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**June Zimmer, Executive Director of ICANPLAY Sports Canada and Girls in the Game**, was recently named to

the **2010 Most Influential Women in Canadian Sport** list, as *One to Watch* by the **Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport**. June was one of only 2 women across Canada awarded in this category, and was recognized for her work in promoting access, opportunity and encouragement to young children through the programs that she has developed. This national list recognizes the scope and depth of leadership in sport and physical activity across Canada. In 2010, June Zimmer was also named a YWCA Woman of Distinction for this same work.

"I am incredibly honoured to be recognized in this manner by CAAWS for our work in promoting access to sport for young children. We do what we do because we're passionate about providing positive and encouraging lessons for children. We use sport as a tool to teach about goal-setting, perseverance, self-confidence and healthy friendships, making every effort to role model this for our participants every week. I can only hope that the impact of what we're trying so hard to accomplish will result in a generation of children who feel empowered to believe in themselves and who are not afraid to *get in the game!*"

In 2008, June Zimmer initially launched the Girls in the Game program in Saskatchewan to a group of 40 young girls. Girls in the Game is now being delivered throughout the entire province of Saskatchewan in many rural and urban communities. In 2010, June formed ICANPLAY Sports Canada which has become the parent entity of Girls in the Game. Through ICANPLAY Sports June has broadened her reach, offering non-competitive sport opportunities to young children beginning at the age of 3 years old.

"This is a team effort, and I can't say enough about the coaches, parents, participants, administrators, support staff and community advocates who help to make these programs run. It's not common for grassroots programming designed for young children to receive national acclaim in this manner. To be recognized on the same stage as Olympic athletes and programs, in terms of potential sport impact, has me speechless. But when I watch the magic that my team performs each week, and I see the joy on the face of a child as they celebrate a success in sport, I know that we're part of something special. Sport experiences for children should be fun and inclusive. My team is committed to making sure that happens."

*The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) is a national organization dedicated to creating an equitable sport and physical activity system in which girls and women are actively engaged as **participants and leaders**. CAAWS provides a number of services, programs and resources to a variety of clients, including sport and physical activity organizations, teachers, coaches, athletes, volunteers, health professionals, and recreation leaders. Since 1981, CAAWS has worked in close cooperation with government and non-government organizations on activities and initiatives that advocate for positive change for girls and women in sport and physical activity. Amy Hamilton, Director of Public Relations, ICANPLAYSports Canada Inc., Girls in the Game, Regina, SK, 306 565 0578*