

**OUA/U Sports announcement**

**Wednesday, January 24**

**[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]**

Good morning everyone. It's a great pleasure to be here and join you for the official announcement that Algoma University will host two elite championships next month.

I'd like to recognize the honouary chair of the OUA Curling Championship Committee, Tom Coulterman. Tom is familiar to many people in our city. He has had a profound impact on curling in Sault Ste. Marie, long before but including his time as the coach of the Team Jacobs rink.

I also want to recognize an athlete who has set a strong example for current and future Algoma University athletes.

Natasha Doroodian captured silver medals at both the OUA and U Sports championships back in 2015.

At the time, she won the sophomore wrestling program's first-ever OUA Championship medal and then just two weeks later she won the Algoma University Thunderbirds first ever medal at the U Sports championships.

Thank you Natasha for showing Algoma University athletes what is possible.

Next month, Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma University will play host to the country's top university wrestlers and curlers. I note, however, that the University is not just hosting. Athletes from AU will compete in the events.

Offering students comprehensive sports programming is an important responsibility for any university. Athletics helps students grow on and off the field and I credit Algoma University staff and coaches for helping expand sport at AU.

The George Leach Centre has served a key role in the development of sport at AU. I was here for the official opening ceremony of the expanded George Leach Centre back in the spring of 2015. At the time, a number of us noted that the upgraded facility would allow AU to host more athletic events.

It is nice to be here and see that come to pass.

I once again want to thank the university's leadership for bringing these events to our city, I encourage citizens of Sault Ste. Marie to attend them and I wish our local athletes the best of luck.

Thank you.