



# PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FEBRUARY 7, 2020

## ***Tim Benedetto, Dick DeCaprio, John Gravallese, and Kathy Wynters To Receive Hockey East Founders Medal*** *Presentation Set for March 20 at Hockey East Semifinals*

**WAKEFIELD, Mass.** - Four individuals who have made, and continue to make, unique contributions to the growth and stability of the Hockey East Association will be presented the prestigious Hockey East Founders Medal at this year's Hockey East Championships, it was announced today by Hockey East Commissioner **Joe Bertagna**. The ceremony will take place on TD Garden ice on Friday, March 20, between semifinal games of the 36th Annual Hockey East Championships.

This year's recipients, all of whom are still active in Hockey East, are on-ice officials **Tim Benedetto** and **John Gravallese**, former Supervisor of Officials and current Chief Observer **Dick DeCaprio**, and long-time Associate Commissioner **Kathy Wynters**. Benedetto and Gravallese are the first on-ice officials so honored. DeCaprio, who also officiated in the early years of the conference, follows his predecessor, Supervisor of Officials **Brendan Sheehy**, who was honored in 2011. Wynters, the longest serving employee in conference history, becomes the first female to receive the award.

"These four individuals have combined for more than a century of service to Hockey East," said Bertagna. "I am pleased to shine a light on the contributions of so many on-ice officials by recognizing Timmy, Grav, and DeCap. And I am particularly happy to give some long-overdue recognition to Kathy for all she has done for the conference and, to be frank, for me in the time we have worked together."

**Tim Benedetto** has been a referee in both Hockey East men's and women's conferences, starting with the men in 1991 and the women in 2017. He has worked 10 men's Hockey East championship games, as well as 10 Beanpot finals. He is one of the few referees in the country who has worked in both the men's and women's Frozen Four. A 30-year veteran of the Everett (Mass.) Police Department, Benedetto spent 14 years as a high school hockey assistant coach. In addition to his college officiating, he has worked the IIHF World Junior Championships and the IIHF Men's World Championships.

**Dick DeCaprio** has enjoyed a unique hockey life as a player, coach, on-ice official, and administrator. A native of Arlington, Massachusetts, "DeCap" was an outstanding player for the legendary Eddie Burns. He went on to play at Boston University (Class of 1968) and then returned for a 42-year career in the Arlington school system. As a teacher and administrator at Arlington High Schools, DeCaprio followed Burns as the boy's varsity hockey coach and continued the Spy Ponders' tradition of championship success.

He first contributed to Hockey East as an on-ice official from 1984-87 before becoming an observer (1994-2006) and Supervisor of Officials (2006-12). The position of Chief Observer was then created for him in 2012 and he has served in that role since. He is the only person inducted into the Massachusetts High School Hockey Coaches Association Hall of Fame in three categories: referee, assistant coach, and head coach. He also enjoyed two different stints as an assistant coach at Lowell and as a scout for the St. Louis Blues.

**John Gravallese** is one of the most respected and longest serving on-ice officials in the country. His service to Hockey East began in the league's first year (1984) when then-Supervisor of Officials **Dana Hennigar** asked him to serve as a goal judge. He began as an on-ice official the following year and remains the referee with the most service to Hockey East. Though he may be underestimating the numbers, "Grav" believes he has worked the Hockey East championship game at least six times and has also been chosen to work the NCAA Tournament in at least as many years. In 2019, his work as a high school official was recognized by the Massachusetts High School Hockey Coaches Association.

A native of Quincy, Massachusetts, **Kathy Wynters** began her service to Hockey East when the league was first formed in 1983 while she was an assistant athletic director at her alma mater, Providence College. She served Commissioner Lou Lamoriello and the conference in that role until 1988, when she became the full-time Assistant Commis-



sioner to **Stu Haskell**, as the league office operated out of Bangor, Maine.

After a nine-year hiatus from Hockey East, she was hired by Commissioner Joe Bertagna in 2000 and has served as Associate Commissioner for most of this period. Taking on myriad responsibilities, Wynters has given special attention to business manager duties in the office and as the primary event manager for the conference. Her husband, **Chuck Wynters**, was a Hockey East on-ice official for 17 years.

The Hockey East Founders Medal was established in 2009 upon the occasion of the 25th anniversary Hockey East season. The inaugural recipients were, fittingly, the five founding athletic directors who created the conference in the mid-1980s. In all, the award has been presented to seven institutional administrators, five conference administrators, two administrators associated with the TD Garden (home of the Hockey East Championship), two on-ice officials, and two head coaches.

### Recipients of the Hockey East Founders Medal

Year	Recipients
2009	Irwin Cohen, Athletic Director, Northeastern University
	Bill Flynn, Athletic Director, Boston College
	Lou Lamoriello, Athletic Director, Providence College
	Andy Mooradian, Athletic Director, University of New Hampshire
	John Simpson, Athletic Director, Boston University
2011	Bob DeGregorio, Commissioner, Hockey East
	Stu Haskell, Commissioner, Hockey East
	Brendan Sheehy, Supervisor of Officials, Hockey East
2013	Steve Nazro, Vice President of Events, TD Garden
	Jim Prior, Public Address Announcer, TD Garden
2014	Jack Parker, Head Coach, Boston University
2018	Dick Umile, Head Coach, University of New Hampshire
2019	Tom Peters, Associate Athletic Director, Boston College
	Dana Skinner, Athletic Director, UMass Lowell
2020	Tim Benedetto, On-Ice Official
	Dick DeCaprio, Observer/Supervisor of Officials, Hockey East
	John Gravallese, On-Ice Official
	Kathy Wynters, Associate Commissioner, Hockey East

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