**CAAWS ANNOUNCES ITS 2011 MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LIST**

**Highlighting Leaders in Sport and Physical Activity Across Canada**

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OTTAWA, January 17, 2012 – The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) announced today the twenty women selected to the *Most Influential Women in Sport and Physical Activity list* (MIW) for 2011. The objective of the list is to focus on women who are leaders and role models making a difference on the Canadian or international scene. The women on the MIW are influential women who contributed in a significant way to sport and physical activity in the year 2011.

“CAAWS publishes its *Most Influential Women list* to celebrate and honour Canadian women who are influencing change in their area of expertise of sport and physical activity," said CAAWS Executive Director Karin Lofstrom (Ottawa, Ontario). “These leaders share a passion for sport and physical activity—and use it to improve the lives of others. These women are game changers who motivate others to become leaders.”

Every year, the MIW list includes athletes, officials, coaches, politicians, professors, administrators and volunteers. There are some women who have been named to the list several times, such as Paralympian and coach Chantal Petitclerc; and some who are new to the list like Olympic boxing hopeful Mary Spencer, and Karen Rackel who is the first ever women President of the Royal Canadian Golf Association (in its 116 year old history). Nine of the women are making their first appearance on the MIW List, while Olympian Beckie Scott and Paralympian Chantal Petitclerc have each been named to the MIW list 6 times, and Olympian Charmaine Crooks has appeared a record seven times.

**The CAAWS Most Influential Women List for 2011** **is:**

*(in alphabetical order, profiles and photos at* [*www.caaws.ca*](http://www.caaws.ca)*)*

* **Dr Jodi Abbott**, Official and volunteer, Skate Canada, (Edmonton, Alberta)
* **Honourable Leona Aglukkaq**, Minister of Health, (Gjoa Haven and Iqaluit, Nunavut)
* **Stacey Allaster**, Chairman & CEO, Women’s Tennis Association, (St Petersburg, Florida/Welland, Ontario)
* **Caroline Assalian,** Chief Sport Officer, Canadian Olympic Committee, (Ottawa, Ontario)
* **Claire Buffone-Blair**, President and CEO, Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame, (Calgary, AB)
* **Canadian Women’s National Soccer Team** (2011 team)
* **Charmaine Crooks**, Board of Directors, Canadian Olympic Committee, (Vancouver, BC)
* **Dr Wendy Frisby**, Professor, School of Human Kinetics and Chair of Women's and Gender Studies, University of British Columbia, (Vancouver, BC)
* **Wendy Gittens**, Executive Director, Wheelchair Basketball Canada, (Ottawa, Ontario)
* **Andrea Grantham**, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of Physical and Health Education Canada, (Ottawa, Ontario)
* **Dr. Vicki Harber**, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, (Edmonton, Alberta)
* **Lindsay Hugenholtz**, Deputy CEO, 2011 Canada Winter Games, (Halifax, Nova Scotia)
* **Clara Hughes**, Olympian and advocate, (Winnipeg, Manitoba / Glenn Sutton, Quebec)
* **Élaine Lauzon**, Director General, Égale Action, (Montreal, Québec)
* **Anne Merklinger**, Director Summer Sports, Own the Podium, (Ottawa, Ontario)
* **Kelly Murumets**, President and CEO, ParticipACTION, (Toronto, Ontario)
* **Chantal Petitclerc**, Spokesperson, volunteer and coach, (Montréal, Québec)
* **Karen Rackel**, President of the Royal Canadian Golf Association, (Edmonton, Alberta)
* **Beckie Scott**, Olympian and advocate, (Vermillion, Alberta)
* **Mary Spencer**, Athlete and volunteer, (Windsor, Ontario)

CAAWS also nominates emerging leaders as *Ones to Watch*. The two outstanding women selected for 2011 are:

**Andrea Carey**, Director of Operations & Community Engagement, Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence (Victoria, British Columbia); and **Alexandra Orlando**, Marketing Associate, Toronto 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games Organizing Committee (Toronto, Ontario). We look forward to following their careers in sport and physical activity. Boxer Mary Spencer was on the *Ones to Watch* list for 2010 and this year moved up to the MIW list.

The final list was compiled by a CAAWS selection panel, from both public nominations and from contributions from knowledgeable sport and physical activity leaders. The panel reviewed the submissions and based its decision on accomplishment and scope of activities in the 2011 calendar year. This is the 11th year that CAAWS announces its MIW list. Past lists can be found at <http://www.caaws.ca/influentialwomen/e/past_lists.htm>

The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity ([CAAWS](http://www.caaws.ca/)) is a national non-profit organization dedicated to creating anequitable sport and physical activity system in which girls and women are actively engaged as **participants and** **leaders**. CAAWS provides a number of services, programs and resources to a variety of clients, including sport and physical activity organizations, teachers, coaches, athletes, volunteers, health professionals and recreation leaders. Since 1981, CAAWS has worked in close cooperation with government and non-government organizations on activities and initiatives that advocate for positive change for girls and women in sport and physical activity. Follow CAAWS on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/CAAWS).

*Full profiles and photos of all women on the MIW List can be found at* [*www.caaws.ca*](http://www.caaws.ca)

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