

**President**

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**Peter Guadagni**

2022 is turning out to be a very good year for USMS. For the first time in several years, we will finish the year with a significant year over year membership increase. Some clubs are at their highest membership levels ever. We conducted very successful spring and summer national pool championships, both of which attracted participants at pre-pandemic levels. More importantly, swimmers had great experiences at both events. Our one-hour championship swim has been rebranded as a virtual championship and registered a significant increase in participation. Similarly, our open water national championships have also started to return to their pre-pandemic levels.

While the resurgence of our national competitive events has been heartening, we know that only a small percentage of members participate in them. For this reason, one of my highlights of 2022 was the Board's approval of a new set of strategic priorities. Our two previous strategic plans were focused on our national operations and provided guidance on the development and direction of our national office. Our new strategic priorities seek to use the infrastructure developed under those strategic plans to help our local programs thrive. These priorities are:

1. Local club development
2. Local event development
3. Community development
4. Effective use of volunteers at local level
5. Support for the independent swimmer

A large majority of our members report that their primary reason for joining USMS is to swim with a club. Therefore, a great way to pursue our mission of promoting adult swimming is our first strategic priority of local club development. Relay 2022 with its focus on club development was our initial step towards implementing this priority. This event, rated as very good or excellent by 87% of participants, provided an opportunity for local volunteers to hear about national resources available for club support. Just as important, it served as a venue where volunteers from across the country could hear from their peers on local successes, challenges, problems, solutions, and innovative ideas – all with the goal of supporting our clubs and providing value to our members. Our Board and national office staff were listening to and participating in these conversations. Based on this learning and further investigation, we will soon be introducing programs intended to support the formation of new clubs and the expansion of existing clubs. Many of these programs are meant to be implemented in partnership with our LMSCs who are in the best position to understand local opportunities and constraints. We recognize that no individual program will work everywhere. For this reason, it is important that local leaders report on successes and challenges and that our national organization listens to this

feedback. Over time this communication should help us develop a portfolio of economically viable services, programs, and ideas that can support clubs and LMSCs of all sizes. (Please note, the reference to local clubs above was meant to be generic and include clubs, workout groups, and other collections of USMS members who regularly practice together.)

Local club development is the first new strategic priority on which we have focused. Over the coming years we intend to expand our plans to include all five priorities. It is expected the elements outlined above – large volunteer meeting (Relay), synthesis of learning, development of programs and services, listening to local feedback, and refinement and expansion of programs and services – will be used for the other priorities.

As USMS president, two of my more important responsibilities are to serve as Chair of the USMS Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee is made up of the elected officers and the immediate past president with legal counsel and the CEO serving as ex officio members. Its primary roles are to oversee our standing committees and plan our annual meeting. For approximately the past two years we have adopted a practice of meeting every other month with additional meetings added when necessary. The Board, which meets monthly, is composed of the Executive Committee members and the eight at-large zone directors with the legal counsel and CEO again being ex officio members. The powers of the Board are outlined in our bylaws but most of our time is spent providing direction to the CEO, reviewing and approving budgets, and providing financial oversight including approval of tax filings and audits. During the past few years, we have also embarked on programs to regularly review USMS policies and communicate with local leaders. The current Board reflects the diverse interests of our members. On it we have coaches, noncompetitive swimmers, elite competitors, officials, meet directors, club presidents, LMSC chairs, and past members of almost every USMS committee. Board members represent a broad range of ages, and volunteer and professional experience. They care deeply about USMS, and their only concern is the success of our organization. It has been my honor and privilege to serve with them.

I would like to close by saying a few words about the USMS national office staff. They are knowledgeable, efficient, and highly skilled. They work very hard and are motivated to provide our members with a great experience. USMS is blessed to have its current staff.

**Vice President of Administration**

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**Chris Colburn**

The Administration division consists of four committees (Championship, Legislation, Membership, and Rules). The Vice President of Administration (VPAdmin) is an ex-officio member of these four committees, and also works on any issues that might require the attention or advice of a Board member. The past year has been a busy one for the division's committees. The activities of the committees (and the VPAdmin) are summarized below. You can find more details in the annual reports and meeting minutes for each committee.

