



Keiji was a valuable member of Gymnastics Nova Scotia for over 40 years and his sudden death in March of this year came as a terrible shock to the gymnastics community in Nova Scotia and across the country. Keiji came to Canada from Japan in 1973 and was coached by fellow inductee, Tak Kikuchi at Taiso Gymnastics when he first came to Canada. He competed for Nova Scotia at Nationals in 1975. Keiji coached in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario before settling in Nova Scotia in 1983. He coached at Spartans YMCA for about 6 years and then the Maritime Academy of Gymnastics for a couple of years before they merged with Halifax Tumblebugs to form the Halifax Alta Gymnastics Club in 1991. Keiji coached at Halifax Alta for over 30 years.

Keiji coached a number of high level gymnasts and had a lot of success in getting them to reach their true potential. His athletes won many medals and team awards at Provincials, Atlantics, Easterns and Canadian Championships and also at the Canada Games. Keiji attended Canadian Championships for approximately 30 years and had numerous trips to Canada Games as team coach of the NS women's artistic gymnastics team, most recently

in Halifax in 2011.

Keiji was probably best known as Ellie Black's personal coach since she started gymnastics. Ellie's accomplishments include many best ever Canadian results at various Olympic Games, World Championships, Commonwealth Games and Pan Am Games. He would have been extremely proud of Ellie's recent accomplishments at the World Championships in Liverpool last month.

Keiji was a volunteer member of the NS Women's Technical committee for 15 years as their coaching chair from 1992-2006. He also coached at various clinics in Nova Scotia sharing his expertise with fellow coaches.

Keiji was presented with a Gymnastics Canada Life Membership Award in 2015. In 2013, he was co-winner of Gymnastics Canada's Coach of the Year, an honour he shared with David Kikuchi. He was also the Sport Nova Scotia Coach of the Year in 2013 and the Gymnastics Nova Scotia Coach of the Year in 2010, 2012 and 2013.

Keiji had a real love of coaching and he really enjoyed teaching the athletes. Athletes of all ages benefited from Keiji's expertise and wisdom and he will be missed by so many. Keiji had a quiet demeanor and liked to stay out of the spotlight but when Keiji spoke, people listened. His memory will live on through all the people that he has worked with over the years. We were very fortunate to have had Keiji as part of our association for so many years.

# KEIJI YAMATAKA