

## **2018 Virginia Local Masters Swim Committee (LMSC)**

### **Chair Report**

This report marks the end of my first term as Chair of this fantastic organization. It has been my honor to represent our membership not only locally, but also regionally and nationally. It is my hope that I can continue to serve another term in this position to see through on some initiatives that we have recently started, and to begin pursuing and implementing new efforts to enhance the experience of Masters Swimmers in Virginia and West Virginia.

We have a superb Board of Directors, who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to our LMSC. Many of our Board members currently and/or previously serve on USMS national committees, not to mention that one of our members is the current President of U.S. Masters Swimming. All of this experience and insight benefits our organization and, in my opinion, makes us one of the strongest LMSCs in the country.

USMS is rapidly changing many aspects of how it delivers benefits and services to meet and fulfill the expectations of our long-time members, while welcoming all newcomers, to include the non-competitive swimmer. As the national organization changes to address the needs across the country, we at the LMSC need to adapt to our members' needs at the local level. Our Board is meeting this goal and charging full steam ahead to continue on that path in 2019.

In this report, I just want to highlight some of the major issues and achievements we have tackled this past year. Certainly, this is not all we have achieved—please see the other Board member reports on our website for information specific to those functional areas.

As highlights, in 2018, the Virginia LMSC:

- Established quarterly Board meetings, allowing us to better discuss ad hoc issues and collaborate more effectively
- Voted to pay the USMS Sanction Fee of \$100 for Open Water events hosted by our member clubs
- Started a new program to provide member swim groups with a \$100 stipend to host a social function, helping build camaraderie among workout groups and to help recruit new members
- Sent six members/coaches to the USMS National Coaches Clinic
- Paid 50% of the cost for several members to obtain a USMS Coaches Certification
- Approved the LMSC paying 50% of the registration fee for members to obtain an Adult Learn to Swim (ALTS) Instructor Certification
- Elected to not raise LMSC fees for individual memberships in 2019
- Added a swim meet at Randolph Macon College, which took place in Sept
- Hosted six pool meets and two open water events within the LMSC; also supported numerous other pool and open water events within the state, but located in the Potomac Valley LMSC

- Established great relationships with our neighboring LMSCs of Potomac Valley, North Carolina, and Maryland
- Worked on revising the Virginia LMSC By-Laws
- Participated in several USMS-led Peer-to-Peer conference calls

As excited as I am to look back at some of the things our Board accomplished in 2018, I am even more excited about our future and what we have planned for 2019. I attended numerous USMS meetings, clinics, and the Annual Convention throughout the year. I've also had some side discussions with several USMS National Board members and the CEO of USMS. Throughout these meetings and discussions, I was able to garner a lot of information on the strategic direction of USMS, and I want to make sure that the Virginia LMSC heads in the same direction. In that spirit, the following list are some goals that I, as Chair, would like to see achieved in the upcoming year.

VA LMSC Goals for 2019 (in no particular order):

- Offer clinics around the state, such as stroke, technique, ALTS, health & nutrition, swim techniques for triathletes and open water swimmers, etc.
- Submit a bid for, and host, the LCM Colonies Zone Championships, as a preview to the 2020 Summer Nationals in Richmond
- Improve our Strategic Messaging, Communications, and Marketing to not only promote Masters Swimming in Virginia, but excite our membership and state about the 2020 Summer Nationals (it will also be the 50th Anniversary of USMS)
- Establish some outreach activities to visit as many pools in the state as possible to promote Masters Swimming and to see how the LMSC can help their aquatic program(s)
- Reach out to LMSC unattached swimmers and encourage linking up with a club or workout group
- Increase involvement of coaches into the Virginia LMSC by establishing a more active Coaches Committee – they are our primary contact with the majority of our members
- Continue to pursue the possibility of establishing a Regional Club for our LMSC
- Complete the revision of the Virginia LMSC By-Laws
- Evaluate the LMSC Board structure and determine if it meets the needs of our current membership
- Establish a task force to explore ideas and look at investing in other initiatives that will provide value to our membership
- Increase the number of volunteers for LMSC activities & events; also, better recognize our volunteers
- Charge the Fitness Committee with looking for creative solutions to reach out to and keep our non-competitive swimmers engaged in USMS

In order to make all these things happen, it takes a cadre of fantastic individual volunteers. I want to thank each and every one of those volunteers. Each year we recognize a couple individuals that stood out, for not only their current volunteer service, but their long-time commitment to Masters Swimming in Virginia. This year we awarded the 2017 Virginia LMSC Volunteer

Service Award to **Denise Letendre (VMST)** and **Kyle Ahlgren (Club Tribe)**. They both continue to serve our members, and I wanted to personally thank them for their dedication and devotion. I am currently taking nominations for the 2018 award, which will be presented at the David Gregg Meet in February. We always have opportunities for volunteers; so please reach out if you are interested in assisting in some capacity.

Finally, I want to give a special thanks to the number one volunteer in Virginia Masters Swimming, **Betsy Durrant**. Betsy stepped down from her position on the Board early this year as she switched her focus to fighting and recovering from cancer. Betsy has served in almost every position on the LMSC Board and the VMST Board since the early days of Masters Swimming in the 1970s—if there is a face of Virginia Masters Swimming, it is Betsy! I know there is nothing more she would like than to get back to the pool with her swimming family—we wish her well.

As I wrap-up my 28th year of Masters Swimming, and conclude my first term as the Virginia LMSC Chair, I want to again express my thanks to the Board for allowing me to lead this organization for the past two years. I have a passion and am committed to this great sport and organization. I want to preserve the history and intent of why the organization was founded, while being at the forefront of moving us forward to make it even better. If it is the desire that the Board maintain my services as Chair for another term, I would be greatly appreciative—I have unfinished work. Please send me any comments about our organization, or suggestions you may have on how we can make Masters Swimming better for all of Virginia! I am always available by email at [vachair@usms.org](mailto:vachair@usms.org).

Thank you!

**Kirk Clear**  
Chair, Virginia LMSC

