



U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING

Board of Directors Candidate Application Form

Date Submitted

Monday, May 27, 2024

Section 1: Candidate Information

Board Position Title

At-Large Director-Southeast Zone

Candidate Name (as on USMS registration)

Erika Braun

LinkedIn Profile URL

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/erikabraun/>

Preferred Name

Erika

Preferred Pronouns

She/Her/Hers

Profile Photo Upload



Erika Braun.jpg

Section 2: Qualification Questions

I am a current USMS member in good standing in this election year.

Yes

I have attended one or more annual meetings in the past five years.

Yes

USMS annual meetings attended in the last 5 years

Year Attended
2023
2022
2021

I plan to attend the Annual Meeting this year.

Yes

I plan to attend all Annual Meetings, Board of Director meetings, and other assigned meetings during my tenure.

Yes

I have the technological capability to fully participate in USMS videoconference meetings.

Yes

For at-large director positions: I am a member of an LMSC within my zone of candidacy.

Yes

Section 3: Nomination and Recommendations

First Nominator and Recommender

Recommender 1: Name

Britta O'Leary

Second Recommender

Recommender 2: Name

Mark Rubacky

Recommender 2 LMSC or N/A

North Carolina

Recommender 1 LMSC

Georgia

Section 4: USMS Background

USMS Permanent Member Number 023KN

USMS Profile URL <https://www.usms.org/people/023KN>

Current LMSC North Carolina

Years as a USMS Member 21

Service at the LMSC Level

How many years have you served your LMSC? 6-10

LMSC Service History

LMSC Position/Committee	Length of Service (Years)
President, Vice President, Board Member, Raleigh Area Masters Swimming	8

Service at the Zone Level

How many years have you served at the Zone level? 0

Service at the National Level

How many years have you served at the National level? 10+

National Service History

National Position/Committee	Length of Service (Years)
Chair, Vice Chair, Committee Member, USMS Comp & Benefits Committee	10

Section 5: General Questions for all Candidates

Please state why you are interested in serving on the USMS Board of Directors.

As a non-profit organization, I understand that volunteers are critical to supplementing the expertise of USMS's small but mighty staff to ensure its success. During my tenure as chair of the compensation and benefits committee, I worked closely with the CEO and interacted with the BOD. This gave me the opportunity to understand governance processes and strategic initiatives necessary to maintain a healthy organization.

While serving as president of Raleigh Area Masters as part of North Carolina Masters Swimming, I led the effort to create our vision, mission and core objectives to drive a positive culture aligned with USMS, which may be accessed here: <https://swimram.org/index.php/core-objectives>. Our team regularly gives back to the community through volunteering at intracity swim meets to help promote and grow the sport. I would enjoy the opportunity to provide my expertise at the national level to support the organization on a larger scale.

Throughout my career, I worked in leadership capacities in human resources including being a part of strategic planning, SWOT analysis, and developing organizational goals. I currently work as Sr Manager Compensation with DLA Piper LLP global law firm. I also currently serve as chair of the NC Swimming Hall of Fame committee and board member for the 2029 World University Games.

Based on my professional, nonprofit and swimming experience, I feel I can add tremendous value to the USMS Board of Directors.

What does USMS's mission mean to you? Please share a personal story.

USMS's mission to "empower adults to improve their lives through swimming" truly resonates with me personally. Swimming not only provides me with health and fitness benefits, but is also my stress outlet, social connection with amazing friends, and provides incredible opportunities to fuel my competitive drive.

After walking away from the sport at age 20 while swimming with The University of Georgia, I did not envision ever returning to the sport after college. Fast forward 11 years, a friend recommended participating

in a triathlon. I knew I needed to get back in swim shape in order to do a triathlon. I sought out our local Masters swim team and immediately fell back in love with the sport. In less than two months, I competed in my first Masters meet and never looked back. I never did compete in that triathlon but was motivated to compete with several USMS meets each year and work hard toward improving my times. I became even more inspired when my times as a Masters swimmer became faster than as a teenager and college swimming.

In 2012, I set my goal on qualifying for the Olympic Trials in the 50 free, which I had done so 24 years earlier at age 16. With the support of my coaches, trainer, husband, employer and teammates, I hit the time standard and returned to compete at Trials as a 40-year-old. I would have never experienced this journey without first joining USMS.

What do you consider to be USMS's greatest opportunities for the next 2 to 4 years? How would you advocate for these opportunities on the national board level?

USMS's greatest opportunity is to continue to focus on finding new ways to grow our membership and expand our sport to attract a wider range of members. With the Olympic Games in Paris this summer and then with the U.S. being the host country in Los Angeles in 2028, we can capitalize on the attention that our sport will receive during this time.

USMS does an excellent job with outreach to our current members; however, there is an opportunity to expand this further to reach new audiences. Grassroots marketing but also expansion of what USMS benefits provide adults could help grow our base further. This effort may need a commitment to adding additional marketing professionals to staff for increased exposure.

Another challenge I see is availability of pools and competition opportunities in certain parts of the country that may limit participation. Partnership efforts with public and private sectors could incentivize more pool availability with combining learn to swim programs for youth as a future pipeline for Masters swimmers.

Section 6: Position-Specific Questions

What makes you a good candidate for a USMS at-large director? What skills, experiences, and attributes do you have that will contribute to the success of USMS?

One of the reasons I feel I am a strong candidate for the USMS BOD is that I am passionate about the organization and a positive ambassador for our sport. I feel its imperative to give back and be directly involved to help make a difference in driving the long-term viability of USMS. It certainly takes a village to make a strong organization thrive and I have a talent of bringing others together to also contribute their talents for the greater good.

