



## 2024 UPEI Inspiring Young Alumni Award

### Ellen Dixon (BSc 2012)

Ellen Dixon is a four-time Academic All-Canadian field hockey athlete with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from UPEI and a Masters in Physiotherapy from Dalhousie University. She is a well-regarded and successful sport physiotherapist with designations and certifications in sport physiotherapy, vestibular rehabilitation, custom orthotic therapy, and concussion therapy. In addition to her regular practice, Ellen is a therapist for the Hurricanes Football team at Holland College, where she is also a sessional lecturer.

Ellen made a name for herself in PEI field hockey circles as the vice-president of the provincial field hockey body where she worked to introduce new people to the sport and to develop their skills. One initiative was to form PEI's first co-ed indoor field hockey league, allowing men to try the sport for the first time. She coached the PEI U-16 team at the Nationals in 2013 and the PEI U-18 team at the Nationals in 2016.

Outside of field hockey and physiotherapy, Ellen is known as a community leader, an active volunteer, a mentor, and a pioneering hockey official. In 2004, while she was playing bantam hockey, she decided to give officiating a try. She enjoyed officiating hockey and continued to do it through her time as an Academic All-Canadian at UPEI and while completing her master's degree at Dalhousie.

When she returned to PEI, Ellen worked toward her level 4 certification, allowing her to officiate at higher level games like women's AUS and Atlantic Championships. Eventually, she was one of 100 officials from across Canada who were invited to participate in Hockey Canada's Officiating Program of Excellence and was part of the first regional high-performance camp for women in Atlantic Canada.

These experiences opened the door to officiating higher-level games for women and men. Ellen has officiated at the U-18 National Women's Championships, and the 2019 and 2023 Canada Winter Games. In December 2023, she became the first woman from PEI to referee a Maritime Junior A Hockey League, earning praise as a pioneer and role model. As director of female officials for Hockey PEI, Ellen supports other female hockey officials across the province and works to recognize talent and assist with on-ice development.

Somehow, Ellen found enough spare time to learn and excel at disc golf, a sport in which she is a top ranked local amateur. Recently, she was the lone Maritimer to compete at the 2024 Amateur Disc Golf world championships in Michigan, where she finished 34<sup>th</sup> in a field of 114.

In recognition of her pioneering achievements in hockey officiating, significant contribution to youth and amateur sport, and dedication to her profession, the UPEI Alumni Association is proud to present Ellen Dixon, BSc 2012, with a 2024 Inspiring Young Alumni Award.