

# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## AHL ANNOUNCES NEW INDUCTEES INTO AMERICAN HOCKEY LEAGUE HALL OF FAME

**SPRINGFIELD, Mass.** ... The American Hockey League today announced the four people selected for induction into the **American Hockey League Hall of Fame** as the Class of 2017.

Honored by the AHL Hall of Fame Selection Committee as the 12<sup>th</sup> group of enshrinees are **Billy Dea, Bryan Helmer, Rob Murray** and **Doug Yingst**.

"The history of the American Hockey League is defined by the standards of excellence set by those who have played, coached and worked here over the past eight decades," said **David Andrews**, AHL President and Chief Executive Officer. "The AHL Board of Governors is proud to unanimously endorse the Selection Committee's recommendation for the induction of these four individuals into the American Hockey League Hall of Fame as the Class of 2017."

The Class of 2017 will be honored as part of the festivities at the **2017 Capital BlueCross AHL All-Star Classic**, hosted by the Lehigh Valley Phantoms. The American Hockey League Hall of Fame Induction and Awards Ceremony is scheduled for January 30, 2017, in Allentown, Pa.

Formed in 2006 to recognize, honor and celebrate individuals for their outstanding achievements and contributions in the American Hockey League, the **AHL Hall of Fame** is housed online at [www.AHLHallofFame.com](http://www.AHLHallofFame.com) and is accessible to fans worldwide with the click of a mouse as part of the AHL Internet Network.

In operation since 1936, the AHL continues to serve as the top development league for the players, coaches, managers, executives and broadcasters of all 30 National Hockey League teams, as well as the NHL's on-ice officials. By season's end in 2015-16, more than 88 percent of all NHL players were American Hockey League graduates, including more than 200 former first- and second-round draft picks and more than 300 players who appeared in both leagues last season alone.

*(more)*

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## Billy Dea

Edmonton native **Billy Dea** spent more than half of his 19-year professional career in the American Hockey League, where his consistency, durability and reliability made him one of the league's all-time greats.

After seeing time in the National Hockey League with New York, Detroit and Chicago, Dea made his AHL debut with the Buffalo Bisons on Oct. 8, 1958. Over the next eight seasons, Dea played in every single one of the Bisons' contests, breaking Bill Needham's league ironman record on Christmas night in 1965. Dea finally missed a game on Feb. 12, 1966, ending the streak at an amazing 548 straight (plus 48 more in the playoffs) – a mark that may never be broken.

A hard-working and popular winger, Dea had his most productive offensive season in 1960-61, when he set career bests with 35 goals and 74 points. He helped the Bisons return to the league finals in 1962, and was an important part of their Calder Cup championship team in 1963.

Dea spent nine seasons in Buffalo, eclipsing the 20-goal mark each year and reaching the 50-point plateau six times. He returned to the NHL with Chicago, Pittsburgh and Detroit before finishing his playing career with the AHL's Tidewater Wings in 1971-72.

AHL Totals: Billy Dea			Regular Season					Playoffs				
Season	Team		GP	G	A	Pts	PIM	GP	G	A	Pts	PIM
1958-59	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	70	25	45	70	19	11	5	4	9	4
1959-60	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	72	28	26	54	20	--	--	--	--	--
1960-61	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	72	35	39	74	10	4	1	2	3	0
1961-62	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	70	30	22	52	17	11	0	2	2	2
▶ 1962-63	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	72	20	12	32	25	13	2	8	10	0
1963-64	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	72	25	16	41	4	--	--	--	--	--
1964-65	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	72	21	19	40	15	9	3	0	3	0
1965-66	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	70	32	23	55	17	--	--	--	--	--
1966-67	Buffalo Bisons	AHL	71	25	39	64	5	--	--	--	--	--
1969-70	Baltimore Clippers	AHL	7	0	1	1	2	--	--	--	--	--
1971-72	Tidewater Wings	AHL	72	7	7	14	8	--	--	--	--	--
			<b>720</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6</b>

- ▶ *Calder Cup (1963)*  
*AHL record, consecutive regular-season games played (548)*



## Bryan Helmer

Unheralded and undrafted after four seasons of Junior "A" and Junior "B" hockey, **Bryan Helmer** went on to play more games and record more assists and points than any defenseman in the history of the American Hockey League.

A native of Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., Helmer made his pro debut with the Albany River Rats in 1993 and played five seasons in Albany, helping the club to a Calder Cup championship in 1995 and earning First Team AHL All-Star honors in 1997-98. Helmer later skated for the Worcester IceCats (1998-2000), the Manitoba Moose (2001-03) and the Springfield Falcons (2003-04) before joining the Grand Rapids Griffins, where he did not miss a single game during two seasons and was named a Second Team AHL All-Star in 2005-06.

Helmer then spent two years as captain of the San Antonio Rampage (2006-08) and then two seasons with the Hershey Bears (2008-10), where he captained the club to back-to-back Calder Cup championships. In 2009, Helmer was selected to wear the "C" for the Canadian team at the AHL All-Star Classic.