In addition, my analytical and strategic thinking skills will be beneficial to offer a different perspective and innovative thought process to the table. My experience with strategic planning in the corporate setting can be useful for setting goals, objectives and a drive for results. My focus would be on finding positive outcomes and solutions that would benefit the greatest amount of our members now and in the future.

Describe a situation where you had to balance your own perspective with input from individuals representing various viewpoints, and how you ensured that all perspectives were considered.

The most beneficial situations I've been part of in group sessions is when there has been diversity of thought present to consider multiple perspectives. When differing opinions exist, I've had success with whiteboarding the pros and cons of each scenario. Each individual proposing a different recommendation has an opportunity to present both positives and negatives. The group has an opportunity to provide input or ask questions before making a decision.

Every thought is captured on the whiteboard from all participants. I've facilitated an exercise where dot stickers are distributed for the group to place either red, green or yellow dots on each item. The items with the most red stickers represent stop/concern, yellow is caution, and green is positive or go. It gives a visual for more discussion about those ideas that are concerning or those ideas that have the greatest support. It allows for everyone's voice to be heard and for there to be a collaborative discussion to reach the best collective solution.

Section 7: Agreements and Submission

Election Operating Guidelines Accepted

Board Standards Accepted

Conflict of Interest Policy and Questionnaire Accepted

Code of Conduct Accepted

Unsporting Conduct Accepted

Attestation Accepted

Consent to Publish Accepted

Consent to Run Accepted

Signature



Date Signed

Monday, May 27, 2024



U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING

Board of Directors Nomination/Recommendation Form

Submitted on

Thursday, June 6, 2024

Section 1: Nominator/Recommender Information

Name

Mark Rubacky

LMSC or N/A

North Carolina

Zone or N/A

Southeast

USMS Permanent Member Number

070MN

Section 2: Candidate Information

Board Position Title

At-Large Director-Southeast Zone

Candidate Name (as on their USMS registration)

Erika Braun

Section 3: Nomination & Recommendation

How do you know the candidate?

Erika is a teammate of mine with Raleigh Area Masters. I have been swimming with Erika for 11 years. We have also worked together hosting several Masters meets and the North Carolina Hall of Fame.

What makes this person a good candidate for this position? What skills, experiences, or attributes do they bring that will contribute to the success of USMS in this role?

Erika has had experience in several roles within the Masters community. Erika was a board member for Raleigh Area Masters for 8 years. During that time she also served as Vice President and President of the board. Additionally she has served on the USMS Comp and Benefits Committee for 10 years. During that time she has served as Vice Chair and Chair. Outside of Masters she is the chair for the NC Swimming Hall of Fame committee which recognizes individuals that have made major contributions to swimming in North Carolina. Additionally, she is serving as a board member for the 2029 World University Games.

My first experience with Erika was not long after I moved to North Carolina and joined Raleigh Area Masters. Erika was very welcoming to me to the team and encouraged me in those first practices as I tried to get back in shape. Erika is an excellent teammate and always pushing me to reach my goals. Now that I am the President of Raleigh Area Masters Erika continues to help me outside the pool as we work to grow the Masters community here in Raleigh. Erika constantly volunteers her time at the intracity swim meets which is helping grow our sport.

I personally feel Erika would be an excellent board member for the USMS community. Her passion for

growing our sport and overcoming the obstacles that her put in her way will be a great value to the board of directors and the USMS swimming community as a whole. Her creative thinking and willingness to find a solution to the problem will help us grow our community.

Section 4: Agreements & Submission

Second Recommender

Accepted

Attestation

Accepted

Consent to Publish

Accepted

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. J. Smith", written in a cursive style.

Date Signed

Thursday, June 6, 2024



U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING

Board of Directors Nomination/Recommendation Form

Submitted on

Thursday, June 6, 2024

Section 1: Nominator/Recommender Information

Name

Celia Wolff

LMSC or N/A

North Carolina

Zone or N/A

Southeast

USMS Permanent Member Number

07cwr

Section 2: Candidate Information

Board Position Title

At-Large Director-Southeast Zone

Candidate Name (as on their USMS registration)

Erika Braun

Section 3: Nomination & Recommendation

How do you know the candidate?

I am a team mate with Erika for NCMS. I have known her since 2013 when we met and competed on several relays at Pan Am Games in Sarasota.

What makes this person a good candidate for this position? What skills, experiences, or attributes do they bring that will contribute to the success of USMS in this role?

Erika Braun has over 20 years experience in performance management and compensation administration. Her success and expertise in those areas are paired with the ability to motivate and engage with the people around her. Erika put those skills to work by volunteering on the USMS Compensation and Benefits Committee from 2013-2022 where she assisted with development of a formal pay structure for USMS staff positions and presented pay recommendations and salary benchmarks. She was also the recipient of the 2023 Dorothy Donnelly Service Award which demonstrates her desire to serve the swimming community that she has been a part of for more than 25 years.

Erika serves as a Co-Chairman of the North Carolina Swimming Hall of Fame as well as being an inductee. She holds numerous Masters' World, National and State records. Erika's prowess in the pool extends to the board room. She will bring an expansive set of knowledge, skills and abilities as the At-Large Director of the Southeast Zone. As a member of US Masters Swimming for over 25 years, Erika has always been a positive influencer on the pool deck. Her ability to connect with and inspire those she swims with and represents will allow her to hear, listen and better speak for the Southeast Zone.

Section 4: Agreements & Submission

Nominator/First Recommender

Accepted

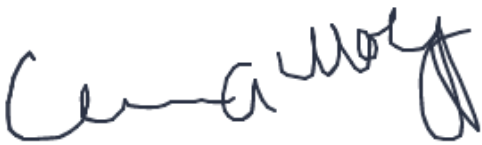
Attestation

Accepted

Consent to Publish

Accepted

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. A. Wong" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Date Signed

Thursday, June 6, 2024