



2026 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)
President	Kimberly Kohut*
VP of Olympic International	Cheryl Russell*
VP of Athlete Access and Opportunity	Jacklyn Luu
Foundation Trustee (3 seats)	Gigi Grizanti

**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

President

Candidate: Kimberly Kohut

City and state of residence: Cleveland, OH

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Unaffiliated

Education / Professional Background / Experience

B.S. Elementary Education (2001), Miami University (1-8 generalist license) M.Ed Curriculum and Instruction (2005), Kent State University (4-9 math license) Ed.S. K-12 Educational Leadership (2011), Kent State University (Pre K-12 principal license) Teacher (2001-present) (Cincinnati Public Schools and Parma City Schools) Taught 6th-8th grade Science, 7th grade Reading, 8th grade math/Algebra 1, 3rd grade all content areas, 1st grade all content areas, 7th grade ELA, 5th grade ELA, and 5th grade Math/Science; Assistant Principal (2015-2022) (Parma City Schools)-assisted school principal in all functions of leading a school including site-based budgeting

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

USA Artistic Swimming President (2024-present). Collaborates with CEO, Vice Presidents, and Athletes to create meeting agendas and lead bimonthly board meetings. Led the development of the 2025-2029 strategic plan. Negotiated CEO contract renewal and established a contract review task force of the Board of Directors. Established an open ongoing frequent dialogue with CEO and staff. USA Artistic Swimming Board of Directors Secretary (2020-2024). Assisted the President with meeting agendas, minutes, and notes from USOPC strategy sessions as we formed our mission and strategic plan over the 4 years in that role.. I attended many Conventions and am familiar with the governance structure and process. (See below for more association/zone level leadership/governance experience)

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

Athlete: 1997-2001 (Miami University); Coach: 2000-2002 (Cincinnati Synchronizers); Judge: 2002-present (National Figure Judge 2008, National Judge 2011, PAN AM Judge 2015, AQUA G Judge 2017, AQUA A Judge 2023, AQUA Gold Judge 2024); Coach: 2002-2010 (Brecksville Blue Dolphins); Lake Erie Admin Chair: 2005-present; Lake Erie Officials Chair: 2006-present; Lake Erie Education Chair: 2020-present; East Zone Officials Chair: 2012-2016; 13-15 National Team Manager 2013 & 2014; East Zone DEI Chair: 2020-2024; Secretary, Board of Directors: 2020-2024; President, Board of Directors: 2024-present; CCP: Level 3; Life Member

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

I currently serve in this role and I am seeking re-election for my second and final term. I have learned in my first term about the cyclical nature of the role and the time it takes for each phase of the cycle, so I can be a prepared and effective leader. I care deeply about the long term success of the organization and look forward to working with our CEO and the USAAS Foundation to capitalize on the opportunity of the LA 2028 Olympics to help us secure a more stable financial outlook for years to come. I would be a good candidate to serve in this leadership role because I was on the board of directors in a non-voting capacity from 2020-2024, so I am keenly aware of the historical progress the organization has made regarding financial stability and strategic planning. I have served the organization in many different roles as an athlete, coach, judge, manager, and association/zone leader. I also believe that my status as an international judge allows me to bring a unique perspective to the board regarding the trends and issues that are happening within our sport at the global level. I have developed strong relationships with key stakeholders around the world.

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

The contributions that I could bring to the USA Artistic Swimming Board of Directors is a continuation of the work that has been accomplished these past 6 years. We have transitioned from an operational board to a strategic board due to the health of the organization and the fiscal stability to have full time staff responsible for the day to day operations. I would continue to work with the CEO to allow this transformation to continue to grow and develop by working collaboratively with the staff and other board members. I am a very good listener and have had many opportunities to be calm in times of crises due to my personality and experience as a school leader. I am extremely organized and will be able to continue to balance my career alongside the position of President.

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

I am a teacher and will be starting my 26th year in education this school year.

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

My conflict of interest consists of being on the administrative board of the Lake Erie Association. I am not affiliated with any club.

