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**NEWS RELEASE**

## **PNE AWARDS OCTOBER'S MIRACLE MILE ATHLETE BURSARY TO COQUITLAM WATER POLO PLAYER, ATHINA VAZEOS**

**VANCOUVER, B.C.** – The Pacific National Exhibition has named Coquitlam's Athina Vazeos the winner of the Pacific National Exhibition's Miracle Mile Athlete Bursary for the month of October.

Athina's dedication to the sport of water polo and her involvement in her community are just two of the many reasons she received this honour. Athina, who started playing water polo only five years ago, has shown that she has what it takes to advance quickly through the sport. With achievements including her team's victories as the 2005 Cadet National Champions, the 2006 Youth Women's National Champions and the 2006 Youth Cup Champions, it isn't hard to believe that Athina and her teammates have a strong possibility of achieving one of their loftier goals of making it to the 2012 Olympic Games.

John Stockdale, Provincial Women's Water Polo coach, has been working with Athina since 2005 and has come to know her well as an exemplary leader both in her community and her sport. *"Inside and outside the pool, Athina is an intelligent, responsible young woman,"* Stockdale says. *"She is well liked by her teammates, and has great people skills as a team leader and a coach for our development program. She truly is a great role model for our water polo community."*

A mentor and teacher to those her junior, Athina has a passion for giving back to the young water polo community in the Lower Mainland. For the past two years she has coached the Coquitlam Lions Water Polo Club and has volunteered with the Coquitlam Sharks summer swimming program. *"It is very important to give back to the younger generation of swimmers that may be following in my footsteps,"* she explains.

*"We are so pleased to award Athina Vazeos the October 2007 Miracle Mile Athlete Bursary,"* says Michael McDaniel, President and CEO of the Pacific National Exhibition. *"Her dedication to sport and her community as well as her unwavering determination makes her an ideal candidate for this honour. She is an accomplished athlete that young girls out there can and should look up to."*

For more information on the PNE's Miracle Mile Bursary visit [www.pne.ca](http://www.pne.ca) or call 604-251-7708.

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Owned by the City of Vancouver, the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) is a healthy and vibrant non-profit charity organization dedicated to providing over 3 million visitors a year with first-class cultural, sporting and family entertainment events. Founded in 1910, the PNE operates from a 114-acre site at Hastings Park, a multi-facility venue in Vancouver where the organization operates four activity streams: an annual 17-day Fair, Playland Amusement Park, maintenance and care of the Hasting Park site and management of the site's year-round facilities. These facilities are utilized to celebrate a variety of hockey, amateur sporting, music, community, social, cultural and commercial events throughout the year.