The **Championship Committee** (chaired by Jim Clemmons) advises national championship hosts and makes recommendations and decisions that enhance the quality of championship meets for our members; reviews bids and selects the sites for national championship meets; and supports marketing opportunities for U.S. Masters Swimming Corporate Partners. The committee worked this year with National Office staff to coordinate and oversee successful National Championships events in San Antonio and Richmond. The committee also participated in choosing meet hosts and continuing planning for 2023 events in Irvine (Short Course) and Sarasota (Long Course). The committee also began to evaluate bids and potential logistics for the 2024 and 2025 Championships.

The **Legislation Committee** (chaired by Charles Cockrell) has had a busy year. The committee is responsible for the compilation, changes, and updates related to Parts 2, 4, 5, 6, the Glossary, Organizing Principles, and Legislation's area of jurisdiction in Appendix B of the Rule Book. The committee met monthly in the Spring to discuss interpretation requests, as well as received and anticipated legislation proposals in advance of the June 10 submission deadline. During the months of June and July, the committee met frequently to deliberate and vote on the balance of the submitted legislation proposals, as well as to prepare the packet of recommendations submitted to the House of Delegates for the Annual Meeting. This year, the committee undertook some significant work designed to clarify the legislative process and the Annual Meeting, and to define more clearly the powers of the Board and of the House of Delegates.

The **Membership Committee** (chaired by Sue Nutty) deals with items related to membership; registration; and the roles and responsibilities of LMSC Membership Coordinators. This year, the committee recognized the recommendations of a number of task forces over the previous few years, and drafted legislation to disband. The committee worked with the National Office to ensure appropriate communication and mentorship by veterans for newer Membership Coordinators.

The **Rules Committee** (chaired by Mollie Grover) also had another busy year. The committee is responsible for ensuring that the competitive rules in Part 1 of the USMS Rule Book provide for fair and equitable competition in the best interests of all our members. The committee works throughout the year to ensure that USMS members are informed of current rules, interpretations, and rule changes. The committee accepts, considers, and reports proposed amendments to Part 1

## *USMS Executive Committee Reports*

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to the USMS House of Delegates in conjunction with the USMS Annual Meeting. The committee held a Winter organizational conference call followed by a Spring conference call to consider potential and proposed amendments submitted to the Rules Committee in advance of the June 10 submission deadline. The committee met in June and July to consider proposed amendments and prepare the pre-convention delegate packets. While the committee fielded fewer rules proposals this year than in recent years, a few important items came before Rules this year. Those proposals, as well as housekeeping proposals and those related to amendments made by USA Swimming, can be found in this year's Rules Proposals packet.

In addition to acting as a liaison to the Executive Committee for the Administration committees, I continued my service this year as a member of the **Governance Committee** (Jeff Strahota, chair). I also worked on the Board Communication group, who worked together to solicit feedback on important national and local issues from LMSC leaders in each Zone.

**Vice President of Local Operations**

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**Ed Coates**

The Local Operations division consists of four committees (History and Archives; LMSC Development; Recognition and Awards; and Records and Tabulation). The Vice President of Local Operations (VPLO) is an ex-officio member of these four committees. Detail reports from each committee's activities is available in the committee reports section of the annual meeting packet or by reviewing committee meeting minutes posted on [www.usms.com](http://www.usms.com).

**History and Archives committee** (chaired by Frank "Skip" Thompson) met 2 times before the annual meeting to conduct committee business. The committee was given the following goals at the start of the year:

1. Living History – Prepare best practices for LMSCs – Communicate Minimum viable concept idea and best practices by end of the year
2. Prepare remembrance presentation for annual meeting – develop process and procedure
3. Complete historical top ten relay compilation
4. Maintain Olympian list - develop process and procedures
5. Rule Book archives

Status: All projects are ongoing.

