

Candidate 1 of 6: Brendan Baker

LIHA Membership: Family Member

Current or New Board Member: New board member

Introduction (tell us about yourself):

My name is Brendan Baker, and sports has always been at the heart of who I am. As both a dedicated hockey player and coach, I've spent countless hours on the ice; competing, teaching, and sharing the passion that the game brings to so many of us. Hockey isn't just a sport to me; it's a way to build character, resilience, teamwork, and lifelong friendships.

Off the ice, I'm a proud father of three amazing kids who share my love for the game. Watching them grow as players and as people has been one of the greatest joys of my life. Whether I'm coaching from the bench, lacing up my own skates, or cheering them on from the stands, hockey is something that connects us as a family.

Through playing and coaching, I strive to lead by example; instilling values of hard work, respect, and perseverance in every athlete I work with. For me, hockey is more than a game; it's a lifelong passion that brings our family and community together. I had such a great organization to grow in as a child, and I'd like to do my part to contribute to youth hockey in Lincoln.

Why are you interested in serving on the LIHA Board of Directors?

I've spent the last 3 seasons coaching 6U and watching the kids grow in skill, passion, and excitement. I've also seen reluctant parents, unsure of what they are signing their kids up, change perspective over the course of a season because of the environment we help provide.

Not only do I plan to continue contributing on the ice, I'd like to help grow LIHA off the ice so we can continue to reach the Lincoln community.

I am committed to:

Player Development: Creating a positive, competitive, and skill-focused environment where every athlete has the opportunity to improve.

Strong Coaching Support: Ensuring our coaches have the resources, communication, and backing they need to lead effectively.

Clear Communication & Transparency: Listening to families and making thoughtful, informed decisions that reflect the best interests of our association.

Building Community: Strengthening the culture of Lincoln Youth Hockey so that it's not just a program, but a place where kids build confidence, friendships, and lifelong memories.

Most importantly, I care deeply about the future of our organization. My goal is to help create an environment where every child, regardless of skill level, feels valued, challenged, and excited to come to the rink.

What are your areas of expertise? What contributions do you feel you can make?

1. Leadership & Culture Building - The board shapes the overall culture of Lincoln Youth Hockey.

I plan to:

Promote sportsmanship, accountability, and respect.

Support a positive parent environment.

Help set standards that reflect long-term development over short-term wins.

Lead by example as both a coach and a hockey parent.

Culture starts at the top and the board defines that tone.

2. Communication & Transparency -Many youth organizations struggle with communication.

I plan to:

Be a bridge between coaches, parents, and leadership.

Encourage open forums and clear updates.

Help families feel heard, even when decisions are difficult.

Promote transparency around policies, team selection, and finances.

3. Program Development & Long-Term Vision

I plan to:

Contribute to growth strategies for increasing participation.

Retention efforts so players stay in the program.

Development models that prioritize skill progression.

4. Fundraising & Resource Development -Off-ice leadership also includes financial health

I plan to:

Assist with sponsorship outreach.

Support fundraising initiatives.

Promote stable finances - protect the future of the program.

Do you have any other current volunteer commitments (LIHA or otherwise)?

7U Select Baseball Coaching - March Through July

Candidate 2 of 6: Tami Batt

LIHA Membership: Family Member

Current or New Board Member: New board member

Introduction (tell us about yourself):

My name is Tami Batt, and I live outside McCool Junction with my husband and our four children. I currently serve as the Plant Operations Manager at Corteva Agriscience's Seed Corn Production Facility, where I lead daily operations, operational strategy, and a diverse team responsible for delivering safe, high-quality, and efficient production outcomes.

Throughout my career with Corteva, I have driven several key initiatives focused on process improvement, team development, and operational excellence. My leadership style emphasizes accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement, and I take pride in building strong teams that perform well under pressure and adapt quickly to changing needs.

All four of my children (15, 12, 10, and 8) have participated in LIHA, giving our family firsthand experience with the program's value and impact. I welcome the opportunity to bring my leadership experience, operational background, and commitment to the community to the board.

