

AASP International Regional Conference Grant Report – University of Ottawa

The University of Ottawa was pleased to host the 2015 Eastern Canada Sport & Exercise Psychology Symposium (ECSEPS) on March 27th and 28th. This two-day student-run event marked the 19th edition of the conference, which was founded at the University of Ottawa in 1996 by AASP member, Dr. Natalie Durand-Bush, who was doctoral student at the time.

This year, the conference was attended by 167 students and professors representing universities primarily within Eastern Canada (Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia). New this year, however, ECSEPS also welcomed representatives from American, German, and Chinese universities. In total, the conference featured 116 student presentations in which proposed, in progress, and completed research, as well as literature reviews and applied work were presented. The 29 sessions ranged from Psychological Skills Training to Physical Activity and Disability to Coach Learning, and covered a variety of contemporary topics within the field of sport and exercise psychology (e.g., concussions, transformational leadership, positive youth development). Each 12-minute presentation was allotted three minutes for questions, which allowed for discussion amongst peers.

The student social on Friday night was well attended by students and professors alike, and offered attendees the opportunity to network and exchange ideas in a more informal setting. Highlights of the conference included the two keynote addresses. Specifically, Dr. Catherine Sabiston from the University of Toronto delivered a keynote address entitled “Research in Exercise and Health Psychology: Trajectories, Stories and Observations from the SabLab” during lunch on March 27th, in which she discussed very applicable and relatable lessons from her research experience for students. During the closing banquet on March 28th, AASP member, Dr. Gordon Bloom, from McGill University, gave the newly designated John Salmela Keynote Address entitled “Listening, Challenging, and Supporting in Sport and Exercise Psychology” in which he paid tribute to his doctoral thesis advisor, the late Dr. John Salmela. During his keynote address, Dr. Bloom reflected on the history and significance of ECSEPS and offered invaluable advice to graduate students, including take-home messages about the importance of listening to mentors, challenging oneself, taking initiative, and networking with individuals outside of academia.

On behalf of the ECSEPS 2015 Organizing Committee, we would like to thank AASP for their generous support for this International Regional Conference, which went towards reimbursing the keynote speakers’ travel costs.

Kylie McNeill & Corliss Bean,
School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa