

PRESS RELEASE
18TH FEBRUARY 2021

2020 MERIT AWARD RECIPIENTS

Oceania Athletics is proud to announce the recipients of the 2020 Oceania Athletics Association Merit Award.

- Maria Clarke (NEW ZEALAND)
- Alan Stevens (NEW ZEALAND)
- Peter Deane (AUSTRALIA)
- Alifereti Cawanibuka (FIJI)

OAA President Robin Sapong Eugenio said the 2020 recipients were well-deserved, with extensive and worthy nominations supported by their respective Federation.

"At the December 2020 Council Meeting, the Council unanimously agreed that Maria, Alan, Peter and Alifereti would receive the prestigious award. Based on the OAA Merit Award criteria, all four recipients have made significant contributions to the sport of athletics over a sustained period; not only for their federation but for Oceania area and internationally" Sapong Eugenio said.

Maria, Alan, Peter and Alifereti will receive a badge in recognition of their achievement and will forever be a part of an ever-growing list of exceptional people who have contributed to our sport. With the closure of International Borders, Oceania Athletics arrange for each recipient to receive their award at the next significant athletics event within their respective nations.

Please find the highlights from each of our recipients' nomination form below.

Maria Clarke - ATHLETICS NEW ZEALAND

Maria has been a member of the IAAF Legal Commission (formerly Juridical Commission) from 2007 until 2019. Maria's work contributes to the Commission saw her appointed as the Commission Chair in 2015. From 2016 until 2019 – Maria chaired the IAAF Governance and Integrity Reform Working Group. Maria has also provided guidance to OAA Athletics, most recently assisting with constitutional changes that were adopted in September 2019. Maria is always willing to share her insights with others and is a fantastic ambassador for our sport.

Alan Stevens – ATHLETICS NEW ZEALAND

In 1991, Alan was elected as an Oceania Area Representative, and a part of the IAAF Cross County & Road Committee - 16 years continuous to 2007. From 1970 – 1996 Alan was a part of the NZAAA Management Committee and Athletics NZ Board – 26 years in total. In 1977-1988, Alan was Convenor for Cross Country & Road Committee. In 1995 Alan was Awarded the IAAF Veteran Pin at World Congress, Goteborg, Sweden.

Peter Deane - ATHLETICS AUSTRALIA

Peter worked closely with RDC Adelaide as head of Pembroke School which was immediately adjacent to the RDC. He provided facilities and equipment on loan for the RDC for many courses. Peter coached many distance runners from Africa and Oceania in the lead up to the Sydney Olympics. He continued this connection with Oceania by hosting and coaching PNG athletes in Adelaide and acting as a team coach for the PNG team at the last Pacific Games in Port Moresby. Additionally, Peter lectured Level II IAAF Distance Course at RDC Gold Coast.

Alifereti Cawanibuka - ATHLETICS FIJI

Alifereti was a Fijian Athlete, who contributed significantly to both school and university athletics in Fiji. From 1990 to 2019, Alifereti was the track referee, for Fiji secondary school Athletics Championships and been an active technical official at all Oceania events held in Fiji for more than 20 years, including the Oceania Melanesian Regional Championships and the Oceania Area Championships. Additionally, he has provided support to Fiji Team at Pacific and Mini Games. From 2008 to 2019, Alifereti was President Fiji University Sports Association.

Congratulations once again to our deserving 2020 Merit Award recipients

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