



2025 Nominating Committee Report

Board of Directors & Foundation Trustee Candidates

The Nominating Committee met virtually and corresponded during the summer months. We are pleased to present the following candidates for positions on the USA Artistic Swimming Board of Directors and Foundation.

Summary of Candidates

Position	Candidate(s)
VP of Member Development	Ruida Shu, Amy Oliver, Heidi Lurenz
VP of Competitive Programs	Rebecca Phillips *
Treasurer	Anna Montgomery *
Foundation Trustee (3 seats)	Denise Shively

**Indicates current officeholder eligible to run again.*

Submitted By

Teagan Betancourt, Chair

Nominating Committee Members

- **North Zone:** Beth Borland
- **South Zone:** Barbara McNamee
- **East Zone:** Jen Hatt
- **West Zone:** Heather Glenn
- **Athlete Representatives:** Mariya Koroleva, Bill May, Jaime Czarkowski

VP of Member Development

Candidate: Ruida Shu

City and state of residence: New Canaan, CT

Affiliated Club (if applicable): New Canaan Aquianas

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ruida-shu%EF%BC%8Cmba-19929b38/>

Education / Professional Background / Experience

Education: Bachelor of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Connecticut; Master of Business Administration (MBA), University of Connecticut.

Professional Summary: A proactive and strategic leader with over 18 years of experience in Utility Operations and Project Management, I specialize in driving operational excellence, ensuring regulatory compliance, and solving complex challenges in high-stakes environments. My career is characterized by a hands-on approach, analytical rigor, and a commitment to fostering cross-functional relationships that yield measurable results.

I thrive in dynamic settings where adaptability, clear communication, and data-driven decision-making are essential. Whether leading multi-disciplinary teams, negotiating with stakeholders, or developing programs to meet evolving reliability standards, I consistently aim to exceed expectations and create lasting impact.

Fluent in English and Mandarin, I bridge cultural and technical gaps to foster collaboration across global teams.

My core strengths include:

1. Strategic project planning and execution
2. Regulatory compliance and reliability standards
3. Data-driven decision-making and problem-solving
4. Stakeholder engagement and negotiation
5. Program development and performance tracking

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

As a dedicated parent and active contributor to the New Canaan Aquianas artistic swimming team, I have taken on a wide range of leadership and administrative roles that support both athletes and the broader artistic swimming community. My involvement spans meet management, team coordination, scoring, and judging:

- **Meet Management:** Served as one of two meet managers for the 2024 East Zone 13-15/Junior/Senior Championships, hosted at the New Canaan YMCA. Oversaw logistics, scheduling, and coordination with officials to ensure a successful and smoothly run event.
- **Team Liaison:** Acted as the intermediate team liaison during the 2023–2024 season, facilitating communication between coaches, athletes, and parents.
- **Committee Leadership:** Appointed lead for the Outfit Committee for the 2024–2025 season, responsible for coordinating team attire and presentation in alignment with competition standards and team identity.
- **Scoring Staff:** Contributed as scoring staff for multiple East Zone meets, demonstrating precision and reliability in managing competition results.
- **Judging Advancement:** Achieved Level 2 Judge certification, reflecting a deep understanding of artistic swimming rules and a commitment to fair and consistent evaluation.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

Experienced and highly committed artistic swimming official with a strong technical foundation and hands-on involvement in East Zone competitions. Over the past two years, served as scoring staff for nearly all 12 & Under Age Group and Intermediate meets, demonstrating reliability, precision, and deep familiarity with meet operations. Successfully completed multiple judging certifications in the 2024–2025 season, including Level 1F and Level 2F Figure Judge, Level 1 and Level 2 Routine Judge, and Level 1 Synchronization Technical Controller. Brings a methodical and detail-oriented approach to evaluating performances, ensuring consistency and fairness in scoring. Passionate about upholding the standards of artistic swimming and contributing to the sport's development through accurate and professional officiating.

Why would you be a strong candidate for a leadership role on the USAAS Board of Directors?

I am a dynamic and accomplished professional whose leadership experience and technical expertise make me a strong candidate for a position on the USA Artistic Swimming Board of Directors or Foundation Board. As Chair of the Northeast Power Coordinating Council (NPCC) Regional Standards Committee, I regularly collaborate with government regulators and industry stakeholders, bringing a deep understanding of governance, negotiation, and consensus-building to the table.

With a proven track record of leading task forces, managing engineering teams, and driving complex projects to

completion, I excel in project management, time management, and strategic decision-making. My experience in writing standards and solving multifaceted problems reflects a methodical, solutions-oriented mindset—qualities essential for effective board leadership.

I am known for my positive attitude, adaptability, and ability to motivate teams. My strong communication skills, honed through years of regulatory and technical engagement, allow me to navigate diverse perspectives and foster collaboration.