Why are you interested in serving on the LIHA Board of Directors?

I am interested in serving on the LIHA board because the organization has played a meaningful role in my family's life for many years. With our children participating in travel, house, and select programs, I have gained a well-rounded understanding of how each level supports player growth, confidence, sportsmanship, and a lifelong love for hockey.

What motivates me most is LIHA's mission to provide a safe, competitive, and development-focused environment for youth athletes. I have seen firsthand how the organization fosters teamwork, discipline, and character values that extend far beyond the ice. LIHA's commitment to developing players of all ages and skill levels, while emphasizing respect, inclusivity, and long-term growth, aligns strongly with my own values as a leader and parent.

I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to a program that has given so much to our family. With my background in operations leadership, strategic planning, and team development, I hope to support LIHA as it continues to grow, strengthen its programs, and deliver a positive, meaningful experience for all athletes and families.

What are your areas of expertise? What contributions do you feel you can make?

My areas of expertise include operational leadership, strategic planning, process optimization, and team development. In my role as Plant Operations Manager at Corteva Agriscience's Seed Corn Production Facility, I oversee complex daily operations, lead cross-functional teams, and drive initiatives focused on safety, efficiency, and long-term organizational success.

I believe these skills translate well to board service. I am comfortable evaluating systems, identifying opportunities for improvement, and helping organizations build strong, sustainable structures that support their mission. I approach challenges with a solutions-oriented mindset and value transparent communication, collaboration, and accountability.

I feel I can contribute meaningfully by helping LIHA strengthen its operational processes, support thoughtful growth, and continue delivering a high-quality experience for players and families. With experience managing large teams, navigating change, and leading continuous improvement efforts, I can offer a practical, strategic perspective as LIHA plans for the future.

Do you have any other current volunteer commitments (LIHA or otherwise)?

Yes, I am currently involved in a few volunteer commitments. I have supported the LIHA community by helping coach the Mite program for four years and am currently serving as the team manager for the 12U travel team.

In addition, I serve on the Executive Board of Directors for the York County Development Corporation, where I am currently the Board President. My term as president concludes in March 2026, at which point I will continue as a board member.

These roles have strengthened my leadership skills, strategic perspective, and understanding of community needs; experience that I believe would be valuable in supporting LIHA through board service.

Candidate 3 of 6: Jonathan (Jon) Cropsey

LIHA Membership: Family Member

Current or New Board Member: New board member

Introduction (tell us about yourself):

My name is Jonathan (Jon) Cropsey, and I am a lifelong hockey enthusiast, player, and dedicated hockey parent. I currently have two children playing youth hockey and also compete in an adult league myself. Hockey has been a central part of my life for many years, and I am passionate about helping grow the game and create positive, development-focused experiences for young athletes. I believe strongly in building strong programs that emphasize skill development, teamwork, sportsmanship, and a love for the game. I am also eager to continue learning and being coached by others in the sport so I can better support players, parents, and the organization.

Why are you interested in serving on the LIHA Board of Directors?

I am interested in serving on the LIHA Board of Directors because I care deeply about the development of youth hockey and want to give back to the organization that supports so many families and players. Having experienced the game as a player, parent, and volunteer, I understand the importance of strong leadership, clear communication, and thoughtful planning. I want to help ensure LIHA continues to provide a positive, well-organized, and inclusive environment where players of all skill levels can grow, learn, and enjoy hockey. I also look forward to learning from other board members, coaches, and volunteers so I can continue to grow and contribute more effectively.

What are your areas of expertise? What contributions do you feel you can make?

My strengths include organization, leadership, communication, and hands-on volunteer experience. I have volunteered numerous hours at hockey events across the state and understand what it takes to successfully coordinate tournaments, practices, and program logistics. In addition to hockey, I helped found the BRCA (Back Road Catfishing Association) in 2022 and currently serve/have served as Vice President, which has given me experience in building an organization from the ground up, managing operations, supporting members, and helping guide strategic decisions. I believe I can contribute to LIHA by supporting program development, helping improve operational efficiency, assisting with event coordination, and representing the perspectives of both parents and players, while continuing to learn from others within the organization.

