

Richard Garza - Candidate for Vice President of Administration



The Election Committee has deemed that Richard Garza is a member in good standing of USMS. The candidate has indicated he is planning to attend the HOD Meeting for this election year and, if elected, is planning to attend all HOD Meetings during his tenure in office.

The candidate was nominated by and received a letter of recommendation from *Tom Boak* and received a letter of recommendation from *Stuart Smith* in accordance with our Election Operating Guidelines.

The candidate provided the following responses on the Candidate Questionnaire/Consent-to-Run Form:

Section Two: Candidate Qualifications

I am a member in good standing of USMS in this election year: Yes No

I am planning to attend the HOD Meeting for this election year: Yes No

I am Planning to attend all HOD Meetings during my tenure in office: Yes No

I have attended more than 1 HOD Meeting in the past five years: Yes No

I am a resident and a member of the Zone from which I seek election (Director Candidates only): Yes No N/A

Please list the USMS National HOD Meetings you have attended, including the dates of attendance:

September 11-15, 2013 Anaheim California
September 17-21, 2014 Jacksonville Florida
September 30 - October 4, 2015 Kansas City Missouri
September 21-30, 2016 Atlanta Georgia

Section Three: Questions

Why are you interested in this position and why do you believe you would be a good candidate?

Because I am passionate about Masters swimming, I want to contribute to as many people as possible. I want to give back to the sport and share Masters swimming with as many adults as possible.

I asked myself, "If I was elected to the Board of Directors for USMS, would I like the person I became, and the skills I would learn along the way? Would this opportunity be an effective way to share my knowledge and skill for as many people as possible? Is this is the best way I can

serve others in Masters swimming on a national level?" The answer to all three of those questions were "YES!".

I believe I would be a good candidate because most of my experience is in administrative work. Yes, I am a coach, but I have fully embraced, and enjoy, the dry side of swimming as well. It's what makes the wet side of swimming, and coaching, possible. I am able to bring the perspectives of an LSMC volunteer, an editor, a stroke and turn judge, an athlete, and a head coach, all at the same time.

What do you consider to be the major issues facing USMS now and in the future? As a person holding an elected position within USMS, how would you address these issues?

Today, I see new members feeling intimidated, and a lack of experience in our future volunteers as issues facing USMS. In the future, I see social media becoming an issue.

The Adult Learn to Swim program is doing a fantastic job of creating educated and certified instructors in areas where adult lessons did not exist before. Many of these Masters programs are already welcoming new and diverse individuals into their programs. It's great to have more people participating in Masters swimming, however, these people who are new to swimming won't be keeping up with Masters swimmers who have been around for decades. This large difference in ability is going to leave the less experienced Masters swimmers out of the full experience USMS want's it's members to have.

One possible solution is to create different types of Sanctioned events, similar to USA Swimming's model for swim meets and ability. For example, if you have met qualifying times for Nationals, you CAN'T compete in this particular event. This would create USMS events that would be designed for Masters swimmers who have no time, or don't have any qualifying times for Nationals. This will create a less intimidating environment for the new Masters swimmer, or fitness swimmer that has never been to a Masters swim meet before. Any club could do this today, but creating the option in the rule book would spread the idea nationally and encourage new members to participate in USMS sanctioned events.

Our most valuable asset as an organization is experience. Many of our volunteers have served on local and national committees for many years, and have helped build USMS from the ground up into THE role model for a Masters Swimming National Governing Body. At some point, these experienced and dedicated volunteers will start the next chapter of their lives, and I'm concerned that the next generation of volunteers are going to be behind in the skills and experience necessary to continue providing an amazing service and experience for our members.

I would encourage each committee to create a course, ebook, webinar, cheat sheet, guide, power point presentation, anything they choose to explain what new members should know, and how the committee works. This will allow new committee members to be caught up and on the same page as more experienced members, so less time is spent training and educating new members.

The next generation is growing up, and will be a fully involved part of our membership in the coming years. This group is tech savvy, is used to being connected all the time, tends to post anything and everything on Social Media, and they don't know what a rotary phone is. Their primary form of communication is through the internet. The future issue: There are going to be to many forms of social media. There are going to be more than just Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. It's going to be the responsibility of USMS and each LMSC to either point new members to the designated profiles for USMS and LMSC's, or create profiles in the new social media outlets as they become more prevalent. Proactive use of social media is going to help USMS manage it's brand and image in the future.