Tech-savvy and highly organized, I bring a forward-thinking approach to both operational and strategic initiatives. Whether contributing to governance, supporting athlete development, or advancing the mission of USAAS through outreach and innovation, I am prepared to serve with integrity, insight, and impact.

What time, talents, and abilities would you/this individual bring to the board?

Time Commitment: I am fully prepared to dedicate the time and energy required to actively participate in board meetings, committee work, and strategic initiatives. My experience managing high-stakes projects and leading cross-functional teams has taught me how to prioritize effectively and maintain accountability. I approach board service with the same level of commitment and professionalism I bring to my role as Chair of the NPCC Regional Standards Committee.

Talents:

- **Leadership & Governance:** I have chaired regulatory committees and led task forces, giving me deep experience in governance, policy development, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Strategic Thinking:** I excel at identifying long-term goals, aligning resources, and driving initiatives forward—skills that are essential for shaping USAAS's future.
- **Communication & Negotiation:** Years of working with government agencies and industry leaders have sharpened my ability to communicate clearly, build consensus, and advocate effectively.
- **Team Motivation:** I lead engineering teams with a focus on collaboration, morale, and results. I bring that same energy to board service, fostering a positive and productive environment.

Abilities:

- **Project Management:** I manage complex projects with precision, ensuring timelines, budgets, and deliverables are met.
- **Technical Expertise:** My background in standards development and engineering allows me to analyze challenges and propose structured, data-driven solutions.
- **Organizational Skills:** I am highly organized and detail-oriented, capable of managing multiple responsibilities while maintaining clarity and focus.
- **Adaptability & Learning:** I'm a quick learner who thrives in dynamic environments—ready to absorb new information, adapt to evolving needs, and contribute wherever I'm most needed.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about you/this individual?

Over the years, I've cultivated a deep commitment to athletics, leadership, and community service. My journey began in high school as a cross-country and track & field athlete and continued through college, where I co-founded the UConn Boxing Club while pursuing my bachelor's degree. For the past 11 years, badminton has been a consistent passion—I competed on the UConn Badminton Team during my part-time MBA, helping the team secure first place at the 2019 Northeast Collegiate Tournament.

In recent years, I've expanded my athletic involvement to Artistic Swimming, where I've immersed myself in both the sport and its technical aspects. Beyond personal participation, I actively contribute to the community through volunteer work at the Huaxia Chinese School of Greater New York. There, I serve on the registration team, organize the Parent's Athletics Club

(<https://www.hxgny.org/wp/2025-2026-hxgny-parent-club-list-jia-zhang-wen-hua-ke-ke-biao/>), and coordinate staff for the Sports Jr. class, where I also teach badminton to children for eight weeks annually. Additionally, I help run the Greenwich YWCA Badminton Club, fostering local engagement and promoting lifelong fitness.

These experiences reflect my dedication to teamwork, mentorship, and the pursuit of excellence—values I bring to every endeavor.

Are there any potential conflicts of interest we should be aware of?

None that I can think of

Candidate: Amy Oliver

City and state of residence: Palm City, Florida

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Garden Artistic Swimming

Education / Professional Background / Experience

I earned my master's in marriage & family therapy, and am licensed in FL as an LMFT. I have owned and operated a private practice in South FL for the last 17 years. With my education and professional background, I have been invited to speak at many events for women, teens, couples, and families. Additionally, I have taught workshops & classes on a variety of topics.

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

I am currently a member of the rules committee as a South Zone representative. I have served in this role for the past 3 years. Within the rules committee, I have taken on a leadership role in this legislative year for all proposals concerning the JO & Elite tracks as well as all AQUA rules/updates. Following convention, I will be taking on the role of Tech Chair for the South Zone. I am also the officials chair for the NE FL association. Within Gardens Synchro I have served as a 12U & Jr coach for our JO athletes.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

I was a competitive athlete for 10 years, and then returned to the sport as a coach and master's athlete 12 years ago. During the past 12 years, I have been elected to various leadership positions within our association & zone (listed above). Additionally, I have acquired my level 3 judges certification, DTC level 2 certification, & STC level 2 certification. I have also served as the classroom session lead & camp clinician for 3 Rising Star Camps held in Florida.

Why would you be a strong candidate for a leadership role on the USAAS Board of Directors?

I have a passion for both the sport and the athletes. I desire to create and sustain a thriving, competitive environment that encourages all athletes and coaches to perform at their peak. I value equitable, fair, & fun competitions for all who participate. I long to see this sport & USAAS grow in popularity & support across the USA.

What time, talents, and abilities would you/this individual bring to the board?

I am organized, ethical, kind, hard working, efficient, enthusiastic, energetic, creative, and spunky! I love bringing out the best in others and encourage everyone to operate with excellence.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about you/this individual?

I am eager to build upon the amazing work of my predecessors, and watch how this sport can flourish further.

