The OVA is pleased to announce the recipients of the inaugural Scarborough Solars Award. The Award, funded by the former Scarborough Solars Volleyball Club and administered by the OVA, was established with the aim of giving back to athletes in the Ontario volleyball community. The 2011 Scarborough Solars Award winners are Caleigh Whitaker and Garrett May.

Whitaker and May, both elite volleyball athletes, exemplify the determination, sportsmanship and athletic achievement reminiscent of the former Scarborough Solars Volleyball Club and the success of its athletes and coaches.

“The OVA is proud to have introduced the Solars Award as a living legacy of the incredible contribution to the growth and development of volleyball in this province made by the Scarborough Solars Volleyball Club throughout its history,” said OVA Executive Director Steve Carroll. “It is only fitting that aspiring high performance volleyball athletes continue to benefit from support provided by the Scarborough Solars Volleyball Club.”

Whitaker, a recent member of the Beach National Team, trains full-time at the National Beach Volleyball Practice Centre Ontario while attending York University. She has been involved in the OVA for over 10 years playing and competing in both Indoor and Beach volleyball. Choosing Beach Volleyball as her discipline she has represented Canada at the U19 (2008) and U21 (2009, 2010) World Junior Beach Championships, placing in the top ten at each event. With the goal of representing Canada at the 2015 Pan American Games and 2016 Summer Olympic Games, Whitaker says the Solars Award will assist her in offsetting the costs of training and traveling across Canada and internationally in preparation for these pinnacle events.

Garrett May, the reigning U21 World Junior Beach Champion (with partner Sam Schachter) has proven to be a powerhouse both in Indoor and on the Beach. He currently plays in the OUA with the University of Western Ontario Mustangs, where he was named the CIS Rookie of the Year for 2011, and is a member of the National Beach Team. May, along with Schachter, was named Junior Athlete(s) of the Year at the 2010 Canadian Sport Awards. Like Whitaker, May hopes to represent Canada at the Olympic Games and plans to use the Solars Award toward the many costs associated with achieving that goal.

The OVA would like to thank the individuals on the Scarborough Solars Award Selection Committee for their time and effort in choosing this year’s recipients. It was a tough choice with many worthy candidates submitting applications. The Selection Committee was comprised of: OVA Technical Director, Jason Trepanier; OVA Region 1 President, Tony Curciarello; former OVA Executive Director, Diane Wood; OVA Member-at-Large, Ian Eibbit; and Dave Carey, representing the Scarborough Solars Volleyball Club.
The Scarborough Solars Award will be rewarded annually to a minimum of two (2) Ontario athletes (equal number of male and female athletes) who have been selected to, or who have the ability to, represent Ontario/Canada in international volleyball or beach volleyball competitions. Recipients are selected based on their athletic achievement, impact of the OVA on the applicant, and the impact of receiving the Award on the athlete. The amount of the Awards will be between $500 and $1,000 per athlete per year.

**About the Scarborough Solars Volleyball Club:**
The Scarborough Solars Volleyball Club was founded in the late 1970s and saw many of its young and upcoming players and coaches go on to become well known members of the volleyball community; many of which represented Ontario and Canada on the international stage. Notable Solars players and coaching alumni include Olympians John Barrett (1984), John Child (1996), Mark Heese (1996) and Ed Drakich (1996); OVA President and Varsity Blues Women's Head Coach, Kristine Drakich; former OVA Technical Director and current Ryerson Ram's Women's Head Coach, Dustin Reid; York Lion's Men's Head Coach Wally Dyba; as well as many individuals who coach in the OVA club system today.

**About the OVA:**
Established in 1929, the Ontario Volleyball Association (OVA) is the official governing body and provides the organizational structure for the sport of volleyball in the province of Ontario. The OVA is involved in every facet of the sport and offers programs at all levels for both indoor and beach volleyball. The OVA strives to provide all Ontario residents with fair and equal access to participation and personal growth through recreational, competitive, elite, instructional, administrative, coaching and officiating volleyball programs. For more information, please visit: www.ontariovolleyball.org.

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