

Recruiting & Training Club Volunteers

**John King – Walnut Creek Masters (WCM), Pacific LMSC
BOD At-Large Director, Officials Committee**

**Mike Kerr – Chicago Smelts Coach, Illinois LMSC
ILMSA Distance Committee**



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CLUB DEVELOPMENT
COACH SUPPORT
— KANSAS CITY —

Presenters



John King

Walnut Creek Masters

BOD Walnut Creek Masters

Official



Mike Kerr

Chicago Smelts Coach



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Agenda

- Volunteer Development and Retention
 - Why do you need volunteers?
 - Running your team AND/OR events or activities
- Volunteer Events
- Coach Development
- Breakout Exercise: Small Group Discussion
 - Finding, Developing, and Rewarding Volunteers in your club
- Q&A / Wrap-Up Discussion
- Presenter Bios



Volunteer Recruitments & Development

- Clubs are all different shapes and sizes,
but volunteers are '*hiding in plain sight*'!
- Find someone in each workout to help spot potential volunteers.
- Before recruiting volunteers, make sure roles are clearly defined:
 - Why don't people step up?
 - Unknown size of commitment and length of commitment!
 - It is easier to recruit for multiple smaller & more specific roles than general, open-ended roles, like:
 - Timing one day for a meet, versus treasurer for one year.

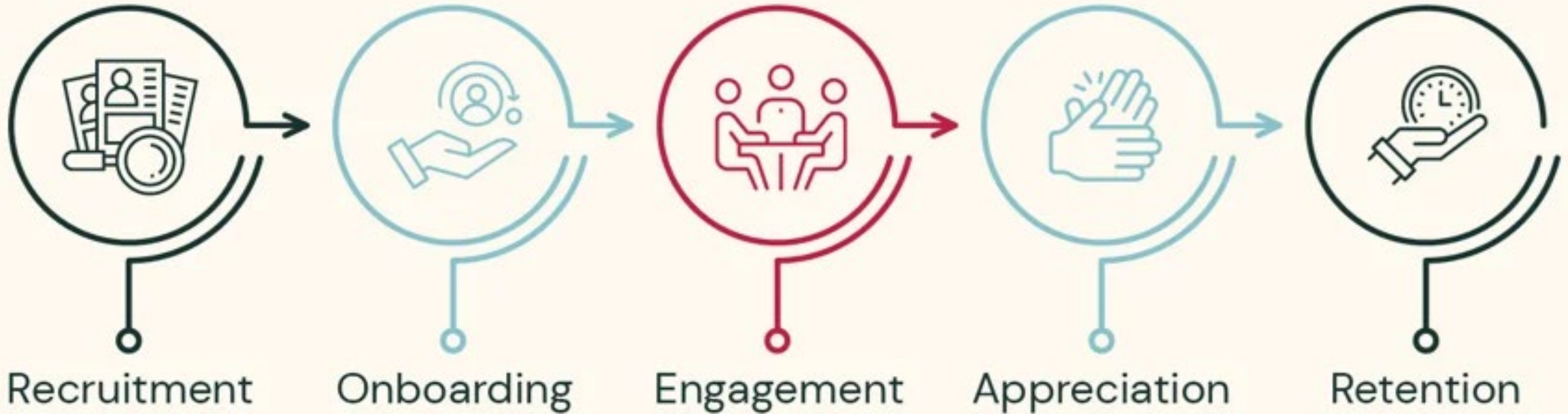


Volunteer Recruitments & Development

- If a position is open, leave it open
 - It's easier to recruit for positions that are open!
 - You don't want to burn out your existing volunteers
- Match the volunteers' skills and temperament (and availability!) to the role
- Give volunteers room to do their job
 - Life gets in the way sometimes - that's OK!
 - don't micromanage or re-do their work



Steps of the Volunteer Lifecycle



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Volunteer Development: Reward and Recognize

How often & When does your org show appreciation?

- All volunteers need to feel rewarded and recognized!
 - Annual recognition for exceptional service & achievement
- Awards
 - "MVP award" & Rookie of the year
 - Swag: team gear
- Social media spotlight: Meet the volunteers!
- Incentives: Volunteer hours to receive free access to events

The sooner and more that the appreciation is shared, the better



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Volunteer Events

- Host in-person events for your LMSC volunteers to build camaraderie with each other
 - In-person board meetings
 - Social events
 - Service events (Habitat for Humanity, ALTS lessons)
 - Connect volunteers to other club volunteers to foster skill growth
- Encourage participation in USMS national events
 - National meets / national open water events
 - Annual Meeting
 - Relay
- Create opportunities to recognize and celebrate your volunteers
 - Annual Meeting / Awards Banquet



Coach Development and Recognition

Paid or volunteers, your coaches keep the swimmers coming back

- Engage them as a part of team & season planning.
- Invite a coach to be a member of your club Board.
- Coaches are the best positioned to spot potential volunteers. Ensure that they know what your need is.
- Provide funding from team for coach training, invest in your coaches!
 - USMS Coach & Official certifications, ASCAA, etc.
- USMS Coach Appreciation week is mid Oct & National Coach Appreciation day is Oct 6th.



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Coach Development and Recognition

Bringing in new coaches

How do you cover your regular coaches when they are off?

What do you do when a coach leaves?

- Building your pool of substitute coaches is the first step to creating a solid swimmer to coach pipeline.
- The coaches will know which members are simply “fast” and who has the experience & interest. Giving your coaches leeway to invite swimmers to move into a coaching role also ensures that the coaches feel they are contributing to the overall club development.



Breakout Session – 10 minutes

- Small Groups of 4-6 people each
- Introduce yourselves
- Designate a note taker who will share out to the room
- How can you find, engage, and reward volunteers in your Club?
 - Discuss your questions, concerns, experiences and proposed solutions
- How can you keep Club volunteers engaged?
 - Share ideas to engage volunteers at the Club Level





Wrap-Up / Questions & Answers

**Don't be afraid. Ask away.
(If you're thinking it, someone else
probably is too!)**

Next Steps / Call to Action

- Host a Community Service Volunteer Day
- Add a line item to your 2026 Budget for Coach Training
- Host a social event to thank your volunteers





Session Leader Bio

- John King – has served as a BOD member at the club, LMSC, and national level. He currently swims with the Walnut Creek Masters. He is an official for USMS, USA, NCAA, and NFHS (high school). He currently serves on the USMS Officials and Rules Committees and received the USMS Officials Excellence Award for 2023. He also served on the USMS grievance sub-committee. John lives in Walnut Creek, California and has four children and five grandchildren. He loves swimming, wakeboarding, and snow skiing.
- Mike Kerr- Has coached USMS in both Chicago and NJ (his home state) since 2017. He's a LVL3 USMS coach and marathon swimmer (completed 20 Bridges in July '25). He joined the ILMSA board as a chair on the Long Distance Committee this year. He lives in Chicago where he loves swimming in Lake Michigan and sketching the city.