Are there any potential conflicts of interest we should be aware of?

None

Candidate: Heidi Lurenz

City and state of residence: Franklin, Wisconsin

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Menomonee Falls Dolphinettes/Wisconsin Waterloons

Education / Professional Background / Experience

Bachelor of Science Physical Therapy Marquette University

Master of Science Adult Education and Administration University of Wisconsin -Milwaukee

As rehab lead at Aurora at Home my responsibilities included education, management and support of the therapists and nurses, financial success and quality control for the day-to-day functioning of our team.

In my 4 year term as the chair of the Therapy Shared Governance Committee, I led the group in setting goals and objectives and reviewing and updating policies for the Home Health division of Advocate Aurora Health Care, the largest health care organization in Wisconsin and Illinois.

As a member of the advisory board for the Milwaukee Area Technical College Physical Therapist Assistant Program, I helped ensure the policies and objectives complied with the Wisconsin state statutes.

My involvement in the Carroll University Physical Therapy Program board included the development of goals and curriculum for their emerging physical therapy program and ensuring they aligned with Wisconsin licensing board requirements.

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

I have held the positions of Technical Chair and Officials' Chair in the North Zone both for multiple terms. I have been a member of the Master's Committee for many years contributing to changes in rules and ensuring the master athletes' voices are heard. I am currently a member of the International Relations Committee.

I am a Life member and have been involved in artistic swimming since 1974.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

- Age group swimmer, Master swimmer, Coach, Judge
- Regularly judge at the local and national level
- Judged Youth Worlds in Samorin, Slovakia
- Judged Junior Worlds in Quebec City, Canada
- Judged Worlds in Fukuoka, Japan
- Judged various other international competitions in Puerto Rico, China, Chile, Peru, Colombia, France and Croatia

Certifications: AQUA judge, LTAD assessor level 5, STC level 1

Why would you be a strong candidate for a leadership role on the USAAS Board of Directors?

With my professional experience in physical therapy administration and my experience in various positions in artistic swimming, I have the depth of skills to oversee policy development and interpret reports and financial statements helping to make decisions to lead the organization in our ever-evolving sport. My excellent communication skills, organization and experience in artistic swimming would enable me to liaise smoothly between the USAAS Board of Directors and standing committees including Membership, Awards, Coaches Education, Collegiate and Masters committees.

What time, talents, and abilities would you/this individual bring to the board?

I have helped foster interest in artistic swimming both at the age group and master's level for the past 50 years and I look forward to being able to engage members on a larger scale using my leadership and organizational expertise. I am passionate for and have multifaceted experience in the sport of artistic swimming. I am willing to contribute, have the desire, the administrative leadership skills and professional experience to contribute to the USAAS Board of Directors.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about you/this individual?

I have dedicated myself to artistic swimming in various aspects over the past 50 years, be it as a swimmer, coach, judge, or committee member. I know firsthand the value that this sport brings to all ages; I have seen the enthusiasm and excitement of all levels of collegiate athletes at events I have judged, and I have seen the delight when one of our girls masters a new skill. Closest to my heart is the Masters, as I have swum as a master since 1990, and I value the camaraderie and friendships made in that group. Over the years I have experienced artistic swimming evolve and engage new generations of swimmers, and I want to be part of that continued evolution through growing our membership. I am part of our history, and I want to be part of our future.

Are there any potential conflicts of interest we should be aware of?

I am an assistant coach for the Menomonee Falls Dolphinettes and a master swimmer for the Wisconsin Waterloons.

VP of Competitive Programs

Candidate: Rebecca Phillips

City and state of residence: Orlando, FL

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Orlando Loreleis Artistic Swimming

Education / Professional Background / Experience

Bachelors of Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Masters of Biology from the University of Central Florida

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

Rebecca has most recently served as the VP of Competitive Programs. She currently is one of the scoring chairs for the south zones and the person who scores many national level events.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

Rebecca has been involved with Artistic Swimming for over 10 years. She has served in many different roles including level 3 Judge, coaching (CCP 3) at all levels of the sport, scoring chair for the south zone and national meets and most recently she served one term as VP of competitive programs.

Why would you be a strong candidate for a leadership role on the USAAS Board of Directors?

Rebecca is knowledgeable about the artistic swimming rules and procedures. She is passionate about fairness and accessibility for all who want to participate or support Artistic Swimming.

What time, talents, and abilities would you/this individual bring to the board?

Rebecca is interested in leadership development and will bring this skill to the role.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about you/this individual?

Rebecca will continue to work to support the Artistic Swimming community.

Are there any potential conflicts of interest we should be aware of?

She is a mom of two artistic swimmers and coaches for the Orlando Loreleis Artistic Swimming club.

Treasurer

Candidate: Anna Montgomery

City and state of residence: Hamden, CT

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Hamden Heronettes (HHC)

Education / Professional Background / Experience

BA in Biology from Franklin & Marshall College.

