

# Crystie McGrail - Candidate for Vice President of Local Operations



The Election Committee has deemed that Crystie McGrail is a member in good standing of USMS. The candidate has indicated she is planning to attend the USMS National HOD Meeting for this election year and, if elected, is planning to attend all HOD Meetings during her tenure in office.

The candidate was nominated and recommended by *Guy Davis* and received a letter of recommendation from *Jeff Strahota* in accordance with the USMS Election Operating Guidelines.

The candidate provided the following responses on the Candidate Questionnaire/Consent-to-Run Form:

## Section Two: Candidate Qualifications

- I am a member in good standing of USMS in this election year:*                    **X** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- I am planning to attend the HOD Meeting for this election year:*                    **X** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- I am planning to attend all HOD Meetings during my tenure in office:*                    **X** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- I have attended 1 or more HOD Meetings in the past five years?*                    **X** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

***Please list the USMS National HOD Meetings you have attended, including the dates of attendance:***

2017-TX, 2018-FL, 2019-St Louis, 2020-virtual, 2021-virtual, 2022-Denver

## Section Three: Questions

***Why are you interested in this position and why do you believe you would be a good candidate?***

I am interested in the VPLO position as an opportunity to expand my service to USMS utilizing everything I have learned and experienced over the past 10 years. My goal in this position is to listen to the needs of each of the committees I would oversee and advocate for them so they and the board can work together to effectively steward USMS into the future.

Identifying gaps in necessary resources, connecting people to solutions, and having a measurable impact are qualities that I have shown throughout my volunteer history with USMS. I am organized, diligent, and will consider multiple situations and outcomes when making decisions. I have worked with many amazing USMS volunteers over the years, and I hope to emulate their best attributes in this role.

***What do you consider to be the major issues facing USMS now and in the future? As a person holding an elected position within USMS, how would you address these issues?***

I see three primary areas of focus for USMS:

1. Supporting our coaches, volunteers, and members in effective and innovative ways is something that I think USMS should continually strive to improve.
2. Continuing our post-pandemic efforts to recover events and programs.
3. Communication. Because USMS is a diffuse organization, each of us can get caught up in our own perspective. But I believe that we can improve this by listening and fostering more constructive conversations between all levels of the organization: national, regional, and local.

I have been fortunate to participate in and help plan the Volunteer Relay, where volunteers across the country come together and learn about and from each other. I strongly believe that one way we can best support USMS's mission moving forward is by continuing to leverage Relay to educate, motivate, and unify our volunteers.

The focus of our 2023 Volunteer Relay in October is Events. It is our hope that learning how others host and grow different events to engage current and prospective Masters swimmers will be both beneficial and impactful.

If I am elected, one of my goals will be to make sure that Relay and other similar initiatives are meeting our volunteers' and members' needs.

If I am elected, I will listen, learn, and strive to ensure that, when developing programs and policies, the board and national committees hear and represent the voices of all USMS members and volunteers.

If I am elected, I will advocate for clear, transparent communications that provide all members with the information they need to understand USMS governance decisions and operational changes.

***Please list USMS committees on which you have served. Include the dates you were on the committees and the names of the committee chairs under whom you served:***

2022 to Present – Governance Committee Member (Jeff Strahota, Paige Buhler)

2022 to Present – LMSC Development Committee Vice Chair (Dave Brancamp)

2019 to 2021 – LMSC Development Committee Member (Michael Moore, Lisa Brown, Maddie Sibilia)

2016 to 2018 – USMS Coaches Committee Member (Bob Jennings)

***Please list any other experience that relates to your qualifications for the position.***

LMSC Positions:

- 2021 to 2022 – New England LMSC Immediate Past Board Chair
- 2019 to 2021 – New England LMSC Board Chair
- 2014 to 2019 – New England LMSC Coaches Chair. Created a series of local clinics for coaches and swimmers and scholarships for coach education.

- 2013 – New England LMSC Asst. Webmaster

Coaching Positions:

- 2010 to 2022 – Head Coach & Club Manager, Great Bay Masters Swimming, Inc. (GBM), Dover, N.H.
- 2018 – Started GBM’s annual “April is Adult Learn to Swim Month” program at the Dover pool, expanded to the Portsmouth pool

Meet Director Roles:

- 2022 – Portsmouth Mini Meet, Portsmouth, N.H. (30 participants)
- 2011 to 2022 – Jenny Thompson LCM Mini Meet, Dover, N.H. (80-100 participants)
- 2012 to 2020 – Exeter SCM Mini Meet, Exeter, N.H. (90-100 participants)
- 2010 to 2015 – New England LMSC SCM Championship Meet, Boston, Mass. (3 days, 400+ swimmers)

Other Assignments & Honors:

- 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 – USMS National Coaches Clinic Attendee
- 2019 – USMS Dorothy Donnelly Service Award
- 2019 – New England LMSC Contributor of the Year Award
- 2018 – USMS Convention Task Force
- 2014 – New England LMSC Coach of The Year Award

Professional Experience:

Fitness industry and administrative, program management, and leadership training experience for nonprofit organizations.

