



U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING

Board of Directors Candidate Application Form

Date Submitted

Thursday, June 11, 2026

Section 1: Candidate Information

Board Position Title

At-Large Director-South Central Zone

Candidate Name (as on USMS
registration)

Nicole Christensen

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
2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

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

Committee(s)
LMSC Development

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

Position
Chair
Communications
Webmaster

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

Jacky Merianos

Recommender 1 LMSC

North Texas

Second Recommender

Recommender 2: Name

Karlene Denby

Recommender 2 LMSC or N/A

Gulf

Section 4: USMS Background

USMS Permanent Member Number 065CM

USMS Profile URL <https://www.usms.org/people/065CM>

Current LMSC

Gulf

Years as a USMS Member 17

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	5
Vice-Chair	1
Webmaster and Communications	9

Service at the Zone Level

How many years have you served at the Zone level?

6-10

Zone Service History

Zone Position/Committee	Length of Service (Years)
Webmaster and Communications	7
Chair (past)	4
Open Water Chair	5
Champs Committee Chair	3

Service at the National Level

How many years have you served at the National level?

6-10

National Service History

National Position/Committee	Length of Service (Years)
LMSC Development Committee	6
At-Large Director	2

Section 5: General Questions for all Candidates

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

I am seeking re-election as the South Central Zone At-Large Director to continue my service at the National level to the organization and the membership.

My first term has increased my knowledge of governance as well as membership and organizational challenges. I believe I can take what I have learned during my first term to be even more productive while serving a second one.

My background in USMS includes various LMSC and Zone volunteer roles; including Chair, Webmaster and Communications. At the national level, I have been on the LMSC Development Committee since 2020 and have a good understanding of our diverse membership.

Although I was a competitive swimmer growing up, I am now a fitness swimmer and part of the majority of the USMS membership, and I understand that the appeal of swimming goes well beyond competition.

Conversely, as an event director since the 90s, I have a keen understanding of what the competitive swimming consumer wants and consider running events, in a professional, fun and efficient manner, imperative.

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

USMS's mission to empower adults to improve their lives through swimming is deeply meaningful to me.

As a studio art major, and then an artist selling in galleries, it was the discipline attained from years of swimming as a child that allowed me to push myself while working alone in my studio. This is still true today as a real estate agent, where my office is in my home.

Swimming has given me a "reset" button to allow me to make it through many different challenges and crises throughout my adult life. Indeed, if I did not have swimming to take care of myself both physically and mentally, I do not believe I would have been nearly as successful in negotiating them.

And now swimming brings me great joy as I watch my daughter swim and compete as a Masters swimmer and her daughter has now started the journey in summer league.

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

Strengthening existing, as well as creating new as needed, programs that appeal to a diverse membership (coaches and fitness, year-round, seasonal, competitive and, open water swimmers) at various life stages, while making sure we do not spread ourselves too thin.

Keeping an eye on the future by working to make our organization one that appeals to younger adults to both join and to step up and volunteer in at the local and national level.

The Board can support this by keeping a high-level view of the organization, paying attention to member feedback and by supporting work done by staff and volunteers.

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?

First and foremost, I believe in our organization and the positive impact it has on swimmers and I care deeply about the membership and I am willing to work hard for both.

I have years of experience in many areas of swimming; as an age group swimmer, adult swimmer, general manager of a USAS club, meet director and admin official for 30 years, board member for a USAS club board, LMSC board and Zone board as well as my current position as an At-large BOD member. I am a fitness swimmer who creates pool and open water events for swimmers as well as mentoring others.

As an LMSC and Zone Chair, I worked at creating collaborative relationships in order to achieve more for the

members. As the LMSC and Zone webmaster and communication chair, I supply timely and clear communication to the membership.

Describe an experience of how you have (or would have) balanced your own perspective with input from individuals representing various viewpoints, and how you ensured that all perspectives were considered.

In the Spring of 2025, I proposed to our LMSC board that we should host a fun oriented meet, to encourage swimmers who had never swum in a meet to enter, as well as providing a fun competition for experienced meet participants. The meet would have standard, non-standard and fun relays as well as prizes and a Halloween theme.

I wanted our LMSC to host the meet, and invest in it, with the understanding that it would go in the red, which is something our LMSC had never done before.

The entire board provided their input and concerns, since it was something never considered before. I brought up that we have reserves and what we really need to be doing is reaching out to our large population of members who have never registered for an event. If we could inspire them with costumes, pumpkin relays, heat awards, and more and also give long time competitors a chance to have fun AND swim some regular races, then it would be a win-win for everyone.

After discussion, the board came together and stood behind the concept. We scheduled the first Hallowmeet for November 2, 2025. Everyone stepped up and volunteered and/or helped find volunteers as needed. The event was a great success. Long time board members thoroughly enjoyed the experience and there was 100% consensus to do it annually as a way to give back to our members.

