

***Mission: Ohio Swimming provides leadership and support to coaches, volunteers and swim programs that maximize every swimmer's potential for excellence.***

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General Chair Report  
2019 Fall House of Delegates Meeting – Dayton, Ohio

I would like to start my report by thanking David Back for his four years of service as General Chair. Much of his time was spent getting OSI more organized and functional. I believe that OSI is in a great position to thrive due in large part to his effort and the effort of those who served on the board with him. Thank you David.

I'm pleased to announce that the transition to the new Code of Regulations and Policy manual has been completed. This was an extensive overhaul of the old bylaws and took a significant amount of time to complete. So we are now working under a more streamlined system that should increase efficiency at the board level and models what is being done at the national level.

In August, board members participated in a board retreat in Cincinnati, where Jane Grosser from USA Swimming came in and helped guide the board through the updating of our strategic plan. Our key areas of focus will continue to be building the base, governance, and communication. The complete plan can be found on the OSI website under the governance tab. I encourage all of you to go onto the website to see this plan as it will drive future decisions that the board makes.

The 2019 USAS Convention was held in St. Louis, MO from September 10-14. We had eleven board members in attendance including two athletes. There were a lot of great topics and discussions that took place during the convention. In addition to the information that was provided to us within the various meetings, a lot of ideas were sparked for future projects within our LSC. Some of those will be mentioned in other committee reports. One of the recurring themes discussed throughout the convention was increasing volunteerism. Finding ways to increase volunteerism within our LSC was also a talking point at the board retreat. This is not limited to board and committee positions but trickles all of the way down to the most basic and essential team volunteers such as timers at meets or parents who help organize team socials. This is a nationwide trend in all activities and sports. We need to find creative ways to encourage parents to volunteer on our teams and in the LSC if we are going to continue to excel and lead in the sports community.

As General Chair, I have selected a couple of key initiatives to focus on in the upcoming year. This is reflective in our 2019-20 budget and the strategic plan, but I want to highlight those areas in this report.

With the idea of promoting volunteerism, I am extending a challenge to every team in the LSC to register at least one new official for the upcoming season. Participation in officiating is on the decline across the country and I think a good start to turning that around is to encourage every team (regardless of size and whether or not you host meets) to have officials. All teams attend meets and should be able to provide help at the officials position when you go to those meets. This also includes participation in our LSC Championship meets. Encourage your officials to apply for a position on deck to gain experience and potentially move up the ranks of officiating and perhaps one day get onto a national deck. In addition to increasing our officials base, I'd like for teams to encourage parents to volunteer as timers. USA Swimming is increasing the number of positions that teams must fill that are outside the basic timer position and it is becoming burdensome to fill these positions without some outside help. Keep in mind that without the help of volunteers, meets will not take place and the teams/kids will have to seek competitions in other commissions and/or LSC's. I believe that improving our volunteer base will only make our LSC stronger. One last challenge in terms of volunteerism goes to your participation in the governance of the LSC. We need people to serve on committees and on the board. We need new ideas to stay in

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the forefront of our sport. While I appreciate and value all of the time and dedication of those who have served in the past and continue to serve today, we can't sustain the pace without an infusion of new faces. Please ask how you can get involved and help make Ohio the best LSC in the country.

My second initiative will deal with athlete participation in the governance process and providing the athletes a voice in the organization. We are very lucky to have the athlete leadership that we have today. It has been a long process since USA Swimming instituted the policy of athlete participation on LSC boards but we have had some outstanding leaders with great ideas over the past few years. Once again, I'm challenging every club to have an athlete member take an active role in the governance of the LSC. I know the current athlete leadership is very accessible and would like to get more athletes involved. Please help interested swimmers get in touch with them to get started.

The third initiative will be in opportunities for athlete support. Last spring the HOD voted to increase the swimmer surcharge to \$5 from \$2. With this increase we have invested funds into some key areas that we look to give athletes in the LSC more opportunities to grow and succeed. The first was reinstating the Camps Program. The camps program will require a lot of cooperation between coaches and teams to provide a successful program. Opportunities will be provided for all levels of athlete with an emphasis on the novice and intermediate level swimmers in the LSC. The second area of investment was in senior travel funding. While the policy required restructuring for sustainability, we were able to more than double the amount available to our athletes attending national level competitions. The third area that was addressed was increasing the zone team funding. Years ago, this area had its' funding drastically reduced. We have been able to reinvest funds into the zone team to hopefully make that experience even better and more affordable than in the past. The fourth area for athlete support comes in the area of Outreach travel. We have significantly increased the funding in this area to help those families in need participate in more meets where travel is required. In addition, we are working on developing strategies to help create participation in our underserved areas of the LSC (both urban and rural communities) in order to grow our sport and support the national DEI goals.

SafeSport continues to evolve as operations and policies continue to come from "The Center" for SafeSport. It is imperative that we stay updated on MAAPP especially when it comes to our 18 and older athletes and their requirements for participation. Please become familiar with these policies so you or your athlete(s) aren't caught off-guard.

I'm very excited as we move into another swim year, especially an Olympic year. I believe the future of Ohio Swimming is bright and we will continue to grow in and out of the pool. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you.

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