



NEWS RELEASE

2018 WIN for KC Women's Sports Awards Celebration to be held February 7

KANSAS CITY, MO (January 31, 2018) – The Women's Intersport Network for Kansas City (WIN for KC) is holding the 24th annual WIN for KC Women's Sports Awards Celebration presented by Burns & McDonnell on Wednesday, February 7 in the Grand Ballroom at the Kansas City Convention Center.

Keynote speaker will be Ibtihaj Muhammad, an American sabre fencer who won a bronze medal in the Team Sabre at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio. With this achievement, she became the first female Muslim-American athlete to earn a medal at the Olympics. Muhammad also made history as the first Muslim-American woman to compete in the Olympic Games for Team USA while wearing a hijab. She is ranked No. 7 in the world individually and won gold with Team USA at the 2014 Senior World Championships.

The WIN for KC Women's Sports Awards Celebration presented by Burns & McDonnell is the largest celebration of National Girls and Women in Sports Day in the country. This annual event recognizes women and girls throughout the community who are making a difference through sports. The six individuals who will be honored are:

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.

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, bowling and golf.

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.

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.

Hallmark Cards Leadership Award - *Liz Weidling* is a triathlon coach who has inspired women to participate in sports for over 15 years. 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.

The WIN for KC Women's Sports Awards Celebration presented by Burns & McDonnell is a key fundraising initiative to support WIN for KC's 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.

The 2018 luncheon co-chairs are Mary Buschmann, Executive Director, USTA, Missouri Valley Section and Rebecca Sommers, Fitness Creative Lead/Senior Copywriter, Garmin International.

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](#).

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

P: 816.474.4652
F: 816.474.7979

WINforKC.org