**The LMSC Development Committee** (chaired by Dave Brancamp) meets monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month and continues work to provide support and education to LMSCs on effective operations and best practices. The committee was given the following goals at the start of the year:

1. Help develop and support Relay 2022
2. Evaluate effectiveness to month communications efforts (Webinars, Peer to Peer, etc) and develop plan for 2023
3. Update LMSC standards
4. Address West Texas LMSC merger with New Mexico
5. Review volunteer role descriptions (every 2 years)

Status: Items 1-4 will be completed by year-end. Item 5 is an ongoing project. For Item 4, legislation will be presented to HOD to merge West Texas with New Mexico.

**Recognition and Awards** (chaired by Elizabeth Nymeyer) met 4 times before the annual meeting and oversees the national service awards that highlight the outstanding efforts of our members and volunteers. The committee was given the following goals at the start of the year:

1. Pilot Google form for collecting award nominations RJA award this year and then use process to streamline other award nominations
2. Subcommittee to evaluate all USMS awards currently in place and recommend if should continue
3. Inventory actual awards and coordinate purchases through the National
4. Present Peer to Peer webinar on what makes a good award nomination (May)
5. Develop recommendations for revised Ransom J Arthur award presentation
6. Rule book change – in the committee description, revise the requirement that requires committee membership to include 4 RJA members

Status: Items 1,4,6 have been completed. For item 6, the proposed legislation to revise the committee description will reduce the required RJA winners on the committee from 4 to 2. All other items are in progress, and most will be completed by the end of the year.

**Records and Tabulation** (chaired by MJ Caswell) met 1 time prior to the annual meeting and administers the compilation of Top Ten, All-American, All-stars lists and USMS Records, as well as maintain the list of measured/certified competition courses in coordination with the National Swims Administrator. The committee was given the following goal at the start of the year:

1. Consider a rule book change to remove all references to top ten administration and move to a Board/Committee procedure

Status – The committee met and discussed this concept and declined to pursue a rule book change.

In addition to supporting these committees and participating in Board activities, I am an active member of the Governance Committee. I teamed up with Mel Goldstein as part of the LMSC Communications group communications group that reached out to LMSCs to share information and get feedback on the USMS revised strategic goals. Mel and I met with the Colonies Zone LMSCs. I also presented at the opening session of Relay 2022 on the topic of Leading your LMSC, with a focus on how LMSCs can support local clubs and events.

**Vice President of Programs**

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**Robin Smith**

The Programs division consists of two committees (Long Distance and Officials). The Long Distance Committee also includes the functions and duties that were transferred from the discontinued Open Water Committee in 2021.

The Vice President of Programs is the EC liaison for, and serves as an ex-officio member of, the Long Distance and Officials committees. In addition to supporting these committees, attending their meetings, and participating in Board activities, I also attended the Volunteer Development Relay Meeting in March, and co-facilitated the Breadbasket Zone discussion session following the USMS Vision for the Future presentation in June.

The Long Distance and Officials committees have a continuous work cycle, and meet on a regular basis throughout the year, preparing for pool meets and open water events including championships. Detailed reports from each committee are available in the Annual Meeting packet and in the committee meeting minutes posted on the USMS website.

Key highlights of each committee's work for this year are summarized below.

**The Long Distance Committee** (chaired by Phyllis Quinn) is responsible for the oversight of the rules and administration of open water and long distance events, and for promoting the development of, and participation in, open water swimming. The committee works in a coordinating and advisory capacity with event hosts and makes recommendations to enhance the quality of long distance championship events. And the committee is also responsible for assuring that the competitive rules in Part 3 of the USMS rules and regulations provide for fair and equitable competition in the best interests of all USMS members.

The main priority for 2022 was to revise the process for the Virtual Championship Events (formerly ePostal National Championships) in preparation for transferring the host duties to the National Office in 2023. The committee continues to give feedback to the National Office regarding the delineation of roles and responsibilities. The goal is to maintain the integrity of the events and provide a fair and fun experience for all participants. Long Distance Rules (Part 3) proposals regarding these changes will be presented once the processes and procedures have been finalized.

