



## Board of Directors Candidate Application Form

Date Submitted Thursday, June 5, 2025

### Section 1: Candidate Information

Board Position Title **President**

Candidate Name (as on USMS registration) Ed Coates

Preferred Name Ed

LinkedIn Profile URL <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ed-coates-hratx/>

Profile Photo Upload



### Section 2: Qualification Questions

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

Yes

I have completed ONE of the following in the past five years: A) Attended one or more annual meetings, B) Been on a standing committee or permanent committee of the Board of Directors, or C) Been a member of my LMSC Board of Directors.

Yes

USMS annual meetings attended in the last 5 years

Year Attended
2024
2023

Year Attended
2022
2021
2020

**USMS standing or permanent committee(s) served on in the last five years**

Committee(s)
Governance
Compensation and Benefits Committee
Executive Committee

**LMSC Board position(s) served on in the last five years**

Position
South Texas LMSC Chair

**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

### Section 3: Nomination and Recommendations

**First Nominator and Recommender**

**Recommender 1: Name**

Peter Guadagni

**Recommender 1 LMSC**

Pacific

**Second Recommender**

**Recommender 2: Name**

Whitney Hedgepeth

**Recommender 2 LMSC or N/A**

South Texas

### Section 4: USMS Background

**USMS Permanent Member Number**      02NS9

**USMS Profile URL**                      <https://www.usms.org/people/02NS9>

Current LMSC

South Texas

Years as a USMS Member

33

Service at the LMSC Level

How many years have you served your LMSC?

10+

LMSC Service History

LMSC Position/Committee	Length of Service (Years)
Chair	14

Service at the Zone Level

How many years have you served at the Zone level?

10+

Zone Service History

Zone Position/Committee	Length of Service (Years)
Zone Committee member	14

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)
Benefits and Comp committee	10
Governance Committee	4
At-Large Board member South Texas	3
VP of Local Operations	4
President	2

Section 5: General Questions for all Candidates

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

USMS has had a profound impact on my life through the friendships I’ve developed within the swimming community and the health benefits I’ve gained from swimming. I’ve personally experienced the value of USMS’s mission, and my desire to serve on the Board is rooted in a commitment to help USMS continue empowering adults to improve their lives through swimming. I want to give back to the organization that has given me so much—by helping it thrive, grow, and serve its members and the broader community.

My volunteer service at both the local and national levels, combined with professional leadership experience, has prepared me to help lead USMS into the future. These roles have provided me with a deep understanding

of USMS's governance and operations. Additionally, my experience serving on other boards and in leadership roles equips me with the knowledge and insight to support the Board of Directors in the role of President.

**Please share a personal story about what USMS's mission means to you.**

The USMS mission—to empower adults to improve their lives through swimming—has enriched my life in countless ways. As a member for over 30 years, I've built lifelong friendships that bring me joy and support. When I moved to Austin three decades ago, a conversation with a lane mate led to a job opportunity, launching a successful career as an HR executive. I've witnessed many examples of this camaraderie in USMS.

USMS has also helped me manage my health. I've lived with coronary artery disease for over 20 years, and swimming has been critical to maintaining a healthy lifestyle and monitoring my well-being. In fact, swimming has quite literally saved my life. When fellow USMS members face health challenges, I'm able to offer encouragement and share my experience, showing that it's possible to keep swimming and thriving.

My goal is to help USMS grow so that more members can share their own stories about the life-changing benefits of our mission.

**What do you consider to be USMS's greatest opportunities for the next 2-4 years? How might the Board support these opportunities?**

**New Products:**

The acquisition of Grown-Up Swimming (GUS) in 2023 expanded our offerings to new audiences and diversified our revenue streams. GUS has grown significantly since joining the USMS family and holds great promise for continued impact and growth.

**New Partnerships:**

Following the success of our partnership with USA Swimming during the 2024 Olympic Trials—one of the most inspiring swimming experiences of my life—we should continue seeking collaborations with other aquatics organizations to expand our reach and enhance member benefits. Partnerships like these elevate the experience of our events and help us grow our community.

**Sustainable Governance and Modernization:**

USMS must continue evolving its governance and operational structures to remain agile and competitive. Serving nearly 60,000 members with a multi-million-dollar budget, a staff of over 15, and hundreds of volunteers, we must balance innovation with oversight. We need modern systems and practices to seize new opportunities while safeguarding our brand and resources.

The Board should encourage staff to pursue these opportunities and provide the resources, support, and strategic guidance needed for success.

## **Section 6: Position-Specific Questions**

**What makes you a good candidate for USMS president? What skills, experiences, and attributes do you have that will contribute to the success of USMS?**

I bring extensive USMS leadership experience, having served as an at-large Board member, VP of Local Operations, and most recently, as President for two years. These roles have given me a comprehensive understanding of USMS governance and operations.