Have worked in several types of analytical laboratories, including in medical testing, soil analysis, water quality analysis and aquatic toxicology.

Current position as a production assistant at the Yale University Teaching Studios, managing logistics and coordinating between departments for projects that advance digital education at the university.

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

Current USAAS Board of Directors Treasurer

- Head Coach of the Hamden Heronettes for over ten years
- Current East Zone Chair

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

Artistic swimming coach for over twenty years. Previously a synchronized swimming athlete for nine years.

Why would you be a strong candidate for a leadership role on the USAAS Board of Directors?

As the USAAS Board of Directors Treasurer I've worked with the Board and CEO on strategic planning and overseeing the budget for the organization. I also worked with the executive board of the local club where I'm the head coach to create annual budgets and help to manage expenses to maintain budget targets. These experiences have allowed me to see how budgets work for both the national organization and smaller clubs. I hope to be a good representative of small and mid-sized clubs on the USAAS Board of Directors.

What time, talents, and abilities would you/this individual bring to the board?

I have worked to make sure my communication with the CEO of USAAS is clear and timely, and have worked with him closely to make sure the budget is presented clearly and that invoices are paid as they come due. I have attended almost all of the board meetings during my tenure and plan to continue to do so if I am elected to a second term.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about you/this individual?

I truly appreciate the opportunity to have served as the treasurer for the last two years. It's been a wonderful learning experience and an amazing opportunity to work with a diverse group of people from across the country.

Are there any potential conflicts of interest we should be aware of?

My only conflicts of interest are my affiliation with my club, the Hamden Heronettes, and my Chair position on the East Zone executive board.

Foundation Trustee

Candidate: Denise Shively

City and state of residence: Westerville, Ohio

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Unaffiliated

Education / Professional Background / Experience

I was a public relations professional in health care and nonprofit organizations prior to becoming a university faculty member in communication. Currently retired, I served as department chair and held several university leadership appointments during my nearly 30 years at Otterbein University as a senior instructor. I hold a bachelor's degree in journalism from The Ohio State University, and a master of arts in management and supervision from Central Michigan University.

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

Within the sport of artistic swimming, I have held many leadership positions on a local, zone and national level. In the Ohio Association I served as technical and officials chair previously. I served as North Zone officials and administrative chair. Nationally, I served the Board of Directors as a vice president of competitive operations and then as president from 2020–2024. Currently I am on the board as immediate past president (non-voting) and am serving as secretary. In addition, beginning in 2005 I served as national team manager for multiple teams including juniors, national team two and the senior team including as assistant manager for the 2008 Olympic team. My service to the national team continued for many years as needs arose.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

I became involved in the sport of artistic swimming as a masters athlete in 1981. Over the years as my children became involved in the sport, I became a coach and ultimately ended up head coach of the Columbus Coralinas. I retired from that position and the club transitioned to the Ohio Coralinas, but I remained involved in association and zone leadership positions as well as being a national judge. I continue to offer my assistance to the board of directors as a volunteer; attend national, zone, regional and location competitions as an official; and am currently filling a one-year unexpired term on the USAAS Foundation board of trustees.

Why would you be a strong candidate for a leadership role on the USAAS Board of Directors?

The foundation plays an essential role in our sport as we fund programs such as national teams, education and membership growth strategies. We have the potential to grow revenue for USA Artistic Swimming through the growth of the foundation. The foundation board is a fund-raising board, but I also think it's essential to have a close connection to the sport to identify potential donors and programs that can benefit from a synergistic relationship. The sport grows when funding grows and vice versa. Because of my background as a masters athlete, parent, coach, judge, USAAS board member and national team manager, I believe I have a wide view of the sport, its needs and the potential for growth.

What time, talents, and abilities would you/this individual bring to the board?

I remain committed to the goals of Judy McGowan whose unexpired term I am filling this year to grow the endowment. With growth of our core funds we can grow the amount that can then be given back to the sport. Judy was my mentor when I served as USAAS board president. I learned a lot from her about the importance of protecting the assets we have in the foundation. But I don't just want to protect what we have, I want to see them grow. I want to help identify the individuals who are as committed to the well-being of artistic swimming as she was. She had a vision and I hope I may continue to help that vision materialize in our efforts to fund the future of the sport. My professional background in management, communication, nonprofit governance allows me to offer a variety of skill sets to the foundation's board of trustees.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about you/this individual?

I am willing to address any questions that arise and if I don't know the answers, I pledge to find someone who may!

Are there any potential conflicts of interest we should be aware of?

At this point in time I serve as the immediate past president of the USAAS Board of Directors but that term ends at convention. I am also serving as secretary of the board (a non-voting member), but have discussed with the president the potential that I may need to resign from that position should that be a conflict with service on the foundation board of trustees.