

# Nelson Honored as 2010 Anaheim Ducks Local Hockey Hero

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Fred Nelson, Hockey Director at Aliso Viejo Ice Palace, was named the 2010 Anaheim Ducks Local Hockey Hero and will be honored before tonight's game against the Oilers at Honda Center.

As part of USA Hockey's [Hockey Weekend Across America](#), the Anaheim Ducks spent the month of January searching for a local hockey hero, someone who has gone above and beyond to give back to their community through hockey.

After the judging panel sifted through the numerous nominations, all of whom have done a tremendous amount to give back to hockey in California, Nelson stood out above the rest.

Nominated by Kelly Olischefski, who has three children playing hockey at the rink, Nelson is a man who has been instrumental in promoting youth hockey in Southern California over the past 20 years. Nelson, who played college hockey at Minot State University, won the All-American Award there in 1981 and 1982 and had his jersey retired in the college's sports Hall of Fame. He moved to California in 1988 and became the hockey director at the Ice Capades Chalet in Costa Mesa before moving on to hockey director at Aliso Viejo Ice Palace in 1993.

Nelson is known for his emphasis on learning the fundamentals and having fun while doing so, not just winning. He knows every child who plays at the rink and their families by name and is a friend to all. He encourages youngsters who are considering playing hockey to try it out, while often letting them borrow equipment and take a few sessions for free to make sure they enjoy it before their parents invest the money.

Olischefski, who put together a 10-page nomination for Nelson, emailed a few people to ask for their input on why he deserved this award. She gave them two days' notice, and was blown away when she received 13 emails back on Nelson's behalf, as her original email was forwarded around to those Nelson had impacted. The following are some of the sentiments expressed in those emails that validate why Nelson was named the 2010 Anaheim Ducks Local Hockey Hero.

"Fred is all about kids playing hockey, period. Not club hockey. Not winning games. Not having the coolest gear or the latest training...just playing hockey for the pure love of the game. Fred sees in every boy or girl a chance to pass along his love of the sport and truly wants to see more kids having fun and playing." – Father of a player at Aliso Viejo

"I give much thanks to Fred Nelson for being a very big influence in life, both as a hockey player and now as a man." – Former player who received a full scholarship to play hockey at St. Cloud State

"If he sees only a little excitement in a kid's eyes, he's quick to come up with a pair of hand-me-down skates and other gear, just to get the kid on the ice and let him/her really see how much fun hockey is. I can only wonder how many hockey careers Fred started this way." – Southern California youth hockey coach

"Fred pours his heart and soul into youth hockey" – Father of a player at Aliso Viejo

"Fred is much more than a hockey director. He has assisted us in raising our kids and thousands of other Southern California kids to not only be fine hockey players but, much more importantly, fine young men and women." – Father of a former player who received a full scholarship to play hockey at University of Nebraska, Omaha

"In 2008, I deployed to Iraq for an entire year and Fred was there to assist my family as they endured the hardships and stresses of the separation, and he still kept my son active and developing in hockey. He truly is a hero on the home front for hockey players and families." – Father of a player at Aliso Viejo



Local Hockey Hero Fred Nelson poses with Ducks [Corey Perry](#) (left) and [Ryan Carter](#) at the High Five Skills Competition at Aliso Viejo Ice Palace.

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“Despite the wealth of hockey knowledge I learned from Fred, the most important thing Fred has given me is a prime example of how to carry myself off the ice.” – Hockey coach who started his coaching career under Fred

During tonight's game, Nelson will be presented with the 2010 Anaheim Ducks Local Hockey Hero Award and a framed USA Hockey Olympic jersey signed by [Bobby Ryan](#). After the game, Nelson will get to meet Ryan. Congratulations to Fred Nelson for being a hero to so many people in the Southern California hockey community.