There have been challenges with several of the 2022 Open Water National Championships this summer – mostly related to extreme weather conditions and water quality issues affecting the race venues. The Long Distance Committee liaisons have continued ongoing communications with the event directors and the National Office to provide advice and support throughout the decision-making process.

## *USMS Executive Committee Reports*

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The committee continues to evaluate current and emerging technology including smart watches, smart goggles, tempo trainers, and other devices as to whether the device assists swimmers with speed, pace, or navigation in violation of current USMS Rules. USA Swimming Open Water rules and USA Triathlon rules regarding unauthorized assistance, unauthorized equipment, and unauthorized accessories during sanctioned events are being reviewed as part of their evaluation. Recommendations for USMS events will be forthcoming.

**The Officials Committee** (chaired by Teri White) is responsible for conducting training, education, and certification programs to ensure that the competitive program offered to USMS members is conducted with the highest standard of professional officiating and in full conformance with USMS rules and regulations.

The committee has continued to promote and facilitate USMS Certification activities for swimming officials. There are currently 346 USMS certified officials. This includes 185 Starters and 70 Referees. This is an increase of 77 officials from last year with 38 new Starters and 13 new Referees. A plan to support certification and recertification activities using online technology is in process.

Both 2022 USMS National Championship pool meets were well-supported by the committee members. Several were assigned to key roles (Head Starter, Meet Referee, Admin Referee) at both meets. In addition, there was a record number of USMS certified officials who worked at these events. This included 85% of the officials at Spring Nationals (San Antonio) and 87% of the officials at Summer Nationals (Richmond).

The committee continues to develop training presentations for LMSC use. There are future plans to develop certification testing and training materials for the USMS Administrative Official role.

Please plan to join these two committees at their meeting sessions scheduled in conjunction with this year's Annual Meeting.



**Vice President of Community Services**

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**Chris Campbell**

The four USMS Community Services Committees have had a busy year since the 2021 Annual Meeting. Their activities and plans forward are summarized below. More specific details can be gleaned from the Annual Reports from each specific Committee.

**Coaches Committee**

*Kenny Brisbin, Chair; Chris McPherson, Vice Chair*

*Scott Bay, Donita Flecker, Michael Hamm, Terry Heggy, Molly Hoover, Laurie Hug,*

*Susan Ingraham, Wilson Josephson, Carol Nip, Elise Shank, Trey Taylor, Tim Waud,*

*Sports Medicine and Science Liaison: Aaron Schneider*

*Ex-Officio: Bill Brenner, Steve Hall*

The Coaches Committee meets monthly and continues to provide educational opportunities, guidance and assistance for swimmers and coaches through their work with the National Office, LMSC Coaches Chairs, articles, On-Line Coaching and Mentoring Program.

Activities and projects since the 2021 Annual Meeting include:

1. Hosting web workouts online.
2. Defining the role of and selecting a Coach to lead the USMS contingent at the 2022 UANA Pan American Masters Championships in Medellin, Colombia. Lina Bot has been selected to head the Team.
3. Developing and scheduling a National Coaches Clinic, to be held in October in Las Vegas.
4. Continuing and revitalizing Coaches Certification training. Online Level 1 classes have been held every month, with over 180 coaches completing this training thus far in 2022. In person Level 2 and Level 3 courses are resuming around the country. Candidates for Level 4 Coaches Certification have submitted their portfolios. These packages are being evaluated, and those Coaches achieving Level 4 Certification will be announced at the Annual Meeting.
5. Evaluating and conferring Coaches Awards. Candidates for the Kerry O'Brien Coaching Awards and the USMS Coach of the Year Award are being evaluated. The recipients will be announced at the Annual Meeting.
6. Continuing and improving LMSC Communications. While monthly emails continue to go out to the various LMSC Coaches Chairs, there is no universal or consistent way to communicate directly with all coaches in the LMSCs. This issue remains a significant stumbling block in the communication process.

