations of athletes at the forefront. Consistently goes above and beyond to support and uplift athletes.
5. **Positive Role Model:** Demonstrate exemplary sportsmanship, integrity, and professionalism, serving as a role model on and off the track, and inspiring athletes to develop strong character traits that will serve them for a lifetime.

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Nomination Process

1. Nominations for the **NHEADCA** may be submitted by athletes, fellow coaches, parents, and community members who have direct knowledge of the nominee's coaching abilities and impact on their athletes and/or community. Self-nominations are permitted provided they include a letter of support from an athlete or an athlete's parent that speaks to the key attributes mentioned above.
2. Nominators must complete the official nomination form, providing examples and anecdotes that highlight how the coach has demonstrated the key attributes (outlined above).
3. All nominations must be submitted by the designated deadline, as communicated by the award committee. Nominations received after the deadline will not be considered.

Selection Process

1. The Athletics Ontario Awards Committee – along with the family of Coach Nyron Higgins - will review the nominations and evaluate each nominee based on the eligibility criteria and key attributes.
2. The Selection Committee will consider the quality and depth of the submissions, the coach's impact on their athletes' development, success, and overall contribution to the track and field community.
3. The Selection Committee will choose up to two (2) recipients of the **NHEDCA** per year, however, there will be no more than one recipient in each category (female, male, non-binary)
4. The award will be presented to the recipient(s) at the annual Athletics Ontario Awards Gala where the recipient(s) will be publicly acknowledged.

Recognition

1. Award presented at the annual Athletics Ontario Awards Gala.
2. A professional development grant for additional track and field coaching education (\$300 bursary provided to each recipient).