

OLA KEN MURRAY *award*


The Ken Murray Award is presented to the minor lacrosse person whose unselfish motivations are demonstrated by the dedication of their efforts to “*helping the kids.*”

The components of the award are:

- a) an OLA “keeper” trophy or plaque.

The requirements of the award are:

- a) the submission of this form detailing the credentials of the person nominated.

Name of Nominee: Gloucester Minor Lacrosse Association
Club/Association: Gloucester Minor Lacrosse Association
Submitted by: Greg Rampley
Position / Capacity: Zone 5 Director
Signature: 

Please attach a separate document which describes the nominee in as much detail as possible for the Selections Committee. Be sure to highlight examples of the nominee’s involvement in lacrosse and motivations as they relate to “*helping the kids.*”

See nomination details on subsequent pages.

Recent Recipients of the Ken Murray Award		
Season	Volunteer	Home Association
2020	Not Awarded	
2019	Tammy Schuetzkowski	Kitchener
2018	Zone 7 Clubs	Zone 7
2017	Brad Matthews	Cambridge
2016	Not Awarded	
2015	Chris Juniper	Kitchener
2014	Todd King	Barrie
2013	Bill Hobbs	Simcoe
2012	Jennifer Price	Toronto Beaches
2011	Frank Ham	Toronto Beaches
2010	Stephen Hynes	Peterborough

Dear OLA Awards Selections Committee,

Please accept this letter as a formal nomination of the **Gloucester Minor Lacrosse Association (GLA)** for the **Ontario Lacrosse Association's (OLA) Ken Murray Award**. It is recognized that this particular award is dedicated to the minor lacrosse volunteer whose unselfish motivations are demonstrated by the dedication of their efforts to *"helping the kids"*. That said, no single individual can adequately capture the support and dedication put forth by numerous GLA volunteers who worked tirelessly to maintain critical relationships with their lacrosse families in a year of hardships, unknowns, and lockdowns.

For over 50-years, the GLA has had a significant and enduring presence in their community maintaining a fun and organized box lacrosse program focused on fair play and improving skills for all children and youth; engaging volunteers; mentoring coaches and officials; supporting families; and engaging with community businesses and sponsors. The global pandemic, social movements and political unrest over the last 18-months have raised awareness and caused significant financial, health, educational, cultural, business and community impact. In light of these significant challenges, the GLA volunteer community persevered this past season and continued to dedicate itself to *"helping the kids"* in the following ways:

1. When COVID-19 and provincial lock-downs began impacting the GLA's ability to deliver on their mission of providing programming, the GLA executive adapted and significantly enhanced the club's social media presence in order to maintain and grow their connection to families, community business partners and sponsors. Some notable examples include:
 - a. GLA volunteers engaged with Ottawa Physiotherapy, a key organizational partner for the club, to undertake an online video campaign aimed at promoting engagement and healthy lifestyles. The GLA recognized how difficult it was for their kids to be isolating at home away from their friends and sought to connect with, motivate and provide positive and encouraging messaging to GLA players and their families.
 - b. The GLA also celebrated and communicated its values and opportunities with the broader sport community in the Nation's capital through print media:
<https://ottawasportspages.ca/2021/02/25/inclusion-safe-play-top-of-mind-for-gloucester-lacrosse/>
<https://ottawasportspages.ca/2021/07/15/ambassadors-for-the-game-gloucester-lady-griffins-want-girls-in-ottawa-to-experience-lacrosse/>
2. COVID-19 also had a staggering, negative effect on the financial status of the GLA. Under this pressure, GLA volunteers worked diligently to secure both Provincial and local grants to ensure a stable and sustainable organization moving forward. Successful grant applications have provided the GLA with the opportunity to broaden accessibility to programming and to secure equipment that will enhance player and coach experience for years to come.
3. In January 2021, the GLA renewed its commitment to anti-racism, equity, and inclusion policies and procedures by striking a committee tasked with actionable-items that will serve to educate their members, update current policies to reduce barriers for their members, and promote equity and inclusion in the GLA. Through the work of the GLA's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Awareness (IDEA) Committee, they will: (i) celebrate the unique qualities of each of their players and, (ii) foster a lacrosse community that respects differences and welcomes diverse players to the sport of Lacrosse. Further, the IDEA Committee will seek to educate, advocate, promote and update GLA policies and practices regarding the respectful and inclusive treatment of all members within the GLA community. Specific committee goals are centered around four main tenets: (1) Education & Awareness, (2) Community Outreach, (3) Advocacy, and (4) Policy & Language. Importantly, members of the committee are volunteers from both inside and outside the organization and do not represent those on the Board of Directors.
4. In February, when Ottawa exited the lock-down and found itself in an Orange-COVID Zone, it enabled the GLA to implement safe COVID-Wise programming for its LAX community. Even when the City of Ottawa moved to a RED-COVID Zone, the GLA adapted and was able to continue small group training. The GLA volunteers worked diligently to ensure their kids had opportunities to play, to keep their sticks in hand, and most importantly, have an outlet to reconnect with friends and coaches and to begin healing from the impact of COVID-19.

5. In July, when the Province moved to Step-2 of the Reopening Plan, the GLA was ready to begin their Return to Activity. A 6-week program with twice-weekly sessions quickly went from being held outdoors to indoors; with opportunities for game play within the Zone (a total of 28 games were played over a period of 16 days); and an extension to 7-weeks all occurring when the Province moved to Step-3 of the Reopening Plan. Again, GLA volunteers worked vigorously to provide players with opportunities to play.
6. Not all teams have the same level of opportunity to train and play games. In particular, the Lady Griffins box lacrosse teams experienced difficulty finding comparable opponents and experiences within Zone 5 during the 2021 abbreviated season due to fewer teams being registered relative to boys teams, the timing of the shortened season and restrictions imposed by the current OLA insurance policies that restrict player development opportunities of having girls teams play against boys teams (a training tool that is [practiced](#) by Canada's National Women's Ice hockey team). In an effort to create a memorable, inclusive and positive Return to Activity experience for all GLA members, the GLA organized a Girls Jamboree event - a one night celebration of Girls Playing Lacrosse – to cap off the 2021 box lacrosse season. Neighbouring associations were invited and modified game play and skills competitions occurred. The Deputy Mayor of Ottawa along with the OLA's Girls Ambassador program were also in attendance to celebrate and honour all levels of Lady Griffins and all Girls in Sport.

These are six examples of the work the GLA has undertaken in what has been a second unconventional year of Lacrosse. GLA volunteers ensured that players learned foundational skills and experienced game play resulting in undeniably positive effects: promoting healthy active lifestyles, improved physical health and well-being; team cohesion and feelings of inclusion and belonging; drive and resiliency; persistence and dedication; moral development; and a sense of community. The GLA remains committed and dedicated to the growth of the game, to their LAX community, and more than ever to their “kids”. For these reasons, I strongly urge the OLA Awards Selection to consider the Gloucester Minor Lacrosse Association for the **2021 OLA Ken Murray Award**.