

Director-at-large Nominations

Jason Pailing

Membership/Hockey Experience:

My kids have been playing for AHA for 6 seasons where I've been coaching one or both of them since the beginning. Starting with the Mile High Mites program conducted by the AHA staff way back in the beginning I learned that Arvada Hockey is a family with old school beliefs in the blue color mentality of hard work will bring reward. I've been able to watch my kids and their peers grow as not just athletes but as people learning to earn their way in life as well as in sport and I look forward to teaching that to athletes and parents via coaching and as a member of the Arvada Hockey Association Board of Directors.

Benefits to AHA:

As a member of the board I will bring a down to earth approach to how AHA moves athletes forward as not only an athlete but as a future contributing member of the community. I'll focus on awareness of the rules of the sport, engagement of the athlete, parents, coaches and staff in our organization, that it takes us working together to create success for all. And leading by example when it comes to teaching our young athletes and parents the expectations, behaviors, attitude and effort that we all have towards not just the on ice performance of our athletes but the overall success of our coaches, teams, and the entire organization. We can and will grow together if we come together.

Identify One Primary Issue:

Volunteerism, being with the organization since mites and now my son playing bantams I am seeing less parents engaged in volunteering to support the organization. I'd like to promote the fact that it takes everyone's involvement for the organization to be successful and parent/guardian involvement is crucial to the success of our athletes. Help to promote how easy it is to run the clock, play music, help at events/tournaments and how rewarding it is to support the club and the athletes.

John Butterfield

Membership/Hockey Experience:

I started playing hockey for Arvada as a mite back in 1997 at the old North Jeffco rink. I played for 3 state championship teams while at Arvada as well as making four frozen 4 appearances while at Ralston Valley. After graduating from RV, I played 4 seasons at Metro State University of Denver in the ACHA where we advanced to the National Championship Tournament in 2015. After graduating from Metro State, I came back and coached at Arvada at the U16 age level for 4 seasons (2016-2019). I am a USA Hockey level 4 certified coach and my son plays in the 8U division. My daughter will be starting at AHA soon as well.

Benefits to AHA:

With years of experience playing and coaching hockey within our community, I believe I can be a beneficial member of the board. As a Director at Large, I would like to bring focus to not only the development of our players from a foundational level, but to our coaching staffs as well to help develop a

great team of coaches within AHA to help teach the game at all levels.

Identify One Primary Issue:

The hockey world is a small community, and there are families in our community that are putting their kids in neighboring associations when they should be at AHA. I think a commitment to development of not only players but development and retention of high level coaches is something that could help to grow AHA.

Bryon Thornburgh

Membership/Hockey Experience:

Our family has been actively involved with AHA since 2021, when our son, Declan, first participated in the Mile High Mites program. He quickly became passionate about the sport and transitioned into the Mites program that fall. This past season, he was a member of the 10U B Gold team. Looking ahead, Declan will be a second-year 10U/Squirt player next season.

Benefits to AHA:

I bring a unique perspective as a family relatively new to AHA and the world of hockey. While I didn't grow up playing the sport and am still learning the intricacies of youth hockey, I believe this gives me an insightful, fresh outlook. I can relate to other families who are also navigating their way through the early stages of the hockey experience, and I hope to contribute that perspective in a meaningful way.

Additionally, I have significant experience both personally and professionally serving on a variety of boards. This includes working with organizations in their early stages, where my focus was often on foundational elements such as governance and establishing effective structures. I've also worked with more established boards, helping to refine and optimize well-established systems and processes. As a result, I have developed a broad understanding of the diverse challenges and opportunities that boards face, and I can bring that experience to AHA to help drive positive growth and development.

I am also a strong advocate of action and collaboration. I view my role as a board member as one where I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and contribute wherever necessary. Whether it's offering insight, providing support to fellow board members, or assisting with specific projects, I am always eager to pitch in and make a tangible difference.

In my professional life, I lead large teams and manage complex operations. This has honed my leadership skills and strategic thinking, which I believe would be valuable assets to the AHA board. I'm confident that my experience in managing people, resources, and processes would allow me to contribute meaningfully to the organization's continued success and growth.

Identify One Primary Issue:

I believe an opportunity for AHA lies in maintaining and enhancing the quality of our programs while remaining competitive in an environment where youth have increasingly diverse interests and commitments. Today's kids are presented with a wide range of extracurricular activities, from other sports to academic pursuits, making it essential for AHA to continue offering a compelling and enriching experience for both those who are fully dedicated to hockey and those who balance multiple interests.