7. Revitalizing the Coaches Mentoring Program. Initiated in 2019, the Program was put on hold during 2020, but restarted in 2021. Four mentor coaches were selected, and five mentee coaches were able to travel and meet with the mentors during the latter half of the year. This year, it is hoped to have mentor-mentee relationships finalized and announced by the end of November.
8. Continuing on-deck coaching at USMS National Championships. Using the SignUpGenius application, USMS Coaches continue to be a well-received presence on deck at Nationals.
9. Establishing and improving monthly Peer to Peer calls. Hosted the third Thursday of every month, these calls cover a wide variety of topics. Attendance, however, continues to wane as the year progresses, and the Committee is examining ways to counter this trend.
10. Continuing to seek out and publish relevant content for swimmers and Coaches on a regular basis.
11. Liaising with other Committees. Members of this Committee continue to be seated on and work with other USMS Committees (including Open Water, ALTS, Sports Medicine and Science, and Diversity and Inclusion, acting as conduits for information, facilitating collaborative working relationships.

The Coaches Committee will continue to work closely with other Committees and National Leadership to enhance their service and outreach to USMS Members and Coaches, while aligning to National Strategic Directions.

### **Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

*Jeff Commings, Chair; Ally Sega, Vice Chair*

*Conner Bailey, Rook Campbell, Virgil Chancy, Megan Johnston, Leo Letendre, Tom*

*Moore, Leann Rossi, Vicki Shu, Diana Triana, Sarah Welch*

*Ex-Officio: Daniel Paulling*

*Coaches Committee Liaison: Wilson Josephson*

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which meets monthly, helps to create a culture of inclusion and opportunity in USMS for people of diverse backgrounds by finding and developing resources, and sharing them with coaches, LMSCs, and local volunteers. The Committee created webinars and documents designed to help local clubs and LMSCs foster their own diversity and inclusion plans. One of the Committee's major projects was the introduction of the LMSC Diversity and Inclusion Chair/Coordinator position and helping LMSCs develop that role.

Activities and projects since the 2021 Annual Meeting:

1. Building upon discussions with National Leadership, LMSCs and within the Committee, the creation of an LMSC D&I Chair has been promoted to assist LMSCs understand the need for such a position, even if the LMSC feels that such a position is not needed. Prior to this year, three LMSCs (Southern Pacific, Connecticut and Minnesota) had D&I Coordinator/Committee roles in place. The leaders of these efforts are all members of the D&I Committee, so it was easier to define the LMSC role. In 2022, three more LMSCs (Pacific, Georgia and South Dakota) have established these positions, and several other LMSCs are on that path.
2. Following the development of a concept from previous years, the D&I Committee has formalized and created a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award, which recognizes grassroots level contributions and efforts of individuals and organizations championing the cause of enhancing and developing appreciation of diversity, equity and inclusivity within USMS at various levels. The 2022 recipients of this Award will be announced at the Annual Meeting.
3. The Committee has brought forth three legislative proposals for House vote at the Annual Meeting. Two concern enhancing/formalizing the ability of a Local Sanctions Chair to withhold or withdraw a USMS sanction/recognition from an event, should the host be in violation of the USMS Code of Conduct and not adhere to the USMS participation and equal opportunity guidelines, or if the mission, vision and goals of the host organization are in conflict with the USMS organizing principles. The third proposal is to add “Gender Expression” to the USMS Equal Opportunity clause in Article 501.3 in the USMS Rulebook.
4. Following the participation of Lia Thomas in the 2022 Women’s NCAA Championships, the USMS Rules Committee created a policy regarding the participation of Transgender Female athletes. Upon review and consultation with the USMS President and CEO, the possibility of reshaping this policy to align better with the USMS goals of inclusivity and fairness is under examination. An initial task force, comprise of D&I members, was convened. The recent release of updated FINA rules regarding participation of trans athletes has added another nuance to the discussion but did not change the vision of the task force. Preliminary findings were presented to the President at the end of June, with an eye on expansion of the task force to include members from other Committees, and to establish more formal guidance on the task force’s scope of work.
5. Three webinars were presented in 2022. In January, the Committee followed up their year-long series on how LMSCs can enhance inclusivity and ingrain it in their culture. In March, the peer-to-peer webinar focused on the scope and purpose of a local D&I Chair. In July, the webinar focused on the creation of an inclusive culture and environment.