Professionally, my career as an HR executive sharpened my skills in strategic thinking, organizational leadership, and governance—skills directly relevant to this role. I've applied this experience to lead USMS initiatives such as chairing the Compensation and Benefits Committee, serving on multiple task forces, and modernizing the election process through collaboration with the Elections Committee.

Additionally, I maintain a broad professional network, which I've tapped to support USMS—including identifying legal counsel to assist the organization.

**Describe an experience of how you have (or would have) communicated with and motivated a team of diverse individuals with varying skill sets and backgrounds.**

Throughout my professional career, I've led many successful teams. One of my proudest moments was

leading the deployment of a new HR and Finance system in under seven months. This complex project required coordination across departments, external consultants, and executive leadership. I communicated clear goals and timelines, gathered input for decision-making, and ensured the team felt supported throughout the process. The project launched on time, on budget, and successfully—everyone received their paycheck on the first payroll.

As USMS Board President, I’ve used these same skills to lead and motivate our Board. A recent example includes leading the acquisition of Grown-Up Swimming. I ensure the Board had access to the necessary information and people as we discussed the purchase. I worked with staff to clearly communicate the benefits and structure of the partnership, which earned the Board’s confidence and support.

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	Thursday, June 5, 2025



# Board of Directors Nomination/Recommendation Form

Submitted on Friday, June 6, 2025

## Section 1: Nominator/Recommender Information

Name	Peter Guadagni
LMSC or N/A	Pacific
Zone or N/A	Oceania
USMS Permanent Member Number	03GFZ

## Section 2: Candidate Information

Board Position Title	President
Candidate Name (as on their USMS registration)	Coates Ed

## Section 3: Nomination & Recommendation

How do you know the candidate?

Ed and I have served together on the USMS Board of Directors since 2017 and its Executive Committee since 2019.

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?

It is an honor and pleasure to nominate and recommend Ed Coates to continue as president of U.S. Masters Swimming.

Ed’s long service as a volunteer leader at the club, LMSC, and national level compelled me to support his candidacy two years ago. Now, as he nears the end of his first term, his performance has confirmed we made the right choice in electing him as the organization’s president. Board meetings are conducted efficiently, focused on oversight of the professional staff and pursuing our strategic plan, while providing for ample opportunity for discussion. Under his leadership, we have continued to review and strive to improve our policies and processes always with the goal of making USMS a nimbler organization that is responsive to member and volunteer needs. As examples, we have updated our elections procedures, increased board communication to LMSC leaders, and revised our grievance procedures.

Ed has the knowledge, skills, and passion to lead USMS into the future. I encourage you to join me in supporting his continued service as president of U.S. Masters Swimming.

## Section 4: Agreements & Submission

Nominator/First Recommender

Accepted

Attestation

Accepted

Consent to Publish

Accepted

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Gudogni". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Date Signed

Friday, June 6, 2025



## Board of Directors Nomination/Recommendation Form

Submitted on

Thursday, June 5, 2025

### Section 1: Nominator/Recommender Information

Name

Whitney Hedgepeth

LMSC or N/A

South Texas

Zone or N/A

Southwest

USMS Permanent Member Number

02NXX

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### Section 2: Candidate Information

Board Position Title

President

Candidate Name (as on their USMS registration)

Ed Coates

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### Section 3: Nomination & Recommendation

How do you know the candidate?

I have been the head masters coach at Longhorn Aquatics since 2004. Ed has been a member and leader of this group before I came along. I get the pleasure of coaching him 4/5 times per week.

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?

I would like to recommend Ed Coates for reelection to the position of President of the USMS Board of Directors. Ed has been a tremendous asset to the Longhorn Aquatics team, of which he has been a continuous member since 1993. He is our team leader and the person who keeps things running smoothly within our program.

Ed is always the first to welcome new members at practice and the loudest cheerleader on deck when his teammates are in the water. He works hard at events to ensure that all attendees feel included—organizing relays for the entire team and planning team outings. He played a key role in encouraging 85 of our members to attend Spring Nationals in San Antonio.

Ed has also inspired team members to volunteer and get involved in local and national USMS committees. His past leadership of the South Texas LMSC was outstanding, as he consistently kept members informed about local meets, membership renewals, and upcoming Masters events.

Ed swims 4–5 days per week with the Longhorn Masters group and regularly attends Masters Nationals, where he actively promotes the sport he loves.

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## Section 4: Agreements & Submission

Second Recommender

Accepted

Attestation

Accepted

Consent to Publish

Accepted

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Whitney DeLoe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Whitney" being more legible than the last name "DeLoe".

Date Signed

Thursday, June 5, 2025