

## **Virginia LMSC Annual Meeting Chair's Report**

This Annual Meeting marks my final one as Chair. It has been a pleasure to work with dedicated volunteers and get to know enthusiastic swimmers in our LMSC. I am excited about the slate of officer nominees that will carry the LMSC forward.

The change of officers gives the LMSC Board of Directors the opportunity to assess the status of our U.S. Masters Swimming programs in Virginia/West Virginia and to fine-tune the operation of the LMSC to best serve the USMS mission of promoting health, wellness, fitness and competition for adults through swimming. Charlie Cockrell, Shirley Loftus-Charley, Chris Stevenson and Heather Stevenson have provided us with information in their reports that helps us assess our status and make decisions for the future.

For example, Shirley and Charlie report steady to slightly decreasing membership and membership revenue. Charlie also notes decreased revenue from meet profit and sanction fees. The key points about these items are not so much the reduced revenue, but rather the opportunity they present to figure out how to reach more adults who could benefit from swimming, and to offer more events that provide competition or just the chance to challenge oneself and reach a goal. Charlie has suggested specific focus on these two areas (outreach and events) in 2015, and I agree. The new Chair may wish to convene small task forces, which are more nimble than a large board and can meet more frequently, to address these issues and suggest solutions.

One area I hope the new Board will address is volunteers. We can have every intention of hosting more meets, creating great content in our communication vehicles, and encouraging camaraderie among our swimmers and clubs, but these things all require volunteers. While we are starting to see some new and younger volunteers in our LMSC, I would like us to have more participation from different people. This requires creating roles that volunteers understand and feel good about accomplishing, recruiting new volunteers, and recognizing our volunteers for their contributions.

One way to generate ideas to boost our LMSC is by learning from other LMSCs. There are an increasing number of opportunities for this. In the past year, USMS's LMSC Development Committee has hosted multiple peer-to-peer telephone conferences in which persons serving similar roles in different LMSCs (e.g. Registrars, Fitness Chairs) can share ideas and ask each other questions. These conferences will continue in 2015. Also, 2015 will see the first ever LMSC Leadership Summit hosted by USMS. The Summit, which will be held in March, will allow LMSC Chairs from across the country to meet face-to-face for training, networking and idea sharing.

With new officers and more opportunities from ever to share with and learn from other LMSCs, I am very optimistic about the Virginia LMSC's future.