6. The Best Practices subcommittee continues to expand its role in creating and maintaining the culture and environment of inclusivity within USMS through the research into and harvesting of best practices.

The D&I Committee will continue to work closely with National Leadership on matters of diversity, equity and inclusivity, helping to enhance alignment with USMS's stated goals of inclusivity and fairness.

### **Sports Medicine and Science Committee**

*Christopher Rieder, Chair; Arlette Godges, Vice Chair*

*Jim Miller, Jessica Seaton, Nicola Cole, Aaron Schneider*

*Liaison to Coaches Committee: Aaron Schneider*

*Ex Officio: Daniel Paulling*

The Committee's purpose is to create and enhance membership value through expanded sports medicine and science based USMS products, services, and their delivery. The Sports Medicine and Science Committee educates members and the public on topics of swimming related sports medicine and science. The Committee stimulates and encourages research pertaining to Masters Swimming.

#### Projects and activities since the 2021 Annual Meeting:

1. The Committee suggested focus on Coordination with the Coaches Committee to promote the values of aerobic fitness in our unique environment (water) that trains upper and lower body without impact. Articles promoting the cardio benefits, muscle development, psychological benefits (serotonin production), endurance and strength are being pursued. Additional topics include developing a list of specific and relevant strengthening and flexibility exercises for the USMS population, with an eye towards advancing ages.
2. Additional/requests for further information, relayed to the Committee from the Coaches Committee, concern the continued connection to relevant topics connected to the Coaching Committee. One such requested topic concerns the effect of the use of cannabis-based products, such as Cannabidiol. This involves literature review about Cannabidiol usage as part of Litigation proposals

3. Further discussion concerned items and methodologies that will help with the continued increase in motivating in swimmer enrollment, as well as discussion about the health benefits of USMS+ membership.
4. The Committee also examined Covid 19 protocols for competition, aimed at creating proposals/directives to be submitted to the BOD for either adoption or advice.
5. The Committee also examined relevant publications in major news organs (e.g., The New York Times), with an eye towards opportunities to craft similar products using USMS in-house expertise.
6. Lastly, and most importantly, the Committee examined its scope of work and how best to convey the information generated/discovered via USMS membership. The collective knowledge and experience of the members of the Committee, and those members within USMS with whom they liaise is vast and impressive.

Notably, the single largest and most important accomplishment of this Committee during 2021 was the establishment of a pool of medical and scientific expertise from within USMS membership to serve as reviewers and generators of content. However, whether or not a standing committee was the best way to manage and leverage this expertise was questioned. After lengthy discussion, the Committee determined that this scope of work could be better and more efficiently accomplished via ad hoc task forces and dedicated individual contributors than by a standing Committee. As a result, a legislative proposal to disband the Sports Medicine and Science Committee as a standing entity has been submitted and will be brought before the House of Delegates at the 2022 Annual Meeting for vote. The text of this proposal is attached below:

*To: USMS Legislation Committee*

*From: USMS Sports Medicine and Science Committee*

*Re: Legislation Proposal for the 2022 Annual Meeting*

*Date: April 22, 2022*

*The Sports Medicine and Science Committee proposes the following legislation change to be reviewed by the Legislation Committee and presented to the USMS House of Delegates at the 2022 Annual Meeting:*

*Rationale: We recommend the deletion of Rule 507.1.14, and the dissolution of this National Committee. The existing functionality is recommended to continue thru ad-hoc, single-issue-based task forces and individual volunteer contributors working directly with the National Office Staff, the Board of Directors, and other standing National Committees. The Committee recommends maintaining two volunteers to filter information and to assign appropriate individuals from our large and established*

*advisory panel, comprised of specialized and medically educated USMS Members, to serve on an ad-hoc bases, in keeping with their areas of specialization. This will allow these experts to continue to author and review information flowing from the National Office to the membership as needed. The Sports Medicine and Science committee will provide information and referral to those Committee coordinators to enhance the value of information and experience to the USMS Membership.*