Do you have any other current volunteer commitments (LIHA or otherwise)?

Yes. I am actively involved with the Lincoln Ice Hockey Association (LIHA), where I currently volunteer in multiple capacities supporting youth hockey programs and events. In addition, I am involved with the Back Road Catfishing Association (BRCA), where I have served as Vice President, and I regularly volunteer at various hockey events and activities throughout the state.

Candidate 4 of 6: Rick Davis

LIHA Membership: Family Member

Current or New Board Member: New board member

Introduction (tell us about yourself):

My name is Rick Davis, and I began playing ice hockey in Omaha in 1995. I participated in high school house hockey with the Lincoln Ice Hockey Association (LIHA) during its inaugural season. Being involved with LIHA at its earliest stages gave me an early appreciation for the importance of strong foundations, thoughtful governance, and sustainable growth in youth hockey programs.

I have remained actively involved in hockey throughout my life. Since returning to the game in 2016, I have played senior league hockey and have served as a team captain for the past five years, strengthening my connection to the local hockey community.

Professionally, I retired in 2024 as a Chief Warrant Officer Four from the Nebraska Army National Guard and currently serve as a pilot with StarCare, the helicopter air ambulance supporting the greater Lincoln area.

Why are you interested in serving on the LIHA Board of Directors?

I am seeking a position on the LIHA Board without a specific agenda, but with a strong interest in supporting sound governance, organizational stability, and long-term growth. LIHA continues to expand, and I see an opportunity to help ensure that growth is managed responsibly in a way that benefits athletes, families, and volunteers alike.

My connection to LIHA is also deeply personal. My younger sister, Rebecca (Davis) Miller, served on the LIHA board for several years prior to her passing. One of her most impactful contributions was her work with the mite and mini-mite age groups. In 2013, she designed and led the first Shamrock Showdown tournament for the 8U and 6U divisions. Following her passing in 2014, the tournament was renamed the Rebecca Miller Memorial Shamrock Showdown in her honor.

In 2019, I was asked to take over responsibility for the tournament, which I accepted. While the event was not held in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has since returned and continues to grow. This year's tournament marks the fourth consecutive year and includes more than forty registered teams from Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Through this role, I have developed a strong commitment to stewarding LIHA programs thoughtfully and sustainably.

What are your areas of expertise? What contributions do you feel you can make?

My professional background as a senior military officer and medical helicopter pilot has required disciplined decision-making, accountability, risk management, and adherence to strong governance principles. These skills translate directly to board-level responsibilities, particularly in fiduciary oversight, policy development, and strategic planning.

Through managing the Shamrock Showdown tournament, I have gained hands-on experience with budgeting, logistics, volunteer coordination, communication, and long-term planning. I would bring this operational perspective to the board while maintaining a focus on consistency, transparency, and mission-driven decision-making.

I am motivated to help ensure LIHA remains financially responsible, well-governed, and positioned for long-term success while honoring the organization's history and the people who have contributed to its growth.

Do you have any other current volunteer commitments (LIHA or otherwise)?

My primary volunteer commitment is overseeing the Rebecca Miller Memorial Shamrock Showdown tournament. In addition, I remain involved in the hockey community as a senior league team captain and actively play on the 402's Finest first responder ice hockey team.

My family is also actively involved in local hockey. My son Blake is a freshman at Standing Bear High School and a co-captain of the Lincoln Capitals South High School Club team. My younger son, Becket, is a sixth grader at Moore Middle School and a goaltender for the 12U Penguins and a 12U select team. My wife, Heidi, serves as the Capitals South team manager. This involvement gives me a firsthand understanding of the experiences and needs of players, families, and volunteers within LIHA.

