

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee met via Zoom several times during the summer months. The committee puts forward the following candidates for positions on the USAAS Board of Directors.

Open Board of Directors Positions

President
Candidates
Denise Shively*

Vice President of Olympic International
Candidates
Irene Hawes*

Vice President of DEI
Candidates
Ashley Johnson*
Monica Velazquez-Stiak

* Indicates current office holder eligible to run again.

Open Foundation Trustee Positions

Full Three Year Term – Three Positions
Candidates
Judy McGowan*
Barbara McNamee*
Michele Kraus Bennett*

* Indicates current Trustee eligible to run again.

- **Candidate for President:** Denise Shively

Denise Shively is a national judge and a past vice president of competitive operations for USA Artistic Swimming. Her involvement in artistic swimming began as a master's athlete with the former Columbus Synch-or-Swim team. Throughout the years, her daughters participated in the sport and Denise coached for the Columbus Coralinas. A recipient of the Lillian MacKellar Distinguished Service Award and named to the Synchronized Swimming Hall of Fame, Contributor Category, she held several different positions in the Ohio Association and North Zone. In 2003 she was invited to join the national team staff as team manager and continued that role with the junior and senior national teams for more than 15 years. She attended many international competitions including World Championships, World Cups, Pan American Games and the 2008 Olympic Games. She said she was honored to return to the role of national team manager in 2019 in support of the current team working towards Olympic qualification.

Denise is a faculty member and past chair of the Department of Communication, Otterbein University, Westerville, Ohio, where she teaches primarily public relations classes. Prior to teaching, she worked in public relations for several nonprofit organizations including the Westerville Area Chamber of Commerce where she was executive director. She and her husband, Jim, live in Westerville and have three married daughters and three grandsons.

- **Candidate for VP Olympic International:** Irene Hawes

Irene Hawes is a life member, has a Bachelor of Arts from The Ohio State University and a Juris Doctorate from Western State University. She has worked for the Automobile Club of Southern California for the last 33 years. As a FINA A Judge, she judged at the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Qualifier and the 2016 Olympics. She has also judged at the 2007 & 2015 World Championships, at five Junior Worlds Championships, the 2011 and 2019 Pan American Championship and numerous other International Competitions. Hawes is a FINA Evaluator and most recently evaluated at the Inaugural 2019 Youth World Championship and the 2020 French Open World Series. She was the recipient of the 2018 USA Synchro Hall of Fame Contributor, the 2011 West Zone Contributor of the Year Award and the 2018 West Zone Coach of the Year Award. As a former head coach of the Huntington Beach Aquabelles, Long Beach Synchronettes and the Meraquas of Irvine she has worked with athletes of all levels from Novice to National Team members. Irene herself started as an athlete in the Age Group program in Buffalo, New York and has competed at the collegiate level for The Ohio State University where she was a 3 time National Champion. She has also served on the West Zone Board Officials Chair and as the Southern California Association Officials and Technical Chair and at the National level as Rules Chair. Irene has a son in who is a Captain in the Air Force and a daughter who is following in her footsteps training to become a national judge and coaching. Irene Lives in Santa Ana, California with her husband Dennis.

- **Candidate for Vice President DEI:** Ashley Johnson

Ashley has been involved in artistic swimming for 27 years with experience from many perspectives as a swimmer, coach and judge. As the coach of Coral Springs Aquacades, she has led the team to many successful National Championship title events and helped place ten swimmers on U.S. National teams

over the years. Her coaching accolades include: 2017 13-15 USA National Team 2, USA National team development coach, coach of 7 High Point Trophy team winner at South Zones, five-time South Zone Coach of the Year, coach of the 2011 JO team Champion and coach of 2011 U.S. Open Trio Champion which was the only medal won for USA in Hawaii. Ashley's unique coaching, choreography and consulting expertise has afforded her opportunities in South America, Central America, Canada and the Caribbean and allowed her to achieve a position as FINA Educator. Recently, she led two DEI zoom calls for BC Artistic Swimming Association of Canada. Ashley also brings governance experience in serving on the South Zone board and several committees over the years. She brings the same passion and care for members of USAAS as she does for her patients in her nursing career.

Currently residing in South Florida, Ashley loves taking care of her precious dog, Mimi, and is excited to add a diversity and inclusion aspect to all areas of the sport so that USAAS can become a more equitable organization.

- **Candidate for Vice President DEI:** Monica Velazquez-Stiak

Prior to her time at USAAS, Monica served as a DEI liaison for Ohio State Athletics hiring practices and in her department of camps and clinics. While with USA Artistic Swimming, she has worked closely with the USOPC on the topic of transgender inclusion, revised current DEI practices and policies, and has begun working with Inclusion Playbook to further expand equitable opportunity in our sport and policy creation.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassidy Ramage Crew, Chair

Members: Beth Borland, Judy McGowan, Danielle Coggburn, Candy Kaemerer, Karen McGann,
Linda Thomson, Athletes: Morgan Fuller Kolsrud, Megan Robins, Emma Tchakmakjian

Advisor: Ginny Jasontek