



## Media Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **Two graduating athletes win major awards, local sprint star takes home female athlete of the year**

**Red Deer, April 9, 2024** – One hundred ninety student-athletes. Thirty-six coaches. Ten student-trainers. One night to cap off an incredible 2023/2024 athletics season at Red Deer Polytechnic where three championship banners were hung in the rafters inside the Gary W. Harris Canada Games Centre.

Tonight, Red Deer Polytechnic held its annual Athletics Banquet which highlighted the academic and athletic achievements of student-athletes, along with the support from coaches, student-trainers, staff, sponsors and donors throughout the 2023/2024 season. Multiple awards were given out, including the Allan Ferchuk Leadership Award, Red Deer Bottling Male and Female Athletes of the Year and Team Awards (Coaches, Most Improved, Most Valuable and Rookie of the Year).

Randy Stewart, Manager of Athletics and Student Life, explained that this event is a yearly reminder of what makes coming to the office every day so rewarding.

“It’s one of the most enjoyable evenings of the year as we celebrate all of the hard work, sacrifice and dedication of so many people. This event not only provides an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of our student-athletes and coaches, but we also get to recognize our donors, sponsors, medical network, minor officials, volunteers and so many more that make RDP Athletics the incredible success that it is.”

This year, Queens Hockey forward Avery Lajeunesse (Bachelor of Education) received the Allan Ferchuk Leadership Award. She is a student-athlete who captained her team to a second-place regular season finish.

Lajeunesse is proud to call herself a Queen and is more than willing to offer her time to mold young student-athletes into becoming ambassadors of the program. On top of her 3.80 grade point average, she also made time to volunteer in the community. The fifth-year forward read to kids at the library while also volunteering with the First Shift which is a program to help ease kids and families into a fun and positive hockey environment.

Queens Hockey Head Coach Kelly Coulter explained Lajeunesse is an inspirational leader on the ice with her competitive level and work ethic.

“Avery is so welcoming to all individuals who come to our dressing room from first-year players to recruits and prospects. Her devotion to the team being successful has instilled in the players who will continue here what Queens culture is all about. When she leaves, she will be the one we say has left an incredible legacy in her time wearing the crown.”

In her final season as a Queen, Lajeunesse finished in the top five of the scoring race with 11 goals while adding 10 assists. She was named an Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) First Team All-Star. Lajeunesse finished with 50 points in her five seasons with RDP, achieving a career-high in goals, assists and points during the 2023/2024 season.

When the all-star forward looked back on her final season wearing the crown and her last four years with RDP, Lajeunesse explained without being a Queen, she would have never met some of her closest friends.

“Over the course of my five years as a Queen, I have had such an amazing opportunity to make so many incredible memories. As a team we did many different team building events which my favourite definitely was the ropes course. I was able to learn so many new things about my teammates which ultimately helped us become closer as a team.”

While thriving on the ice, Lajeunesse also succeeded in the classroom as she obtained a 3.80 grade point average in her final year at RDP.



The Red Deer Bottling Female Athlete of the Year was awarded to Queens Indoor Track and Cross Country runner Loami Rautenbach (Bachelor of Science in Nursing). Rautenbach's first full year as a student-athlete at Red Deer Polytechnic was outstanding.

Douglas Spicer, RDP Cross Country Running and Indoor Track Head Coach, stated Rautenbach was a cross country rookie who was consistently a scoring member for the team, but it was during the Indoor Track season when she really made an impact.

"On the track, she was our 'Swiss army knife, running three individual distances where she won ACAC gold and silver while also anchoring both relays to impressive victories. Loami is a great teammate and one of the most coachable athletes I have had the privilege of working with."

Following her impressive performance at the 2024 ACAC Indoor Track Championships, Rautenbach was named the Women's Indoor Track Runner of the Year while also obtaining a 3.46 GPA in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

She said RDP Athletics is special to her, specifically her teammates as they are supportive and close with one another.

"Some of my favourite memories since becoming a Queen on the RDP Indoor Track are our team pasta dinners the evening before a race, Monday morning long runs with the girls and our chant before our cross country races. The coaches are amazing as well as the physiotherapy staff who have helped me overcome a couple of injuries throughout my time at RDP."

Lastly, Jacob Wozney was named the Red Deer Bottling Male Athlete of the Year. The Kings Hockey assistant captain led by example every day with his tremendous work ethic and desire to be his best.

Head Coach Trevor Keeper said Wozney is the perfect example of an athlete who is here to help his team and teammates be the best that they can possibly be.

"He's a first team ACAC All-Star and arguably the most complete forward in the league. Jacob has an incredible work ethic and his drive helped the Kings Hockey team immensely in our last two seasons where the team was crowned as champions."

In his final year as a King, the fifth-year forward put up a career high in goals and assists to finish with 30 points in the regular season. He finished eight points shy of the 100-point mark while scoring 45 goals and totaling 47 assists in his five-year career. The Bachelor of Education student finished the Fall Term with a 3.23 GPA.

Wozney explained the awards banquet is a nice way to get together with the other teams and celebrate each and every accomplishment.

"It is important that we recognize and celebrate not only our own personal success but the success of every athlete who wears the crown. It reminds us of the lasting legacy that the athletes who have worn the crown before us have left, something I hope to leave as I finish my college athletics career as a King.