*Several task forces over the past 5+ years have analyzed the effectiveness of the traditional structure of USMS, and their conclusions are the basis for the new strategic re-organization of our organization's structure. Disbanding committees that serve on a spectrum in the organization, while retaining and more effectively reassigning their functionalities is a critical element of this plan. The Sports Medicine and Science Committee and its members concur with these conclusions. This Committee supports the new strategic direction of centralizing tasks, and of being more specific and targeted with our talent in the volunteer base in order to support USMS Membership, and to add value to our Organization as a brand.*

### **Fitness Education Committee**

*Emily Cook, Chair; Ann Marshfield, Vice-Chair*

*Mary Jurey, Lisa Watson, Andy Seibt, Ken Winterberger; Anita Cole*

*Ex Officio: Onshalee Promchitmart, Jay Eckert*

The Fitness Education Committee promotes the fitness, health, and lifestyle benefits of Masters Swimming. The Committee may also offer programs to members for this purpose.

#### Discussions & Projects Since 2021 Annual Meeting:

1. Developing Incentive for Fitness Challenge(s)
  - a. Based on the success of an incentive/prize offered within the NELMSC years ago for registration for the Winter Fitness Challenge, the Fitness Committee thinks offering a similar incentive/prize at the national level will be conducive to increasing participation in Fitness Challenge(s), enhancing experience of Fitness Challenge(s), and strengthening our membership at the local level.
2. How to improve engagement of “fitness swimmers”
  - a. Many discussions were had on improving engagement of “fitness swimmers.” Creating/providing opportunities for varied, fun events was a common thread. Engaging Senior Game participants who are not USMS members was made a point.
3. Creating other events/programs (relays, challenges, etc.)

- a. Often in connection with the query of how to improve engagement of “fitness swimmers,” many ideas for new events/programs were discussed. Ideas included but were not limited to: photo challenges, fun relays, distance swims, and Gold Club hosted/focused events.
4. Continuation of committee in current structure
    - a. No legislative proposals to disband this Committee have been submitted for action in 2022.

It has been recommended multiple times over the past four years that the Fitness Education Committee be disbanded, and its scope of work restructured to coverage by ad hoc task forces and individual contributors. The Committee believes that significant scope of work still exists and needs to be pursued prior to any discussion of disbandment. The Committee plans to develop and implement the Fitness Challenge(s) Incentive, then evaluate how the Committee would best serve the USMS membership and National Office going forward.

**Action Items for the coming year:**

1. Draft & submit plan to Incentivize Fitness Challenge(s) at the national level.
2. Compile short bios of prior Fitness Award Winners for USMS website in support of the Awards and Recognition Committee.
3. Better communicate about the Fitness Education Award so that nominations are received. None were received in 2022.
4. Increase number of Fitness Committee members to 10 to help accomplish envisioned scope of work in the coming year.

**Additional Comments:**

1. In my Summer Report to the Board of Directors, I noted that during the Board’s USMS Strategic Update discussions with Zone Leadership, a concern about undervaluing the expertise and contributions of veteran member contributors was voiced. Although this was specifically noted during our meeting with the leadership of the Northwest Zone, these same sentiments have been expressed to me several times before by several members of the various Committees with whom I liaise. Regardless of whether or not these comments are based in truth, the perceived feeling is real, and that is a major concern for me. I feel that it is vital to the health of USMS and to the progress of the updated Strategic Vision that these perceptions and concerns be addressed. As an organization, our Leadership and membership, both new and veteran, need to be united in our approaches and goals for the future of USMS.