Helmer joined the Oklahoma City Barons in 2010, and on Feb. 18, 2011, became the seventh player in league history to reach 1,000 regular-season games. He was the recipient of the league's Fred T. Hunt Memorial Award in 2010-11, as the player exemplifying sportsmanship, determination and dedication to hockey.

After two seasons with the Barons, Helmer completed his 20-year professional playing career back in Springfield, retiring in 2013 in third place all-time with 1,117 regular-season games played, and first among AHL defensemen with 435 assists and 564 points. Helmer also played more postseason games (159) than anyone in AHL history – including seven trips to the conference finals and his three Calder Cups – and he finished with a cumulative plus/minus rating of +188, finishing at +15 or better eight times.

AHL Totals: Bryan Helmer			Regular Season					Playoffs				
Season	Team		GP	G	A	Pts	PIM	GP	G	A	Pts	PIM
1993-94	Albany River Rats	AHL	65	4	19	23	79	5	0	0	0	9
▶ 1994-95	Albany River Rats	AHL	77	7	36	43	101	7	1	0	1	0
1995-96	Albany River Rats	AHL	80	14	30	44	107	4	2	0	2	6
1996-97	Albany River Rats	AHL	77	12	27	39	113	16	1	7	8	10
1997-98	Albany River Rats	AHL	80	14	49	63	101	13	4	9	13	18
1998-99	Worcester IceCats	AHL	16	7	8	15	18	4	0	0	0	12
1999-2000	Worcester IceCats	AHL	54	10	25	35	124	9	1	4	5	10
2001-02	Manitoba Moose	AHL	34	6	18	24	69	--	--	--	--	--
2002-03	Manitoba Moose	AHL	60	7	24	31	82	14	0	4	4	20
2003-04	Springfield Falcons	AHL	9	1	6	7	6	--	--	--	--	--
2004-05	Grand Rapids Griffins	AHL	80	7	18	25	64	--	--	--	--	--
2005-06	Grand Rapids Griffins	AHL	80	12	44	56	138	16	1	8	9	24
2006-07	San Antonio Rampage	AHL	70	6	23	29	81	--	--	--	--	--
2007-08	San Antonio Rampage	AHL	66	5	15	20	53	7	0	0	0	6
▶ 2008-09	Hershey Bears	AHL	63	2	25	27	59	22	3	5	8	24
▶ 2009-10	Hershey Bears	AHL	71	6	26	32	95	21	0	5	5	33
2010-11	Oklahoma City Barons	AHL	42	6	19	25	25	6	1	1	2	8
2011-12	Oklahoma City Barons	AHL	69	3	21	24	45	14	0	3	3	6
2012-13	Springfield Falcons	AHL	24	0	2	2	19	1	0	0	0	0
			<b>1,117</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>1,379</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>186</b>

- ▶ *Calder Cup (1995, 2009, 2010)*
- 1 *First Team AHL All-Star (1998)*
- 1 *Second Team AHL All-Star (2006)*
- 1 *Fred T. Hunt Award (2011)*
- 1 *AHL All-Star Classic (2009)*



## Rob Murray

Respected by both teammates and opponents for his leadership and hard-nosed play, **Rob Murray** spent 15 seasons as a forward in the American Hockey League.

A third-round draft pick by the Washington Capitals in 1985, Murray made his AHL debut with the Baltimore Skipjacks in 1988-89, racking up 34 points and finishing second on the team with 235 penalty minutes. He joined the Winnipeg Jets organization in 1991 and spent most of the next nine seasons with their AHL affiliates, first in Moncton – where he helped the Hawks reach the Calder Cup Finals in 1994 after scoring 25 goals in the regular season – and then in Springfield, where he quickly became a fan favorite and the face of the city’s new Falcons franchise.

After finishing the 1999-2000 season in Hamilton, Murray signed with the Philadelphia Flyers and began 2000-01 as captain of the AHL’s Philadelphia Phantoms before returning the Falcons later that year. He then spent one season with the Saint John Flames before finishing his career with a third stint in Springfield in 2002-03, becoming the sixth player ever to reach 1,000 regular-season games in the AHL and eventually helping the club to the Calder Cup Playoffs.

Murray reached double digits in goals eight times and triple digits in penalty minutes 12 times during his playing career, and currently ranks second in AHL history with 2,940 PIM and seventh with 1,018 games played. The Toronto native wore the “C” for four different AHL franchises, as well as for the Canadian team at the 1997 AHL All-Star Classic.

Murray transitioned immediately into coaching and spent eight seasons behind the bench with the AHL’s Providence Bruins, winning a Macgregor Kilpatrick Trophy (regular-season champions) as an assistant in 2007-08 and reaching the conference finals in his first year as head coach in 2008-09.