The Bachelor of Education student-athlete was one of seven Kings hockey players to graduate following the end of the 2023/2024 season.

The Kings and Queens Athletics season will kick off on September 7, 2024 when the Soccer teams head to SAIT to take on the Trojans in Calgary. The Polytechnic's first home match will take place the following day when they host the Olds College Broncos.



## Team Awards

### **Kings Basketball**

Coach's Award – Parker Weinrauch  
Most Improved Player – MacGregor Manyluk  
Most Valuable Player – Jose Mauro  
Rookie of the Year – Deandre Rowe

### **Queens Basketball**

Coach's Award – Sadie Jeffries  
Most Improved Player – Janai Hubert  
Most Valuable Player – Sandra Garcia-Bernal  
Rookie of the Year – Salome Nuako

### **Cross-Country**

Coach's Award – Zoey Longman  
Most Improved Player – Georgia Sawchuk  
Most Valuable Player – Justine Larson  
Rookie of the Year – Dylan Leadlay

### **Curling**

Coach's Award – Sam Goodey  
Most Improved Player – Teryn Harder  
Most Valuable Player – Cassidy Blair  
Rookie of the Year – Aiden Berube

### **Kings Hockey**

Coach's Award – Chance Longjohn  
Most Improved Player – Sean Michalevich  
Most Valuable Player – Jacob Wozney  
Rookie of the Year – Dawson Leroux

### **Queens Hockey**

Coach's Award – Brooke Skrypichayko  
Most Improved Player – Hayley Kolosky  
Most Valuable Player – Avery Lajeunesse  
Rookie of the Year – Tora Ward

### **Kings Soccer**

Coach's Award – Eshay Fernandes  
Most Improved Player – Brian Murray



Most Valuable Player – Ajdin Sarcevic

Rookie of the Year – Njegos Bajovic

**Queens Soccer**

Coach's Award – Grace Smith

Most Improved Player – Cara Lord

Most Valuable Player – Kayla Yeo

Rookie of the Year – Payton Erick

**Kings Volleyball**

Coach's Award – Jonathan (JJ) Graham

Most Improved Player – Zach Neufeld

Most Valuable Player – Noah Carlson

Rookie of the Year – Owen Langberg

**Queens Volleyball**

Coach's Award – Jaiden Ferguson

Most Improved Player – Jailyn Stouffer

Most Valuable Player – Emma Holmes

Rookie of the Year – Raya Roesler

**Team Service Awards**

Kings Basketball – Jesse Bonsu

Queens Basketball – Jessica Hennelly

Cross-Country – Jenna Schnare

Curling – Andrew Jones

Kings Hockey – Zach Noble

Queens Hockey – Michael Gundran

Kings Soccer – Jaden Humphrey

Queens Soccer – McKenna Richelhoff

Kings Volleyball – Jillyn Halldorson

Queens Volleyball – Mandy Carroll

**Minor Officials Award**

Beth Ferchuk, Ed Duiker

**Student Trainer Recognition**

Jon Walsh Memorial Kings Volleyball Student-Trainer Scholarship – Jillyn Halldorson

Red Deer Bottling Kings Pit Crew Award – Ethan West

Red Deer Bottling Queens Pit Crew Award – Estel Quinteros



STRIDE Student-Trainer Scholarship – Alissa Berwick

Tim Hamilton Student-Trainer Queen Award – Zachary Noble

Tim Hamilton Queens Hockey Student Trainer – Brook Dunn

Red Deer Bottling Student Trainer Award – Shyla Jenkins

Red Deer Bottling Student Trainer Award – Jade Gaudet

Red Deer Bottling/Truant Family Student Trainer Award – Michael Gundran

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**About Red Deer Polytechnic Athletics:** Red Deer Polytechnic has a historic athletics tradition. The Polytechnic Athletic teams and individual student-athletes have won 25 Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) National gold medals, 195 Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) team and individual titles. The student-athletes and coaches have received numerous individual honours, both for academic and sporting achievement. During the 2023/2024 academic year, Red Deer Polytechnic had more than 190 student-athletes competing in nine sports on 17 teams. Thanks to the support of our community partners, our dedicated student-athletes have been given the opportunity to compete and become leaders on their teams, while they pursue an education that will prepare them to become leaders in our communities.

For more information on the Kings and Queens, visit: [rdpolytechathletics.ca](https://rdpolytechathletics.ca) | [twitter](#) | [facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

For more information on the RDP Royals, visit: [rdpolytech.ca/royals](https://rdpolytech.ca/royals)

**About Red Deer Polytechnic:** Focused on advancing the economic and social priorities of Alberta, Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) provides more than 80 industry-relevant programs within a breadth of credentials to approximately 6,300 credit and apprenticeship students and 3,400+ learners with Extended Education programming. With modern teaching and learning spaces, and state-of-the-art research and innovation centres in advanced manufacturing and energy innovation, the Polytechnic provides applied research opportunities, leadership in the social, economic and cultural development of Alberta, and myriad lifelong learning opportunities.

Red Deer Polytechnic's main campus is located on Treaty 7, Treaty 6 and Métis ancestral lands. This is where we will strive to honour and transform our relationships with one another.

For more information, please visit: [rdpolytech.ca](https://rdpolytech.ca) | [twitter](#) | [facebook](#) | [instagram](#)

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