2. Despite several recommendations to do so over the past four years, no legislative proposal to disband Fitness Education as a standing Committee and to restructure its scope of work to other means has been brought forth this year. The Committee believes that it can make valuable contributions to USMS over the coming year. Specifically, they would like to find ways to bolster participation in USMS Fitness events, whether through better marketing or incentivizing the events.
  - It should also be noted that there seems to be a level of confusion between competitive and “fitness” aspects of the Fitness events. It has been pointed out by members of several Committees that all USMS members are Fitness Swimmers. The differentiation should instead be between Competitive and Non-Competitive Swimmers. This lack of clarity seems to muddle the purpose of the various Fitness events, with some clubs encouraging the more competitive aspects of the events, rather than the participation aspects of the events, per the stated purposes of the National Office oversight. The Committee feels that it can help to clarify this.
  - In addition, a non-integrated approach to scheduling the various Postal Events, be they locally or nationally sponsored, appears to pit events against each other, diminishing participation at all levels. The Committee aims to pursue a more integrated approach to scheduling and marketing of such events, including clear labeling of events as competitive or non-competitive, perhaps offering both classes in each event.

Any questions or comments regarding this report may be made to the USMS Vice President of Community Services.



**Treasurer**

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**Teddy Decker**

As you are all aware the last few years have been volatile from many different perspectives. The National Office (NO) staff and Board of Directors (BOD) have worked closely with the Finance (FC) and Investment Committees (IC) to ensure that USMS continues to operate in a fiscally responsible manner. In late 2021 and the first half of 2022 we also have the added volatility of increasing inflation coupled with a downturn in the investment markets.

Despite these difficulties, we are beginning to see a light at the end of the tunnel with regards to the pandemic and pool closures. Most clubs are operational again, if not at full capacity, and we are seeing our membership numbers beginning to climb back toward pre-pandemic numbers.

The IC has been working closely with our investment advisors (Northern Trust) to make sure we will have the additional cash that is needed to cover our operating expenses, while preserving as much of our investment value as possible.

The FC has also been working closely with the NO and BOD to prepare a budget for 2023 and looking into the future of USMS to make sure that we can continue to be the premier resource for adult swimming in the world.

In addition to the other worldwide and financial issues, we received word in late 2021 that our wonderful CFO, Susan Kuhlman, decided to retire after her 12 year tenure with USMS. Susan officially retired at the end of June 2022. We will miss Susan greatly, but are excited for her next journey in life and wish her all the best. We would now like to introduce Gary Keener, who will be a great addition to the NO as our new controller. Gary comes to us with many years of experience in not-for-profit accounting and has been training with Susan for the last few months. He is picking up our nuances quickly and bringing some new perspectives as well.

**Secretary**

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**Carrie Stolar**

This was my first year serving the Board of Directors as Secretary. I am inspired by the dedication and resilience of our volunteers as we emerge out of COVID shutdowns as well as by the efforts of our National Office. I want to thank the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and the National Office staff for their support and guidance this year. Thank you to all the delegates, coaches, volunteers, and contributors at the local and national levels for making this organization successful. My activities for the past year included taking the minutes for all the Executive Committee and Board of Directors Zoom calls, our in-person meeting at Relay 2022, and our virtual Summer BOD meeting. After the distribution of minutes and their subsequent approval, I post them to the USMS website. I want to thank my predecessor, Greg Danner, for helping me get up to speed in this role. I appreciate that I can record the Zoom calls so that I can revisit the calls as I take the minutes to ensure that they are as accurate as possible. Additionally, I worked with committee chairs and zone leaders to post their meeting minutes to the website. I look forward to connecting with members, both in person and on Zoom, during the second year of my term. I will continue to serve to the best of my ability. Together, we will continue to move USMS forward.

**Legal Counsel**

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**Maria Elias**

The last few years have been incredibly stressful on this organization. We have addressed some extraordinary challenges and have adapted in so many ways. We have had to be resourceful in our ideas and our practices across the board.

I continue to be most impressed by the dedication of staff and volunteers who explore all aspects of issues within their given task. We pro-actively address and try to balance the rights and needs of all members, seeking input from our entire swim community.

We are evolving as an organization. And with growth, often comes more challenges.

We continue to build upon the guidelines to minimize any potential threats to our tax-exempt status. I have frequent telephone conferences with staff, Board members and other volunteers, as well as occasional outside counsel, to keep issues that arise at low risk. I have reviewed numerous contracts and policies during this past year. USMS has not been named in any lawsuit and we maintain continual contact with our liability provider for advice and direction to deter such.