I have never been a registrar, but the registrar in North Texas has explained to me that it's not possible to edit the information that goes out to new members in North Texas when they register or renew their membership. I would push to give the registrar more control in the content that goes out to new members, so they can include links and resources relevant to their LSMC, such as the LSMC website and Facebook page.

Please list USMS committees on which you have served. Include the dates you were on the committees and the names of the committee chairs under whom you served:

Current USMS National Positions Held: Legislation Committee Vice Chair 2015 - Present:
Chair - Meg Smith

Previous USMS National Committee Positions Held: Legislation Committee Co Vice Chair 2015 - 2015: Chair - Meg Smith

Legislation Committee Member 2014 - 2015: Chair - Sean Fitzgerald

Please list any other experience that relates to your qualifications for the position.

In 2010, I started to coach Masters regularly, and I was the only coach for the team at this pool. I grew the kids and masters program from about 6 to 90 swimmers in a year. I managed everything, billing, attendance, meets, meet entries, email, phone calls, complaints, socials, everything. I was running an entire swim team by myself.

In 2012, I became the Vice-Chair for the FGC LMSC. My biggest contributions to the LMSC were creating, and maintaining their social media pages on Facebook. And also completely updating the bylaws, which were about 8 years old at the time. I had to dig through 8 years of meeting minutes, and find every previous secretary to get all the missing minutes that I couldn't find online to make sure that every change that had been approved was in the bylaws.

In 2014, I joined the National Legislation Committee

In 2016, I joined the Futures Task Force, and have helped with research, and initiatives to get more younger swimmers involved with USMS.

In 2016, the NT LSMC elected me to be the Social Media Chair, and the Liaison to the National office for the USAS convention in Dallas TX.

In 2016, I became a Stroke and Turn judge for USA Swimming. Currently apprenticing as a Starter.

In 2017, I was elected as the Vice-Chair of the NT LMSC..

Please list any other information you would like included.

I am a USMS Level 4 certified coach and Kerry O'Brien Coaches award recipient.

I was selected to Head Coach for USMS at this year's World Masters Championship in Budapest Hungary.

I ran for a VP position before, and lost, but I realize my mistake, I should have gone by my middle name, Chris ;)

Please write a short summary statement that will be posted on the display board with your photograph at the HOD Meeting

Welcome to Dallas!

To: Cheryl Gettelfinger Elections@usms.org
Cc: Richard Garza the.richard.garza@gmail.com
From: Tom Boak
Re: Letter of Nomination and Reference, Richard Garza
Vice President Administration

I would like to nominate Richard Garza for the position of U.S. Masters Swimming Vice President of Administration. Please also consider this as a Letter of Reference.

Although he is only 29, he has burst onto the scene over the past eight years and immersed himself in United States Masters Swimming. He is a competitor, a coach, is involved in the North Texas LMSC and USMS at the National level.

First as a competitor – 35 Individual and 16 Relay Top Ten Times, Relay All American

Second as a coach – Level 4 Certified Coach 2017, Masters Coach since 2009, currently Head Masters Coach for Texas Ford Aquatics; Kerry O’Brien Coaching Award 2014; On deck Coach at World Championships in Budapest 2017 and Pan American Championships in Medellin, Columbia 2015.

Third in his LMSC – North Texas LMSC Vice Chair and Newsletter Editor

Last with USMS at the National level – Futures Task Force (note that the Legacy Stars Program is his idea), Legislation Committee since 2013 and serving as Vice Chair, Convention delegate since 2013, Florida Gold Coast Vice Chair 2013-2015, attended USMS Leadership Summits in both 2015 and 2017.

As an organization, we talk all the time about the importance of getting young people involved in our sport. Richard is exactly what we are looking for – he is passionate about Masters Swimming and willing to get involved at every level. It is a sincere privilege to recommend him for this important USMS position.

From: Stuart Smith

Date: May 30, 2017

Subject: Recommendation Letter

To: The Elections Committee

I would like to submit a letter of recommendation in support of Richard Garza regarding the position of Vice President/Administration for United States Masters Swimming.

Richard has spent a number of years in various positions on local and national committees which would make him a logical choice for a V.P. role

Richard has been our Masters coach here for one year now. In that time, he has immersed himself into all areas of Masters Swimming. He has more than doubled membership on the team, and he has promoted the sport locally through clinics and competitions. He has also recently been named head coach for the World Championships this summer.

Through all these accomplishments, Richard has shown that he is organized, innovative and an excellent communicator.

Thank you,

Stuart Smith
Texas Ford Aquatics