The challenge, then, is how we continue to cultivate a program that attracts and retains players who are

fully committed to hockey, while also accommodating those who may divide their time between various athletic and academic endeavors. Therefore, I feel it is important that AHA continue offering competitive pathways that allow players to engage at different levels of commitment, ensuring that both types of athletes feel supported and valued. By continuing to foster a culture of excellence, we can ensure that AHA remains a top choice for all types of young athletes.

Michael Carmosino

Membership/Hockey Experience:

I have been actively involved in hockey for 30+ years between being a player and coach. I started playing hockey at the age of 5 at Arvada and played through high school at both the AA and AAA levels. I currently have a son who will be a 2nd year peewee and a daughter who is a mite.

I got into coaching 7 years ago when my son started as a mite. I have continued to coach at the mite, squirt, and peewee levels. I am also USA Level 3 certified.

My experience as a player and coach has taught me the values, teamwork, and operational needs of the sport and what it takes to be successful.

Benefits to AHA:

I am passionate about hockey and AHA's mission. If elected as a board member, I will bring a strategic perspective that focuses on continued growth of the association. I will work with other board members to set clear goals and objectives for the association. I will also be a voice for all AHA parents, athletes, and coaches.

My main goal as a board member will be to ensure all players receive consistent and quality coaching and opportunities to grow as a hockey player. I strongly believe that investing in our coaches and applying a consistent coaching framework across the association at every level will lead to better individual and team development.

I want to help create a culture of community in which all AHA players can grow and develop not only as hockey players but also as individuals.

Identify One Primary Issue:

I am concerned about the lack of retention and the growth of the association. I would like to see AHA focus on three specific areas that I believe would help retain and attract players: (1) increased focus and investment in hockey development for players and goalies, (2) investment in coaching, and (3) community outreach and involvement.

Graham Burns

Membership/Hockey Experience:

Member of AHA since 2018, I have coached every year since at every level from Mite Beginner to

Bantam. My oldest son played at Arvada for 6 seasons and my daughter just completed her 5th season at Arvada. I have been playing/coaching/administering hockey for going on 40 years now and have held multiple roles on the AHA Board including Division Director, Director at Large and have served as Board President the last two seasons.

Benefits to AHA:

If elected as a Director at Large, I would look to continue the work we have done the last few seasons in improving our goalie program, our mite program, building our girls and in-house programs and continue to look for ways we can improve our families' experience at both Apex and our Off-Ice Facility as well as continue to support our excellent fundraising and scholarship initiatives

Identify One Primary Issue:

I would like to see improvements made to the Off-Ice facility including improving both the shooting area as well as the workout area. We have begun the process of doing this, but there is more work to do to get it across the finish line. I would also like us to follow through changing out the banners in the East rink this August and build a plan to rotate in and out banners each season.

8U Division Director

Andrea Ratkiewicz

Membership/Hockey Experience:

My husband, Jon, has had a lifelong passion for hockey, which has deeply influenced our family's involvement in the sport. Jon grew up playing hockey and continued through college, where he played and helped establish the hockey club at Colorado Mesa University. After graduating, Jon coached the CMU team, and for the past four seasons, he has been coaching the 8U and 10U teams at AHA.

As parents of two sons currently enrolled in the AHA program, one in 8U and the other in 10U, we are fully committed to the development of youth hockey in our area. While Jon has shared his love for the game and passion for coaching with me, I am still learning the ins and outs of hockey. However, what I bring to the table is an operational mindset, which I believe is a valuable asset to the association.

Benefits to AHA:

Benefits I Can Bring to AHA:

1. **Operational Mindset and Player Development:** With a keen eye for identifying gaps, I'm able to spot opportunities for improvement within the organization. For example, I believe that implementing growth mindset training for players and parents could make a significant difference. As the parent of a son in 10U this year, I understand firsthand how growth mindset training can help players bounce back more quickly during games and practices, improving their resilience and overall performance.
2. **Creative Thinking and Community Engagement:** I constantly strive to think outside the box, always looking for new ways to help AHA stand out. My goal would be to not just for AHA to be "a" hockey association, but "the" hockey association of choice. This could include organizing community skates and volunteering opportunities for players, helping to build stronger community connections while also giving back. In addition to player development.
3. **Social Media Strategy:** I bring expertise in recognizing emerging trends and leveraging them to increase visibility. By creating a more dynamic and engaging social media presence, I can help AHA expand its reach, engage with the community, and attract new players, fans, and sponsors.

Identify One Primary Issue:

One primary issue I would like to see addressed at AHA is placing more emphasis on player development, particularly in areas such as mental toughness, agility, power skating, and shooting. I believe this starts with the development of our coaches. With so many associations in the area, it's essential for AHA to stand out as a leader in player development. This could be achieved through offering more clinics throughout the season, as well as providing structured camps during the summer. Additionally, AHA could benefit from partnerships with coaches outside the association or by organizing camps/clinics led by some of our talented parent coaches. Incorporating agility training with certified parents and providing coaches with tools and education on how to instill mental toughness in players would also be crucial steps in strengthening our player development program.

