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USA TRIATHLON NEWS

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USA Triathlon Announces Multisport Award Winners Presented by Wahoo Fitness

Honorees displayed sportsmanship and service while fueling the multisport lifestyle in 2019

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — USA Triathlon today announced the eight winners of the Multisport Awards Presented by Wahoo Fitness, which recognize USA Triathlon members who fueled the multisport lifestyle during the 2019 season:

[Doug Clark Sportsmanship Award](#): Susan Haag (Jacksonville, Fla.)

This award is presented annually in honor of Doug Clark, a decorated triathlete and multi-time masters national champion who inspired others through his dedication and commitment to sport, humility, ability to inspire others, ambassadorship for the sport and high standards of ethical behavior on and off the field of competition. He passed away in 2016.

The recipient of the 2019 Doug Clark Sportsmanship Award is Susan Haag. For more than 30 years, Haag has been active in the triathlon community and is known for her passion to helping others achieve their dreams of crossing the finish line. For Haag, victory has always been defined by the accomplishment of racing and the feeling of pride that goes along with it.

Haag is committed to creating a multisport culture that is inclusive to all, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity or gender. She serves on the Board of Directors of USA Triathlon, myTEAM TRIUMPH, the International Association of Black Triathletes (IABT) and her local track club. She also serves on the International Triathlon Union (ITU) Women's Committee.

Throughout her athletic career, Haag has completed more than 425 triathlons and countless other endurance races, including marathons and ultra-marathons. She has represented USA Triathlon's age-group Team USA at five ITU Long Distance Triathlon World Championships. In her professional life, she is an accomplished attorney in Florida.

[Jeff Jewell Spirit Award](#): Joella Baker (Harmony, Pa.)

This award commemorates Jeff Jewell, a massage therapist for USA Triathlon's age-group Team USA from 2001-2009. Jewell, who passed away from brain cancer on Nov. 15, 2010, was one of life's biggest cheerleaders and was an inspiration to everyone he met. The award is given each year to an athlete who gives back to the sport outside of competitions and is considered a role model to other athletes, particularly youth.

The recipient of the 2019 Jeff Jewell Spirit Award is Joella Baker. Baker is the founder of Get Fit Families, a nonprofit organization based in Harmony, Pennsylvania, that provides scholarships for low-income youth to participate in training camps and local races. In addition to serving low-income youth, Get Fit Families also offers a youth elite and junior elite triathlon team, a youth cross country and track program, an adult running club and an open water swim series.

Baker is the owner and creator of the Mighty Moraine Man Triathlon Series, the largest triathlon series in Western Pennsylvania. She has directed several other highly regarded running and multisport events in her community, including USA Triathlon State, Regional and High School Championships.



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Baker is a USA Triathlon Level II Certified Race Director, USA Triathlon Level II and Youth Certified Coach, USA Swimming Coach, USA Track & Field Coach, USA Cycling Coach, Assistant Swim Coach for North Catholic High School (Pittsburgh, Pa.), certified lifeguard, waterfront safety lifeguard, YMCA instructor and yoga instructor.

In 2001, she was diagnosed with Lupus, an autoimmune disease that can cause symptoms including joint pain, fatigue, organ damage and blood disorders. A competitive athlete in college and a marathoner at the time of her diagnosis, Baker was determined not to let her illness end her athletic lifestyle. She signed up for the Pittsburgh Marathon in 2002, finishing in 4 hours, 34 minutes. It was far from her best time — but she was back. She went on to complete 15 additional marathons, five ultra-marathons, 18 IRONMANs and one IRONMAN 70.3. She has represented USA Triathlon's age-group Team USA at six ITU Long Distance Triathlon World Championships.

Baker has dedicated her life to the multisport community in hopes of sharing her knowledge and passion with those who also love the sport. As a race director, coach, club leader and accomplished athlete, she embodies the multisport lifestyle while inspiring those around her to achieve their goals.

Military Sport Award: Lt. Cmdr. Kyle Hooker (Jacksonville, Fla.)

Lt. Cmdr. Kyle Hooker is the recipient of the the 2019 Military Sport Award, which recognizes the multisport successes achieved by the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Hooker is an active duty member of the U.S. Navy with Patrol Squadron 30 (VP-30) at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida. He is in the process of learning to fly the Navy P-8A Poseidon in preparation for a deployment in Patrol Squadron FIVE (VP-5), also based in Jacksonville. A 2009 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Hooker led the Midshipmen to the 2009 USA Triathlon Collegiate Club National Championships overall team title. He has been a member of the All Navy Triathlon Team for the past 11 years and has won the Armed Forces Triathlon Championship four times.

Outside of the Navy, Kyle is an active member of Team Every Man Jack and was the overall men's champion at the 2019 USA Triathlon Long Course National Championships. In 2019, he finished as the first overall amateur in his IRONMAN 70.3 debut in Texas.

Most Inspirational Comeback Award: Remigia "Remi" Davis (Washington, D.C.)

Remigia "Remi" Davis is the recipient of the 2019 Most Inspirational Comeback Award, which recognizes athletes who have made a comeback to the sport after a traumatic or troublesome situation. Davis was born with sickle cell anemia, a blood disease that affects the shape of red blood cells and ultimately makes it difficult for the cells to get through small blood vessels. Despite her condition, Davis has managed some incredible feats — including running numerous half-marathons on each of the seven continents, including Antarctica.

