



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Madi Osias
WIN for KC/Community Events Associate Manager
816.474.0253

WIN for KC Women's Sports Awards Celebration honorees announced

KANSAS CITY, MO (December 6, 2017) – The WIN for KC Women's Sports Awards Celebration presented by Burns & McDonnell on Wednesday, February 7, 2018 will honor six local residents for their impact on women and girls in our community through sports.

Children's Mercy Rising Star Award – McKenna Luptak, this nine-year-old elite multisport athlete competes in BMX and figure skating. At the age of seven she created "Kenna's Cuddles," an initiative under which she packages and delivers stuffed animals, coloring books and other goodies to patients at Children's Mercy Hospital. She took it upon herself to start this program and has since donated over 250 packages to children at CMH.

Lockton Courage Award – Lisa Elsener is a lifelong Special Olympian who has never let anything, or anyone, stop her from accomplishing her goals. She competes locally in swimming, track & field, basketball, volleyball, soccer, cheerleading, speed skating, skiing, bowling and golf. Not only does she compete in all of these sports, but she has skated on a global stage at the Special Olympics World Games, and was featured in a performance during the Closing Ceremonies.

Kissick Construction Game Changer Award – Sarah Castle is a Paralympic athlete who lost the use of her legs from a rare disease at the age of 11. She created an organization called "Youth4KC" where she mentors and engages young people with service opportunities that enable them to learn the value of making positive, impactful change. Their first project was to bring the National Association of Wheelchair Basketball Victory Tour to Kansas City which helped raise awareness for wheelchair basketball. Sarah continues to change the game as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney and Diversion Manager for Jackson County, MO.

UMB Lifetime Sportswoman Award – Chau Smith completed 7 marathons on 7 different continents in 7 days for her 70th birthday. An avid runner and competitor, Chau has made it her mission to prove that anyone of any age can accomplish their goals. She estimates that she has run over 50 marathons in her lifetime and does not plan on stopping anytime soon. Chau exemplifies the meaning of Lifetime Sportswoman to the fullest degree and is a constant reminder that age is just a number.

Hallmark Cards Leadership Award – Liz Weidling is a triathlon coach who has inspired women to participate in sports for over 15 years. By establishing the Reds Triathlon Team, she didn't just build a team, she created a community of athletes with a goal of supporting one another. Though Liz is incredibly humble, her presence never goes unnoticed, and she is known to be one of the most positive and inspirational women at every race. Liz's encouraging and uplifting spirit does not stop once you leave the race site; her triathletes refer to her as a friend, family and someone they can always count on to push them to be the best versions of themselves.

BKD WOW Award – Jill Leiker is an advocate for empowering women and girls to protect themselves. After the tragic death of Ali Kemp, The Ali Kemp Educational (T.A.K.E.) Foundation was formed and Jill established the T.A.K.E. Defense program to educate women and girls about the importance of self-defense. Over the last 12 years, this program has reached over 65,000 people, including young girls at Camp WIN and college students across the United States. Jill has made it her mission to support young women by giving them the tools and confidence to defend themselves.

For more information about the 2018 WIN for KC Women's Sports Awards Celebration presented by Burns & McDonnell, visit the website at www.WinforKCLuncheon.org. Individual tickets can be purchased [here](#). To sponsor a table, contact Lisa Diven, Director, WIN for KC & Community Impact at 816-389-4186 or ldiven@sportkc.org.

About WIN for KC

The Women's Intersport Network for Kansas City (WIN for KC), was established in 1994 under the umbrella of the Greater Kansas City Sports Commission, with the mission to ignite girls and women through advocating and promoting the lifetime value of sports and fitness, while providing opportunities for participation and leadership development. WIN is a volunteer, membership-driven organization that operates as a program of the Kansas City Sports Commission and Foundation. For more information, visit WINforKC.org. For the latest on WIN for KC news, follow on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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114 West 11th Street
Suite 300
Kansas City, MO 64105

P: 816.474.4652
F: 816.474.7979

WINforKC.org