Jamie Lied

Membership/Hockey Experience:

Our family has been a part of AHA for the past 5 years. For the last 2 years I have gotten to be the division director for 8U families. My husband has also been a coach for 8U for the past 5 years. All 3 of our kids are now playing hockey and AHA has very much become a family and an organization my children love to be a part of almost every day of the week.

Benefits to AHA:

It has been a joy being the division director for 8U for the past 2 years. I would love the opportunity to continue to be in this role for the next season. Learning how the organization flows, the best ways to communicate with families and make the beginning of hockey, for many kids, an enjoyable start has been the highlights of the last 2 years. As a family in the program, I always wanted to create an atmosphere that is easy to get involved in. Helping to provide volunteer opportunities for families is important to me. Because through this, I believe families can connect with other families and feel more seen in the organization. I also want to make sure those who can volunteer always feel and know how valued they are to AHA (from team managers to coaches). I want to continue to make our 8U division one that continues to have the high retention rate that we do from year to year because of the positive experience they receive. This includes thorough communication throughout the year to help keep our families well informed.

I also love to get to know families involved in AHA. Making myself available throughout the season to help them feel connected and seen in a group of 175 players is very important to me.

Lastly, I understand the role of the division director is very much focused on the behind the scenes work needed. From organization of volunteers to coordination of friendlies and jamborees. These past 2 years I've learned efficient ways to make the year run smoothly while coordinating all these pieces that make up the season. And at the same time, very much enjoy this major aspect of this role.

Identify One Primary Issue:

I would love to continue to create more of a culture that helps those that want to get involved able to easily do so. Really focusing on helping to attract and get great coaches involved in the organization and making the process of becoming a coach as efficient as possible.

10U Division Director

Christie Cromwell

Membership/Hockey Experience:

I hope you would consider electing me as your next 10U Director. My family is proud to have been with Arvada Hockey Association since 2016 when my oldest son, Riley started in the mite program when he was five. His love for hockey started when he was watching the Stanley Cup Finals that year. He told us, "I want to do that." He's now a second year Bantam (14U). My youngest son, Kaiden, decided he wanted to play and started in the mite program when he was five too. He's excited to be out of mites and ready to play 10U hockey. Both have had amazing coaches over the years. I have loved watching both my boys grow in the sport they love to play so much. They continue to learn the game, have made lifelong friends and most of all they are having fun. It truly has been a privilege getting to know our hockey families over the years. Thank you for your support!

Benefits to AHA:

I've been the team manager for Mite Intermediate and Mite Advanced for the last two seasons. Prior to that, I was a team mom for Beginners. As team manager, I emailed out communication regularly to families regarding jamborees, coordinated jerseys, snacks and goalie gear. I would also talk to parents about what was beyond mites. Having a player go through each age division with AHA has been beneficial in communicating with parents on what does it look like after mites, after squirts, etc. I'm also comfortable in both GameSheet and clock that I feel confident that I could train parents that are eager to learn.

I also love volunteering for AHA. It's my way give back to an organization that has done so much for my boys.

Identify One Primary Issue:

Volunteering – I stressed this a lot as a team manager to prepare parents for the need of volunteers doing GameSheet and Clock as they move beyond mites. We rely heavily on parent volunteers during games and tournaments to fill these spots. In my experience, it has been the same handful of people that volunteer in these capacities. I want to give parents the opportunity and the confidence to want to volunteer.

Jenn Archibald

Membership/Hockey Experience:

My son Everett played for 10u B Black during the 24-25 season. We have been a part of the AHA community for the past 3 years. I grew up in the East Coast as a United States Figure Skating Novice level skater who was recruited at the age of 13 to play women's ice hockey for Bishop Brady HS. I played on various coed and women's teams as a defender for 4 years until going to college when I took a skating break. I picked up figure skating again after college and was thrilled when Everett expressed his desire to play hockey.

Benefits to AHA:

I am an elementary teacher so I'm very organized and able to communicate in a positive way. I'm used to juggling many tasks at the same time. My experience on leadership teams has helped me to see the big picture in situations while asking thoughtful questions to reach a common goal. We are also a hockey loving family and are passionate about the success of AHA.

Identify One Primary Issue:

My question is what does AHA do to develop the kids that stands out compared to neighboring organizations? I would like to see AHA define what exactly it is that they do for the kids since all organizations claim they are "in it for the kids," yet what sets us apart? It would be great to see AHA join partnerships with elite coaches to improve the kid's hockey skills. In addition how does the organization define maintaining a level of competitiveness against the larger organizations in the area? This is an area I'd love to explore as a board member.