Section 7: Agreements and Submission

Election Operating Guidelines Accepted

Board Standards Accepted

Conflict of Interest Policy and Questionnaire Accepted

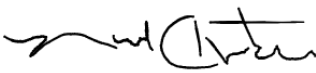
Code of Conduct Accepted

Unsporting Conduct Accepted

Attestation Accepted

Consent to Publish Accepted

Consent to Run Accepted

Signature 

Date Signed Thursday, June 11, 2026



U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING

Board of Directors Nomination/Recommendation Form

Submitted on

Friday, June 12, 2026

Section 1: Nominator/Recommender Information

Name

Jacky Merianos

LMSC or N/A

North Texas

Zone or N/A

South Central

USMS Permanent Member Number

KU9SX

Section 2: Candidate Information

Board Position Title

At-Large Director-South Central Zone

Candidate Name (as on their USMS registration)

Nicole Christensen

Section 3: Nomination & Recommendation

How do you know the candidate?

As Zone Chair and a fellow leader in the Texas Masters Swimming community, I have had the privilege of working closely with Nicole for the past five years.

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?

In the five year's I've known Nicole, she has devoted an extraordinary amount of time, energy, and passion to U.S. Masters Swimming on both the local and National Level—more than many contribute over a lifetime of service.

Nicole currently serves as Chair, Webmaster, and Communications Chair of the Gulf LMSC, as well as Open Water Chair, Zone Championship Committee Chair, and Webmaster for the South-Central Zone. She has served multiple years in all of these roles. In addition to her extensive leadership responsibilities, she also finds time to host local Masters meets and mentor new meet and race directors throughout our Zone. The immense work she puts in behind the scenes is driven solely by her commitment to creating opportunities for our local Masters.

Nicole's events and initiatives are truly inclusive for all Masters swimmers. From the South Central Zone Open Water Grand Prix she developed and has been growing since 2021 to her beginner friendly Halloween meet she launched in 2025, and through her leadership on the South-Central Zone Championship Committee, she goes above and beyond to ensure there's an event for every swimmer in our region. Participation and engagement across the Gulf and South Central Zone have grown

tremendously over the past five years, due in large part to the wide range of events she hosts and supports.

As wonderful of a leader as she is, it's Nicole's mentorship that has made the biggest impact in her LMSC and our Zone. Elevating and educating those she works with is her greatest strength. It takes a village to run our LMSCs/Zones, and Nicole is constantly working with her village to make sure they have everything they need to succeed. She has played an essential role in my personal development and is a big reason I am the level of USMS volunteer that I am today.

I cannot think of a more dedicated or supportive individual to represent the members of the South Central Zone. I have no doubt that Nicole will continue to bring her enthusiasm, strong work ethic, and genuine commitment to the national level, serving as an effective and thoughtful voice for our local membership.

Nicole has my full support for a second term as At-Large Director, and I offer my highest endorsement of her candidacy.

Section 4: Agreements & Submission

Nominator/First Recommender

Accepted

Attestation

Accepted

Consent to Publish

Accepted

Signature

A handwritten signature in dark ink, featuring a large, stylized initial 'L' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke that ends in a small hook.

Date Signed

Friday, June 12, 2026



U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING

Board of Directors Nomination/Recommendation Form

Submitted on

Thursday, June 11, 2026

Section 1: Nominator/Recommender Information

Name

Karlene Denby

LMSC or N/A

Gulf

Zone or N/A

South Central

USMS Permanent Member Number

02AAW

Section 2: Candidate Information

Board Position Title

At-Large Director-South Central Zone

Candidate Name (as on their USMS registration)

Nicole Christensen

Section 3: Nomination & Recommendation

How do you know the candidate?

Both Nicole and I have served on the Gulf LMSC Board for over 15 years. We communicate extensively on various LMSC issues and have worked collaboratively on several projects.

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?

Nicole has served as the Chair of the Gulf LMSC for the past four years, and she also served two terms as the South Central Zone Chair. I am confident that she will bring the same work ethic, experience, innovation, and enthusiasm to the USMS Board that is always present in her work for our LMSC and Zone.

Nicole also serves as the communications person for both our LMSC and Zone, sending out emails blasts to our members and keeping them informed of upcoming competitions, fitness events, and social gatherings. She has volunteered for decades in age-group, college, and Masters swimming and has extensive experience in both coaching and meet management.

Nicole has a knack for getting seemingly impossible dreams to become a reality, selling her vision to others and getting them on board to achieve the desired result. For instance, during the COVID pandemic when a Zone meet was not possible, Nicole organized and achieved a virtual Zone Championship by organizing each LMSC to hold a local competition on the same weekend, compiling all the results, and determining our virtual Zone champions. Similarly, in a zone with almost no open water competition opportunities, she envisioned a Zone-wide open water series which began in 2022. Through hard work and buy-in across the LMSCs, the South Central Zone Open Water Grand Prix has five races over four LMSCs in

2026.

Nicole's enthusiasm for USMS and Masters swimming is apparent and contagious. She encourages our LMSC Board to come up with new initiatives to benefit our members and also encourages the Board to increase its knowledge by signing up for various USMS webinars.

The South Central has been fortunate to have Nicole as our At-Large Director for the past two years, I am pleased to recommend her for a second term on the USMS Board.

Section 4: Agreements & Submission

Second Recommender

Accepted

Attestation

Accepted

Consent to Publish

Accepted

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Denby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "J" being large and stylized.

Date Signed

Thursday, June 11, 2026