



## Media Release

### OLYMPIC SEARCH HAPPENING IN PRINCE GEORGE ON JAN. 21

January 9, 2017

#### For Immediate Release

Are you Canada's next Olympic star? Building on the success of Team Canada at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, Engage Sport North, in partnership with RBC, the Canadian Olympic Committee, the Canadian Olympic Foundation, CBC Sports and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network is searching for future Olympic athletes here in Northern BC.

Engage Sport North will be hosting an RBC Training Ground Regional Qualifier for athletes aged 14-25 on Saturday, January 21 at the Charles Jago Northern Sport Centre in Prince George, BC. No previous sport experience is necessary!

The RBC Training Ground Regional Qualifier includes a series of short athletic exercises that measure speed, power, strength and endurance. Each athlete is evaluated against performance benchmarks set by National Sport Organizations scouting for talented athletes with Olympic medal potential.

"RBC Training Ground offers a tremendous opportunity for young athletes to open their minds to a sport they may not have considered," said Curt Harnett, three-time Olympic medallist and RBC Training Ground's chef de mission. "Growing up I was focused on a hockey career, and was lucky enough to have a high school coach who introduced me to cycling. Just a few years later, I was standing on the Olympic podium with a silver medal around my neck and grateful to my coach for seeing my potential."

The Canada wide search travels across the country with more than 24 local qualifiers taking place in BC, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada. Top athletes from the local qualifier will be invited to attend RBC Training Ground regional finals hosted at the Canadian Sport Institute Pacific in Vancouver. Athletes interested in participating at the free local qualifiers can register at [www.rbctrainingground.ca](http://www.rbctrainingground.ca).

"We are so pleased to be able to offer this exciting opportunity to our local athletes," says Engage Sport North's Executive Director Leslie Ann Wirth. "There is amazing talent yet to be discovered here in Northern BC and the RBC Training Ground is a fabulous opportunity for young athletes to gain national exposure. On January 21<sup>st</sup> the representatives from the National Sport Organizations are looking for talent and potential, not current skill level, which is unique." She adds.

All registration details can be found at: [www.rbctrainingground.ca](http://www.rbctrainingground.ca).

#### For more information, please contact:

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## Backgrounder

Engage Sport North, originally founded in 1994 and formerly known as PacificSport Northern BC, is the only multi-sport organization of its kind in Northern BC.

Dedicated to advancing sport participation and excellence in the north, Engage Sport North provides high quality sport participation and development services and programming to athletes, coaches, officials and sport leaders. In addition, Engage Sport North offers introduction to sport opportunities and physical literacy skill development to children and adults. Engage Sport North works with people of all ages and abilities from those new to sport to experienced athletes and coaches on a high performance pathway.

In its first year, RBC Training Ground travelled across the country and tested 400 athletes at four regional workout events, with 94 young Canadians meeting National Sport Organization benchmarks. Of those, 25 athletes earned funding and support to spark or accelerate their Olympic dreams. For 2017, RBC Training Ground will feature more qualification events in more cities and has partnered with five additional national sport governing bodies, giving even more yet-to-be-discovered athletes the chance to further fuel their Olympic dreams. 2017 marks the first time the event has been offered in Northern British Columbia.

This year 11 National Sport Organizations will be represented at RBC Training Ground events to assess each athlete's potential for their high-performance programs: Athletics Canada, Bobsleigh Canada Skeleton, Canoe Kayak Canada, Cycling Canada, Rowing Canada, and Rugby Canada, Alpine Canada (Ski Cross), Canadian Freestyle Ski Association, Judo Canada, Triathlon Canada and Water Polo Canada. CBC Sports will produce broadcast features to introduce Canadians to the athletes and their stories uncovered at each RBC Training Ground over the upcoming year. These features will follow the journey of each of the five top athletes as they train in their select sport and begin the transition from relative unknown to a potential member of Team Canada.

Program partners CBC Sports, the COF and the COC have joined RBC in committing to RBC Training Ground for five years. For more information about RBC Training Ground and the local qualifiers, go to [www.rbctrainingground.ca](http://www.rbctrainingground.ca).

With a clear vision and defined strategies to ensure excellence and sustainability, Engage Sport North continuously adapts to the ever changing sport environment and combines quality services with new and innovative program delivery.

**Engage Sport North – Strive to thrive!**