



### TOM KORPOLINSKI AWARD

Tom Korpilinski started his hockey career as countless others did. In 1966 his six (6) year old son said “I want to play hockey”, so he took him to a clinic in Virgil, Ontario where the Niagara Falls league was renting ice. There was only one coach on the ice for 50 to 60 little guys, some who could barely stand on skates. Although never having played organized hockey, Tom skated most of his life and did play a little pond hockey, so he asked this coach if he wanted some help. The next week he started with the youngsters and never looked back. Tom instantly became a coach, going through programs with the Ontario Minor Hockey Association and with USA hockey. He also did some refereeing and ultimately became a Director of the local association. When the city of Niagara Falls opened a rink in 1971, Tom became President of the local league and also helped form a travel league in the Western New York area along with Peter Rush and many others. Later, he was elected as the West Section Vice President and then New York State Tournament Director. In 1981 he accepted the position of New York State District Registrar, a position held until he retired from hockey in 2000. Tom Korpilinski’s hockey career spanned 33 years, a time he has always claimed to be the best years of his life where he was able meet countless volunteers, coaches, administrators, parents and players along the way.

In 2000, the New York State Amateur Hockey Association initiated the Tom Korpilinski Award recognizing an individual who has served at the “grass roots” level within the District and exudes the qualities and level of commitment to the sport that Tom so humbly possessed.

#### Past Award Winners

- 2023 Pierre “Pete” Pomainville - Louisville
- 2022 Chuck Aigen - Pelham
- 2021 Eric Guzdek - Amherst
- 2020 Mike Gray – Clayton
- 2019 Kevin Moore – Johnson City
- 2018 John Curry – Geneseo
- 2017 Steve Ketchbaw – Rye
- 2016 Rob Rioux – Syracuse
- 2015 Tom Branden – Depew
- 2014 Kirk Avery – Binghamton
- 2013 Larry McCauley – Redwood
- 2012 Kim Moran – Lake Placid
- 2011 Kurt Kemp – Syracuse
- 2010 Sherb & Amy House, Steve & Dale Ann Wolter – Chazy
- 2009 Linda Zielezinski – Depew
- 2008 Bob Miller – Rome
- 2007 Bob Allen – Lake Placid
- 2006 Richard Lewis – Holbrook
- 2005 Bob Westphal – Buffalo
- 2004 Joyce Burzdinski – Skaneateles
- 2003 Robert Bastin – Clayton