VP of Olympic International

Candidate: Cheryl Russell

City and state of residence: Riverside, CA

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Unaffiliated

Education / Professional Background / Experience

I have a Bachelor's Degree in History from USC, a Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential, and a Master's Degree in Advanced Reading Practices. I was a Team Leader in my Elementary School for 20 years. I was a Mentor Teacher for many years, as well.

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

Currently, I am the Vice President Olympic International and the Officials' Chair in my Association. I've also held the Membership Chair for USAAS, Secretary position for the West Zone, and Tech Chair in my Association.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

I've been an International Judge, currently Gold-level, for twenty years and National Judge for over thirty years, culminating in my selection as Olympic Judge in Paris. I currently have CCCP level 3. I have been an Assistant Coach for over 45 years with various Southern California clubs including: Huntington Beach Aquabelles, Long Beach Synchronettes, Riverside Aquettes and Meraquas of Irvine. I was Head Coach for the Long Beach Synchronettes, as well. As an Assistant Coach in Riverside, my 12-13 swimmers (the Age category for many years) were often finalists, medal winners and Champions at Nationals. Prior to judging and coaching, I was an athlete with the Buffalo Swimkins, Anaheim Aqualinas, and Huntington Beach Aquabelles.

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

As the current Vice President Olympic International, I will bring continuity and expertise to this position if re-elected. Whenever asked to support various Artistic Swimming endeavors (most recently Judge's education), I have not hesitated.

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

I am retired, so I have a great deal of time to devote to this position. My wealth of experience, from local to regional to the zone to national to international gives me a broad perspective. As a former athlete, coach, and judge at all levels, I can also relate to all of the members in those categories.

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

I have fulfilled all of my duties as VP of Olympic International in an exemplary manner, and will continue to do so for the two years leading up to the LA28 Olympics near my home in Riverside, if I am re-elected. Thank you for your support!

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

My sister, Irene Hawes, is an International Evaluator.

Vice President of Athlete Access and Opportunity

Candidate: Jacklyn Luu

City and state of residence: St. Louis, MO

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Unaffiliated

Education / Professional Background / Experience

I hold a Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Stanford University, and I am currently an MD Candidate at Washington University School of Medicine. Professionally and academically, I'm passionate about advancing health equity, healthcare systems, and clinical quality improvement.

I currently serve as an athlete representative on the USOPC (US Olympic and Paralympic Committee) Sports Medicine Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Working Group. In this national role, I collaborate with sports medicine leaders, mental health specialists, and administrators to build equitable pathways for diverse healthcare providers, enhance cultural competency, and establish inclusive best practices across Team USA sports medicine.

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

My governance experience in artistic swimming spans both national organizational leadership and athlete advocacy:

1. USA Artistic Swimming Board of Directors: Serve as an Athlete Representative, elevating athlete-centered concerns to national governance, participating in strategic organizational planning, and working directly with executive leadership on mental and physical well-being initiatives.
2. Team USA Athletes' Commission: Serve as the Alternate Athlete Representative for artistic swimming, representing our sport's unique needs in national multi-sport policy discussions, governance meetings, and USOPC decision-making.
3. Community & Health Research Leadership: Currently leading a multi-institutional research project examining the physiological and psychological impact of hypoxic events in artistic swimming, coordinating directly with national staff and the athlete community to improve safety standards.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

I have been immersed in artistic swimming at every nearly every level over the past 16+ years:

1. Club: Trained with the Santa Clara Aquamaids for 8 years
2. Collegiate: 5-year varsity athlete at Stanford University; 2x Team Co-Captain, 5x Collegiate National Champion, 5x All-American, and 2x USA Artistic Swimming Collegiate Athlete of the Year
3. Senior National Team: 3-year member of the Senior National Team; 2024 Paris Olympic Silver Medalist, 2x World Championship Bronze Medalist, Pan American Games Silver Medalist, and 14x World Cup Medalist.
4. Coaching: Coach for USA Artistic Swimming Rising Stars Camps

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

I believe I am uniquely positioned for the VP of Athlete Access and Opportunity, because of my unique experiences working at the intersection of elite sport, systemic equity, and governance. Having spent 16+ years in artistic swimming, from local club team to Stanford's varsity program and ultimately standing on the podium as a 2024 Paris Olympic Silver Medalist, I have lived every stage of our sport's pipeline. I know the profound joy of our incredible sport, but I have also seen the barriers that make it cost-prohibitive, culturally isolated, and difficult to navigate for underrepresented families.