Davis' life suddenly changed in August 2018 when, while she was waiting by an intersection, a truck veered off the road and struck her. The accident left her with several cracked ribs, a distorted left elbow, and shattered tibia and fibula bones in her left leg. A metal rod was placed in her left leg and she used a wheelchair for more than four months. Six months after the accident she could walk with a cane, and at nine months she completed the REV3 Westfields Sprint Triathlon in Chantilly, Virginia. Just over a year after her accident, she completed IRONMAN 70.3 Atlantic City in New Jersey.

Spirit of Multisport Award: Julie Walker (Atlanta, Ga.)

Julie Walker is the recipient of the 2019 Spirit of Multisport Award, which recognizes individuals who illustrate the positive spirit of multisport through acts of sportsmanship and leadership, with no deference to athletic ability. A passionate and tireless advocate for her community, Walker has devoted her efforts to introducing women of color to the world of triathlon.



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Walker, an accomplished attorney and judge in the state of Georgia, competed in her first triathlon in 2009. She is the founder of Atlanta Tri Sisters (ATS), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to introduce the sport of triathlon to the black community to positively impact participants' health and fitness. Walker has successfully grown ATS from seven members in 2013 to more than 65 in 2020.

Walker's passion for the sport is undeniable. She lives by the ATS motto, which is, "It seems impossible ... until it's done." A relentless motivational coach, she encourages and inspires her club members to find the hidden potential within themselves. Outside of ATS, Walker volunteers with the Young YMCA Kid's Triathlon Team, a seven-week training program that prepares inner-city youth to compete in the Atlanta Kids Triathlon.

Volunteer of the Year Award: Dr. Kam Hunter (Phoenix, Ariz.) and Dr. Bruce Helming (Tucson, Ariz.)

The Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes an individual or organization whose volunteer leadership has been transformative and has mobilized and unified athletes, programs and organizations in the multisport community. The joint recipients of the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award are Dr. Kam Hunter and Dr. Bruce Helming. Together, Dr. Hunter and Dr. Helming worked as Medical Team Leads for the USA Triathlon Collegiate Club & High School National Championships when the event was held in Tempe, Arizona, in 2013, 2014 and 2019, and were scheduled to do so again in 2020 before the event was postponed due to COVID-19.

Dr. Hunter and Dr. Helming have taken proactive roles in developing a medical plan to address the unique challenges posed by the Tempe venue, bringing innovative ideas to maximize the medical area's design and flow. By including student trainees in their onsite medical care team, Dr. Hunter and Dr. Helming provide hands-on experience for their students to make a difference in the sport. Dr. Hunter and Dr. Helming have also committed to serving as medical leads for the Legacy Triathlon and Toyota USA Paratriathlon National Championships in Long Beach, California.

Lifetime Achievement Award: Joni Briganti (Spotsylvania, Pa.)

The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to USA Triathlon and the multisport lifestyle as a whole. These contributions, whether they have been in performance, leadership, volunteerism or mentorship, must demonstrate impact on the multisport lifestyle and an extended commitment to the sport.

The recipient of the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award is Joni Briganti. From a young age Briganti was drawn to the water, and she quickly became an impressive young swimmer. Over the past four decades, she has sought out every multisport and endurance race she could. Briganti has completed more than 100 Olympic-distance triathlons, 110 half marathons, six IRONMANs, 18 IRONMAN 70.3s, 34 marathons and countless 5ks and 10ks.

Briganti has raced at 10 USA Triathlon Age Group National Championships and represented USA Triathlon's age-group Team USA at three ITU Age Group World Championships. Her positive mindset inspires those around her, and she has been known to recruit dozens of people to compete in triathlons with her.

A member of the 2020 USA Triathlon Foundation Ambassador Team powered by Newton Running, Briganti raises awareness for the Foundation while encouraging triathlon participation in her local community through service projects and outreach activities. She is a water fitness instructor and Masters swim coach at American Family Fitness in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and has been a Jazzercise franchise owner since 1985. She is currently training to become a USA Triathlon-certified coach.

Whether teaching, coaching, speaking to novice triathletes at events, serving at her church or volunteering at races, Briganti carries her positivity wherever she goes in hopes of encouraging as many people as she can along the way.



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For more information about the USA Triathlon Multisport Awards Presented by Wahoo Fitness, and to view all past recipients, usatriathlon.org/multisportawards.

About USA Triathlon

USA Triathlon is proud to serve as the National Governing Body for triathlon, as well as duathlon, aquathlon, aquabike, winter triathlon, off-road triathlon and paratriathlon in the United States. Founded in 1982, USA Triathlon sanctions more than 4,300 events and connects with more than 400,000 members each year, making it the largest multisport organization in the world. In addition to its work at the grassroots level with athletes, coaches, and race directors — as well as the USA Triathlon Foundation — USA Triathlon provides leadership and support to elite athletes competing at international events, including International Triathlon Union (ITU) World Championships, Pan American Games and the Olympic and Paralympic Games. USA Triathlon is a proud member of the ITU and the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC).

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