



## 2024 AthletesCAN President's Report

Dear Canadian National Team Athletes,

This past year has been a resounding year for the rise of athlete representation. The athlete voice was strong in the Canadian sport system and in decisions that impact the athlete experience. I have been truly inspired by so many athletes who have embraced their desire to become leaders in shaping a stronger, athlete-centred sport system in Canada.

There are many accomplishments to celebrate this year, as outlined in our year in review, but the most memorable highlight was being able to bring back the AthletesCAN Forum & the Canadian Sport Awards in person in Vancouver for the first time in 4 years! This Forum focused on "Athletes Building Better Governance" and was an incredible opportunity to bring 70 athlete representatives together to create a network of community, listen and learn from each other, and most importantly improve our ability to become effective athlete representatives. We must also acknowledge the support of Minister Pascale St-Onge whose dedication to athlete leadership provided additional funding to bring Forum back. Additionally, we had the pleasure of hosting the newly appointed Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, Hon. Carla Qualtrough at Forum, where she heard from and engaged with many athletes.

With the additional funding, we were also pleased to double the size of our staff to better serve Canadian athletes. We welcomed Jacob Morris and Kristin Henry as critical members of our team, along with Lindsay Smith as interim Athlete Projects and Operations Manager. Along with existing staff, Alan Hudes and Alicia Renaud-Paquin, this team was able to create meaningful progress in elevating the status of athlete representation in Canada. From an awareness perspective, we were able to create impactful social media campaigns including 'Safe Sport 101' to educate our members on their rights and responsibilities as they pertain to Safe Sport. We were also able to interact with more athletes through additional funding, hosting 6 AthletesCAN Town Halls across Canada to hear from our members on their most pressing issues. On the Activation front, we engaged with current and former Canadian Ministers of Sport (Hon. Carla Qualtrough and Hon. Pascale St. Onge, respectively) to discuss critical issues that athletes face, including safe sport, governance regulation, and mandated athlete representation. Finally, we continued to solicit invaluable insights from you, the athletes, through our relaunched Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Survey conducted in partnership with the University of Toronto to understand the diverse experiences of national team athletes across their intersectional identities.

To make resources more accessible for our athletes, we launched the AthleteHUB with great enthusiasm. This one-stop-shop brings together resources from across the Canadian sport system into one convenient, easy-to-use space. This includes Financial Support and Development, Training, Injury and Nutrition, Legal Support and Conflict Resolution, and more! Once again, we want to thank the Canadian Ministers of Sport – past and present - for their continued investment which allowed this project launch.

I am proud of our team's accomplishments and the strides we've made together. I am incredibly grateful for the amazing team of staff, the board of directors, committee members, and volunteers who dedicate extensive time and energy to push for a sport system that puts athletes at the centre. As we move forward, let us continue to strengthen our community and amplify our collective voices for a brighter future in sport.





On a final note, I have now completed my three-year term as president. It has been an incredible privilege to be given this opportunity to represent AthletesCAN in this capacity, and I am truly grateful for the experiences. I am confident that the organization, with its increased staff, strong leadership, and commitment to the strategic plan, is on a path to continue to do great things for our Canadian athlete community.

Thank you for your continued trust and support, it has been an honour to represent Canadian National Team athletes.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erin Willson".

Erin Willson  
President