Tom Kirschenheuter***Membership/Hockey Experience:***

I am a lifelong fan of hockey and the Avalanche. I have been playing on two teams for the past six years. My oldest son, Henry, has been playing for AHA since he was 4. He is now entering his 2nd year as a squirt. I also served as 10U division director last year where I helped the board plan and coordinate the activities necessary for running a successful organization. Last year I was also head coach of the Squirts B Gold team and the year prior coached the Mite team. The entire experience has been one of the most rewarding I've had.

Benefits to AHA:

Based on my past experience in a variety of roles within Arvada Hockey Association, I would like to continue in my current role on the board for the next season. Having served on the Board for a year, I have extensive firsthand knowledge of the inner workings of AHA at this point. I've also gained valuable experience as a parent and coach for the 10U level. I feel confident that I can apply this experience to assist and guide families transitioning their children to the 10U program. My goal is to help facilitate open and easy communication during this time, thus making the transition as seamless as possible.

Identify One Primary Issue:

When communication is not done to the best standard it can lead to several issues. There are times when people over communicate and other times they don't communicate enough. The best approach is to provide the necessary information to the members of the association while remaining responsive to communications from the members. I would like to work toward making sure communication is clear and concise, includes all upcoming dates and expectations, and that every email is responded to.

12U Division Director

Monica Toole Hedgecock

Membership/Hockey Experience:

Our family has been a part of AHA for the past four years. We have a player going into his second year as a PeeWee and our youngest beginning as a Mite next season. Confession: I can barely skate! But I'm here to support our players, from cheering on our kiddos while wearing yellow and black face paint in the stands to taking action photo shots for the team. Where the passions of our four sons go, so goes Mama. Now, I'm happy for an opportunity to support the administration side of our hockey organization as well.

Benefits to AHA:

As an attorney running my own practice, I take on volunteer work similarly to my work, with a focus on organization, communication, and attention to the potential legal liabilities of the organization. I have previous board experience, having served as a Vice Chair and Director-at-Large on the boards of two other local non-profit organizations, and so I can hit the ground running maintaining organization and communication amongst PeeWee teams and families, as well as reporting back to the board with timely and accurate information to allow for prompt and appropriate policy responses and organizational decision-making. I have also taken on social media volunteer work to help promote other organizations I work with and can assist in this area at AHA too.

Identify One Primary Issue:

AHA has developed improved communication with families over the years that we have been members, but that is always an area that requires continued development as communication platforms and needs change. I hope to assist in that continued effort to be sure that families understand the internal structure of the organization, have easy access to timely information, and to encourage their involvement. In that way, I hope to help families support their players as best they can. I would also like to see AHA be the one-stop shop for the development of our young hockey players, so families don't feel compelled to seek out other organizations. Go Arvada, Go Bears, Go!

Sandy Young

Membership/Hockey Experience:

My son has been playing hockey at Arvada since before Mites (learn to skate). Colorado natives who are passionate about youth sports.

Benefits to AHA:

I work in marketing and have experience in social media and communications. Also have a good network of friends, family and business partners.

Identify One Primary Issue:

I would love to understand more about why people leave AHA. That can be discovered via communication or surveying for non-returning families (we do this at work for non-returning corporate partners). It will help us understand and possibly address issues we may/may not be aware of.

14U Division Director

Andrea Greenbaum

Membership/Hockey Experience:

My name is Andrea Greenbaum and I would appreciate your support in electing me as your 14U Director for the upcoming 2025-2026 season.

As my family embarks on their ninth season with AHA, I can say that we are so proud to be a part of such an amazing organization. My daughter will be a first year 14U, and my son will be starting his first year as a 10U player. For the past several years, I've had the privilege of getting to know our hockey family quite well- personally understanding the needs of our athletes, parents and coaches.

The past two years I have served on the Board of Directors as the 12U Age Division Director and as chair of the Girl's Committee. With your support, I would like to continue to support AHA this next year as the 14U Director. As we will be adding a 14U girls team in the 2025-2026 season, I am excited to work with both our male and female athletes in this growing division.

Focusing on the development of all of our athletes is something that I am passionate about. Is it an incredible experience to see your children grow and benefit in so many ways through their love of the game. The life skills gained at AHA stretch far beyond the ice- for players at all levels. Communicating with our families and coaches on a consistent basis is one way that I have supported our larger hockey family as a whole, and will remain committed to in the upcoming year.

Working alongside the Board of Directors, coaches, team managers, volunteers and players is something that I have enjoyed very much here at Arvada. If reelected, I will continue to support all members of our organization every step of the way.

Your consideration and support are truly appreciated and I can't wait to work together to make the 2025-2026 season the best one yet at Arvada Hockey.