Candidate 5 of 6: Matti Roinila

LIHA Membership: Family Member

Current or New Board Member: Current board member running for re-election

Introduction (tell us about yourself):

I grew up playing hockey in Grand Forks, ND where I played high school for Grand Forks Red River Roughriders in 2004-05. I then played for Omaha AAA from 2005-2008 and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Cornhuskers from 2008-2013. In 2014, I graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a Master of Architecture, where I also served as an Assistant Coach for University of Nebraska-Lincoln Cornhuskers from 2013-2014. After college, I moved back to North Dakota and was involved with NDAHA and the Northern Plains District from 2015-2019. I served as the Team North Dakota 14u Boys Tier 1 Assistant Coach for the 2015-16 season and the Team North Dakota 14u Boys Tier 1 Head Coach for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons, leading teams to the 2016 USA Hockey Tier 1 National Championships in Anchorage, AK and the 2017 USA Hockey Tier 1 National Championships in Phoenix, AZ. My wife and I moved back to Lincoln, NE in 2019 where I play adult league and have coached 6U and 8U for the past five seasons.

Why are you interested in serving on the LIHA Board of Directors?

I have served on the board for the past three years, two of which as the coaching director. I believe we have made improvements throughout the association during this time and I would like to continue helping LIHA provide more opportunities for the youth of our community.

What are your areas of expertise? What contributions do you feel you can make?

I have either played or coached at most levels of hockey and believe I have a unique ability to provide experiences from other hockey associations and how they may be implemented here.

Do you have any other current volunteer commitments (LIHA or otherwise)?

LIHA Board Member, LIHA 8U Coach, LIHA 6U Coach

Candidate 6 of 6: David Shipperbottom

LIHA Membership: Adult Member

Current or New Board Member: Current board member running for re-election

Introduction (tell us about yourself):

I started with LIHA in 2012 when both of my kids decided to play Hockey. I've coached, played in the Adult League and have been on the LIHA Board, in various roles, since 2014. Most recently, my Board duties have been as LIHA Board President. As the President, my focus is to ensure that we are in compliance with MWAHA and USA Hockey regulations/registration docs/policies/bylaws, etc. and to also continue to build the relationships with the Stars organization, Omaha Hockey Club, Fremont Youth Hockey Assoc, etc. The other focus has been on growth, where we've continued to focus on growth at the youth level and adult level with Board members that are very dedicated and focused on this. I am not taking any credit for the amazing growth that we have seen, my role is just support and looking over the big picture. My kids have been in the House program, the Select program, and the Travel program at different age levels so I feel very well versed in supporting and promoting all areas. Both of my kids are still playing, the youngest now in our Adult league and the oldest playing for the UNL Women's Club Team. So, I understand the commitment levels needed by players and parents at the different levels and age groups. My regular job is working at Duncan Aviation where I've been since moving to Lincoln in 1999. I am currently the Manager of Duncan's Government and Special Programs Dept which involves roles in leadership, mentoring, program management, budgeting, marketing, legal, negotiating, and reporting to Duncan's Senior Team. These job duties have proven very important in my current role with the LIHA Board.

Why are you interested in serving on the LIHA Board of Directors?

As a parent/coach/player and current Board member within the hockey organization, I'd like to ensure that there is a balanced interest within LIHA for the players and the parents to include the House, Travel, and Adult league levels. It is important to ensure that there is a balance and that our association can provide the opportunities that our members are asking for at all levels. It is impossible to keep everyone happy but there is a lot of effort put into keeping it balanced for the whole association.

What are your areas of expertise? What contributions do you feel you can make?

Having spent the last few years as President of our Board, I've learned a great deal. Areas that need improving, areas that have improved, and how to continue with the growth in our membership that we've seen over the past few years, are just a few things that we need to continue to move forward with. Understanding the history of what has been tried, what has worked, what hasn't worked, an idea that didn't work 10 years ago; can that work now? It's not always seen but the relationships between the local organizations have gotten better, although we still have bumps in the road, we will continue to work these relationships. My Core Competencies that I have great strength in are: Action Oriented, Decision Quality, Learning on the Fly, Drive for Results, Conflict Management, and Organizational Agility.

Do you have any other current volunteer commitments (LIHA or otherwise)?

Current Board Member. Assistant Coach for the UNL Women's Hockey Club