

For Immediate Release  
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**MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT INVESTS \$1.2 MILLION FOR ONTARIO COACHING**  
*Quest For Gold Lottery Sales Fund Enhanced Coach Training To Benefit Athletes*

TORONTO — Ontario's amateur athletes will have better access to superior coaching with \$1.2 million for coach training initiatives funded through the Quest for Gold program, Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion announced today.

"The McGuinty government supports quality training for coaches to help Ontario athletes achieve their best," said Watson. "The Quest for Gold program provides our amateur athletes with superior coaching support to help them train in Ontario excel in their sports and, ultimately, inspire Ontarians to lead active, healthy lives."

Up to 900 coaches from across the province will undergo skills development training as a result of the funding and other program initiatives including a coach mentor program and coach apprentice program. The programs will be delivered by the Coaches Association of Ontario and the Canadian Sport Centre - Ontario.

"By focusing on enhanced coach training, the Ontario government is strengthening an essential element of athlete development," said Doug Hamilton, Chair of the Canadian Sport Centre - Ontario. "Supporting coach development builds a foundation for athlete excellence in Ontario."

Funded by Quest For Gold Lottery sales, this program supports the Ontario government's commitment to excellence in sport. More than 890 athletes benefited from \$2.9 million in revenues raised through the first lottery. Of this amount, 70 per cent went to athletes in direct financial support, 10 per cent was allocated for enhanced competitive and training opportunities and 20 per cent, or \$558,000, funded enhanced coaching programs.

"Athletes need the opportunity to develop skills and coaching is a fundamental element," said Tracey Ferguson, three-time Paralympic Basketball gold medalist. "Ontario's coach training support will provide me and other athletes with an important building block that's critical to achieving excellence."

"Coaches are the backbone of the Canadian sport system. They are the unsung heroes who work to help kids develop as both human beings and athletes." said Sheilagh Croxon, Chair of the Coaches Association of Ontario. "The Quest for Gold funds will make it possible for coaches to continue to learn, be mentors and pursue coaching as a career."

The Ministry of Health Promotion was established to improve and deliver programs that contribute to healthy living and wellness in Ontario. Key priority areas include Ontario's smoke-free strategy, healthy eating, active living, injury prevention and mental health promotion.

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