



## **Stu Thomas**

Special Olympics Ontario is truly saddened by the passing of an extraordinary man and coach. For over twelve years Stu Thomas so generously gave of himself and his time. Stu was and always will be regarded as a gentleman, but for those who had the pleasure of knowing him personally we know that he was also a very gentle man.

Stu's love of sport and particularly basketball combined with his passion and drive ensured that every Special Olympic Athlete who set foot on his practice court would receive the highest quality of coaching. Always leading by example, Stu knew that success was far more than winning. Stu knew that the best win was in helping empower every athlete to reach their personal goals and dreams.

Colleagues and friends respectfully acknowledge and refer to Stu as a "Coaches Coach". Stu knew that knowledge and experience was truly lost if it wasn't shared. In 2006 he became a certified NCCP Facilitator, so that he could help teach and mentor coaches across the province of Ontario.

In 2010 Stu was recognized with the prestigious Special Olympics Ontario Male Coach of the Year Award. Stu was greatly admired for taking his much beloved Oakville Sky Walkers Basketball Team to new levels.

In 2012 Stu took on the task of Technical Coordinator in Basketball for the Special Olympics Ontario Provincial Spring Games. In this role he graciously imparted his knowledge and experience to ensure that the Provincial Games were not only a success but more importantly a games of the highest integrity and quality.

As the Basketball Mission Staff for Team Ontario attending the 2014 National Summer Games, Stu was an integral member of the team. Always upbeat and optimistic, Stu provided great leadership to the team with his extensive knowledge of basketball and with his passion for Special Olympics.

Also in 2014 Stu took on the task of Provincial Convener in Basketball. In this role he was instrumental in helping SOO instill standards and best practices across the province.

We would be remiss not to mention how gracious Stu always was to Special Olympics Ontario staff. Stu was often our "first call" whenever there was a basketball question. Ever humble and patient, Stu always found the time to answer questions and provide assistance where ever he could.

Special Olympics has lost one of its greatest treasures. Stu will be greatly missed but at the same will always be fondly remembered by the entire Special Olympics Ontario Family.

### **Special Olympics Ontario**

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