Since transitioning out of active competition, I have stepped directly into high-level governance as an Athlete Representative on the USAAS Board of Directors and the Team USA Athletes' Commission. In these roles, I haven't just sat in meetings; I have worked directly with USAAS's executive leadership to reform national team selection processes, ensuring they are rooted in transparency and athlete trust. I've also played an active role already in USAAS board meetings, working with leadership to promote the athlete perspective.

Beyond sports administration and outside the pool deck, I have worked to build scalable access where none existed. When I recognized the systemic educational barriers facing low-income students while at Stanford, I founded and directed our university's chapter of Matriculate, recruiting over 60 mentors to guide underrepresented youth to higher-education.

Through all these experiences, I have worked tirelessly to build opportunities for those turned away by systemic and institutional barriers. What makes me excited about this role is the opportunity to do the same for USAAS, by developing inclusive policies and educational opportunities so that anyone can enjoy our amazing sport.

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

I bring an unwavering dedication to the mission of athlete access. Having earned my Master's in Biomedical Informatics from Stanford and currently training as a physician at WashU, I offer three distinct capabilities to this role:

1. Strategic Equity & Policy Experience: Through my national appointment on the USOPC Sports Medicine DEI Working Group, I collaborate with physicians, psychologists, and policy leaders to evaluate systemic barriers across Team USA. I bring this exact expertise to USAAS, by helping to understand how we can make our sport more inclusive for people of all abilities and backgrounds.
2. Athlete-Centered Advocacy: Having led teams through high-pressure environments as a 2x Stanford Team Captain and an Olympian, I understand how to mediate complex dynamics with empathy and clarity. Whether facilitating dialogues or representing artistic swimming's unique voice to the broader USOPC Board of Directors, I know how to turn vulnerable athlete feedback into constructive, actionable strategy.
3. Systems-Level Thinking: My background in healthcare research has taught me how to measure human-centered outcomes. I will bring this knowledge to our access initiatives, developing programs and policies that broaden access to artistic swimming.

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

As the daughter of Vietnamese immigrants, my commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is deeply personal. Growing up, I saw how community support and intentional access could transform lives inside and outside the pool. This lesson has guided me through my time at Stanford to the Olympic podium and now medical school. Artistic swimming gave me a platform to compete at the highest level, and I am passionate about ensuring that every athlete, regardless of their background, socio-economic status, or identity, feels welcomed, supported, and empowered to thrive within USA Artistic Swimming.

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

Current BOD member as Team USA AC Alternate Representative

Foundation Trustee

Candidate: Gigi E Grizanti

City and state of residence: Amherst, NY

Affiliated Club (if applicable): Buffalo Swimkins

Education / Professional Background / Experience

Executive Leadership/Fundraising/Current Trustee

Leadership or Administrative Experience in Artistic Swimming

I have served as a Trustee for the last 3 years and would welcome continuing to serve another 3 during this time of great opportunity for growth and NGB success. In addition, I have over 30 years of executive leadership experience that I feel helps contribute to being a useful member of the Board of Trustees.

Artistic Swimming Background / Experience

I have been involved in this Sport since the age of 8, as a swimmer, a parent, Club Board of Director, coach, National Team Program Coordinator and advocate.

Why would you be a strong candidate for a leadership role on the Foundation Board?

I believe I have contributed in many ways to the success of the Foundation my last three years and look forward to serving another term.

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

Fundraising Experience/Love of the Sport and hopes for continued growth

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

If anyone has any questions, feel free to reach out to me.

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

No