

# GEORGETOWN NATIVE HONOURED BY SPECIAL OLYMPICS CANADA

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Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir were two days away from receiving their star on Canada's Walk of Fame, an honour previously bestowed on just three figure skaters.

But when preparations for the event conflicted with the Special Olympics gala, the Olympic gold medallists made it known where their priorities lay. It would be the event celebrating athletes who competed on a smaller stage than Virtue and Moir, but were every bit as committed to their sport.

That kind of dedication isn't surprising, says Mark Milliere, who describes the Special Olympics as "sticky."

"Once you're in, you can't help but get involved," he says.

That may explain why 30 years after he first volunteered with the organization, the Georgetown native is still devoting his time to the Special Olympics. In his most recent position, Milliere has helped make a significant impact on the athletes and their ability to compete.

Since 2014, he has served as the chair or co-chair of the annual Special Olympics gala, Limitless. In that time, he has helped increase the amount raised by 400 per cent.

For his contribution, Milliere was named the Frank Selke Jr. fundraising volunteer of the year by Special Olympics Canada.

"We got a really good group together and restructured the year I joined the event team. We used our influence to help support it and we created an event that has grown beyond our wildest dreams," said Milliere, the senior vice-president and general manager at TSN. "It's the single biggest fundraiser for all the athlete's programs, so we're motivated to hit a home run."

The annual gala, held at the end of November in Toronto, brought together 1,200 corporate and community leaders, a who's who of the sporting world (including Vir-



TSN photo

Georgetown native Mark Milliere won the Frank J. Selke Jr. Award as the Special Olympics Canada's Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year. Since 2014, Milliere has chaired or co-chaired the organization's LIMITLESS gala, it's single-biggest fundraiser. In that time he has helped increase fundraising from the event by more than 400 per cent.

tue and Moir, Patrick Chan, Brendan Shanahan, Brian Burke, Damian Warner, Catriona Le May Doan, Adam van Koeverden, Diana Matheson and Michael "Pinball" Clemons) and Special Olympics athletes. They not only celebrated the achievements of the 45,000 Canadians who participate in Special Olympics programs, but also raised a record \$2.1 million.

Milliere got involved with Special Olympics through TSN. He said the network has had a relationship with the Special Olympics since soon after it was launched in 1984.

"Once I got in the position of being an executive and was able to have say in things' direction, I dove in," he said. "You meet so many incredible individuals, great coaches, fantastic parents. It's an absolute feel good thing."

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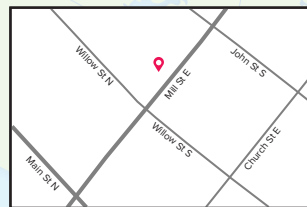


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