***Please list any other information you would like included.***

In early 2023, I moved from New Hampshire to Colorado, where I started a new job and am gradually meeting new people and learning about the local Masters Swimming scene. Now that I have transitioned my prior club and LMSC obligations, I look forward to pivoting my energies to an expanded leadership role at the national level.

***Please write a short summary statement that will be posted on the display board with your photograph at the HOD Meeting***

I am running for Vice President of Local Operations because I believe my 10+ years of experience running USMS events, coaching Masters swimmers, and serving in volunteer roles at the LMSC and national levels has prepared me to be a well-rounded leader and VPLO candidate. I have gained an in-depth understanding of what goes into creating, building, and sustaining local program operations through firsthand experience, including successfully leading my club through the pandemic. I have worked with amazing volunteers on various committees, projects, and events, who I hope to continue supporting on the USMS board. My goal as VPLO will be to listen, learn, and think and act holistically in the best interests of all USMS volunteers and members.

**FROM:** Guy Davis  
**TO:** USMS Elections Committee  
**DATE:** March 26, 2023  
**RE:** Letter of Nomination and Recommendation for USMS Vice President of Local Operations Candidate, Crystie McGrail, Colorado LMSC

It is my great honor to nominate and recommend Crystie McGrail as a candidate for USMS Vice President of Local Operations.

I have worked with Crystie for over a decade in the governance and leadership of Great Bay Masters Swimming Club and the New England LMSC. Her record of service to Masters Swimming at the local, regional, and national levels speaks for itself, as do the special qualities that distinguish her contributions.

Crystie became involved in Masters Swimming shortly after college. She quickly assumed multiple responsibilities within our club as coach, team manager, and meet director, including running an annual 500-swimmer NELMSC championship. Our club thrived under her leadership. She then assumed key LMSC responsibilities, serving as Webmaster, Communications Chair, Coaches Chair, Board Chair, and mentor.

More recently, Crystie has contributed her expertise and experience in national roles, including the Convention Task Force, Coaches Committee, Governance Committee, and as the Vice Chair of the LMSC Development Committee. This breadth of service is remarkable, particularly for a younger USMS member.

Crystie is a quick learner and is very effective working in teams and getting the best from others. She continually invests in her professional, managerial, and coaching skills, and her peers inside and outside the swimming world commend her as "rock solid" her "ability to juggle multiple projects with quiet efficiency." In every role at every level, she brings focus, pragmatism, strong communication and organizational skills, and deep understanding of USMS and its members' needs.

Perhaps what I admire most is Crystie's innate ability to inspire enthusiasm and participation. On the pool deck and in the water she is a dedicated, much-appreciated teammate, coach, and role model who is equally effective in motivating and guiding seasoned competitors and newbies alike.

Crystie's knowledge of Masters Swimming governance, club development, and meet management and her understanding of USMS's strategic goals are excellent qualifications for the VP of Local Operations. I recommend her candidacy to you with my highest endorsement.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Guy Davis  
Chair, USMS Finance Committee  
Vice Chair, New England LMSC  
Member, Great Bay Masters Swimming, Inc.





**U.S. MASTERS  
SWIMMING**

## Letter of

Nomination \* \_\_\_\_\_  
Recommendation\*\*     X      
Both/Combo\*\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

**From:** Jeff Strahota

**Date:** 3 April 2023

**Subject Line:** Letter of Recommendation for Crystie McGrail - VPLO

**To:** The Elections Committee

It is my pleasure to recommend Crystie for the position of Vice President of Local Operations for U.S. Masters Swimming.

Crystie and I first came in contact in the early 2010s through our roles as meet directors of large regional meets, both sharing the vision of having successful events at amazing facilities with our swim communities. What started as more of a marketing and operations best practice sharing relationship continued to grow and broaden to USMS as a whole as she began national-level service in the latter half of the last decade, as she joined the Coaches Committee, then LMSC Development Committee, on concurrent task forces in 2018, and then as we served together on the Governance Committee in 2022.

Throughout this time, her vision and ideas for the committees and USMS have been gold star. It seemed that every convention, we'd spend an hour chatting about something – breaking down an idea and rebuilding with a stronger foundation once we were done.

While I was Chair/Vice Chair of the Governance Committee, and into the pandemic when we couldn't have convention conversations, I could count on a phone call from Crystie every few months to discuss something – and again, an hour or so later, we (and USMS) were both better off. During our Unified Fee discussions, after spending an hour with the New England LMSC, Crystie took me up on my offer to call with additional questions and concerns, and addressing her points was key into getting LMSC buy-in from New England and ultimately getting the legislation passed.

USMS will benefit greatly from someone like Crystie in this position. She is an amazing leader and someone who is willing to listen, eager to make improvements, always with the organization's best interests in mind.

I look forward to the results of her leadership both on the Board and with the VPLO committees.

Thanks,

Jeff Strahota, Potomac Valley LMSC Secretary