AHL Totals: Rob Murray			Regular Season					Playoffs				
Season	Team	AHL	GP	G	A	Pts	PIM	GP	G	A	Pts	PIM
1988-89	Baltimore Skipjacks	AHL	80	11	23	34	235	--	--	--	--	--
1989-90	Baltimore Skipjacks	AHL	23	5	4	9	63	--	--	--	--	--
1990-91	Baltimore Skipjacks	AHL	48	6	20	26	177	4	0	0	0	12
1991-92	Moncton Hawks	AHL	60	16	15	31	247	8	0	1	1	56
1992-93	Moncton Hawks	AHL	56	16	21	37	147	3	0	0	0	6
1993-94	Moncton Hawks	AHL	69	25	32	57	280	21	2	3	5	60
1994-95	Springfield Falcons	AHL	78	16	38	54	373	--	--	--	--	--
1995-96	Springfield Falcons	AHL	74	10	28	38	263	10	1	6	7	32
1996-97	Springfield Falcons	AHL	78	16	27	43	234	17	2	3	5	66
1997-98	Springfield Falcons	AHL	80	7	30	37	255	4	0	2	2	2
1998-99	Springfield Falcons	AHL	68	6	19	25	197	3	0	0	0	4
1999-2000	Springfield Falcons	AHL	22	1	3	4	70	--	--	--	--	--
	Hamilton Bulldogs	AHL	55	11	20	31	100	10	2	3	5	4
2000-01	Philadelphia Phantoms	AHL	46	3	6	9	65	--	--	--	--	--
	Springfield Falcons	AHL	30	3	2	5	43	--	--	--	--	--
2001-02	Saint John Flames	AHL	80	7	14	21	97	--	--	--	--	--
2002-03	Springfield Falcons	AHL	71	2	10	12	94	6	0	2	2	4
			<b>1,018</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>2,940</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>246</b>

1 *AHL All-Star Classic (1997)*



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## Doug Yingst

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The successor to a Hockey Hall of Famer, **Doug Yingst** made a name for himself during a storied 34-year career as an executive with the Hershey Bears.

Hired as the Bears' sales and promotions director in 1982, Yingst won the AHL's Ken McKenzie Award for outstanding promotion of his club in 1987-88 as the Bears captured the Calder Cup. He was promoted to assistant general manager under the legendary Frank Mathers in 1988, and in 1990 added the role of director of hockey operations.

Yingst was named GM in 1996, and in his first season in that position the Bears won a Calder Cup championship. He later established an affiliation with the Washington Capitals in 2005 that began the greatest five-year run by any team in league history, with three more Calder Cup titles, four Finals appearances and a record 60-win season in 2009-10.

Yingst oversaw the groundbreaking for Giant Center, which opened in 2002 as one of the premier facilities in the AHL, and guided the Bears to 10 consecutive seasons of league-leading attendance from 2006-16. He was instrumental in bringing two AHL All-Star Classics to Hershey (1996, 2011), and also orchestrated the first-ever outdoor game in the region at Hersheypark Stadium in 2013.

A long-time member of the AHL's Board of Governors and chairman of several league committees, Yingst was honored with the James C. Hendy Award as the league's outstanding executive in both 2000 and 2006, and was the recipient of the Thomas Ebright Award for his career contributions in 2008.

Yingst retired in 2016 after one more trip to the Calder Cup Finals, the eighth of his career. His four championships as general manager are tied for the most of anyone in league history.

<h3>AMERICAN HOCKEY LEAGUE HALL OF FAME HONORED MEMBERS</h3>
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*Jimmy Anderson (2009)*  
*Harvey Bennett (2013)*  
*Bruce Boudreau (2009)*  
*Johnny Bower (2006)*  
*Jack Butterfield (2006)*  
*Frederic Cassivi (2015)*  
*Bruce Cline (2016)*  
*Fred "Bun" Cook (2007)*  
*Joe Crozier (2012)*  
*Les Cunningham (2009)*  
*Billy Dea (2017)*  
*Bill Dineen (2014)*  
*Jody Gage (2006)*  
*Dick Gamble (2007)*  
*Ken Gernander (2013)*  
*Fred Glover (2006)*  
*Jack Gordon (2012)*

*Bryan Helmer (2017)*  
*James C. Hendy (2015)*  
*Bronco Horvath (2015)*  
*Ralph Keller (2016)*  
*Macgregor Kilpatrick (2010)*  
*Steve Kraftcheck (2008)*  
*Jean-Francois Labbe (2016)*  
*Mitch Lamoureux (2011)*  
*Bruce Landon (2016)*  
*Al MacNeil (2014)*  
*Willie Marshall (2006)*  
*Frank Mathers (2006)*  
*Gil Mayer (2007)*  
*Jim Morrison (2013)*  
*Rob Murray (2017)*  
*Mike Nykoluk (2007)*  
*John Paddock (2010)*

*Marcel Paille (2010)*  
*Bob Perreault (2014)*  
*Harry Pidhirny (2011)*  
*Louis A.R. Pieri (2009)*  
*Maurice Podoloff (2011)*  
*Noel Price (2008)*  
*Eddie Shore (2006)*  
*John Slaney (2014)*  
*John Stevens (2012)*  
*Art Stratton (2015)*  
*Bill Sweeney (2010)*  
*Tim Tookey (2008)*  
*Zellio Toppazzini (2012)*  
*Peter White (2013)*  
*Larry Wilson (2011)*  
*Doug Yingst (2017)*