

Clubs Matter

Strategic Planning Process

It's a new year and, following tradition, time to reflect on the past year's accomplishments and plan for the next 12 months. For a figure skating club, this translates to strategic planning. The development and implementation of a business plan could be the most important tool for your club. Set a date now for your club's board retreat to get together for a casual brainstorming session. An entire evening or day should be set aside once a year for a strategic thinking session to write, review and add to the current plan.

Begin with your mission statement. Do you have one? Does this still accurately reflect your club's membership and purpose?

Here are 10 questions to help you with the first step of the strategic planning process.

1. Why do we exist?
2. Whom do we serve?
3. What is our image?
4. What impact do we have or we had?
5. What are we doing well?
6. What is not working so well?
7. What is the impact of current internal or external trends that affect us?
8. What obstacles are holding us back?
9. What would it take to resolve or remove these barriers?
10. Are we willing to change to move forward?

Rose Snyder drafted these questions, and we work through this exercise at all Club Education Seminars to give board members concrete information on who they are, whom they represent, programs that are successful and programs that aren't. Send these questions to all of your board members before your strategic thinking session and share the answers. This will open the lines of communication amongst your board members and give you some direction for the future. You might be surprised at the differing opinions, but this is an invaluable exercise to help you come together and move forward as an organization. Remember – "If you don't know where you are going, any map will do!"

Upcoming Club Education

(All registration and hotel information will be posted on the Club Education Seminar home page when it is available)

Feb. 18, 2007 – Sugar Land, Texas, Marriott Town Center
March 25, 2007 – Augusta, Maine, location TBD
May 3, 2007 – Reno, Nev., Governing Council meeting
June 2, 2007 – St. Louis area, location TBD

Skating Director Program Presented by U.S. Figure Skating — May 14-16, 2007 — Go to www.narce.com to register —

The Skating Director Program presented by U.S. Figure Skating is designed for figure skating program directors, administrators and instructors who aim to offer the highest level of service and opportunity through their figure skating program. This program will teach the participants how to use the full array of U.S. Figure Skating programs to create a successful and financially viable figure skating program, from the basics to high-level competitive programming.

Send Your Skating Director!

PSA credit and Basic Accreditation exam available

Topics include:

- Understanding figure skating from tots to elite
- Franchising the program
- Customer Service issues
- Parent education
- Risk management
- Ethics
- Coaching programs
- Synchronized skating
- How to develop an off-ice training program

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National Skating Month in Full Swing!

National Skating Month 2007 is upon us! Throughout the month of January (and beyond!) U.S. Figure Skating member clubs, Basic Skills programs and STAR rinks all over the country are holding free clinics as well as a variety of other fun activities to attract newcomers to the sport of figure skating. National Skating Month's home



page is being updated daily with news blurbs and photos from these events. You will also find weekly skating tips provided by none other than 1992 Olympic gold medalist Kristi Yamaguchi, as well as a listing of clubs participating in National Skating Month. For more information, go to U.S. Figure Skating Online, then "Clubs," then "National Skating Month."

Rink Dasher Board For Sale



U.S. Figure Skating is happy to offer all of our member figure skating clubs and Basic Skills programs a customized eight-foot dasher board to proudly display rink side at your home facility. It's brought to you by AMI Graphics. The U.S. Figure Skating discounted price, which includes shipping, is only \$115 per board. You can personalize the top line with your club name. Dashmax is an ultra-durable dasher product that is easy to install and is guaranteed for the entire year. To download an order form, go to U.S. Figure Skating Online, then "Clubs."

Share Your Great Ideas!

If you would like to share a success story with other clubs about a specific program, fundraiser, scholarship award program, governance issues or membership drive, and in the process generate a some publicity for your club, please write a short article (include pictures if possible) and send to Susi Wehrli at swehrli@usfigureskating.org. We will post responses to initiate a new forum for our clubs to share ideas with one another.

Kathy's Corner

Kathy Dreves, Director of Member Services

In early January, you'll receive (or may have already received) what could be considered the most important piece of mail you'll receive all year from U.S. Figure Skating. What could it be, you ask? Why, it's the announcement of the 2007 Governing Council, of course!!

Ours is an organization that provides you, the member club, an opportunity to have a say in the direction of our sport. Many don't realize that it doesn't matter if your club is allowed one vote or 12. Just as in a presidential election, EVERY VOTE COUNTS! In addition, our bylaws state that every club is *required* to register delegates – even if they cannot attend the meeting.

This year's meeting will be held May 2-5 in Reno, Nev., at the Grand Sierra Resort. It's a beautiful property with plenty of spacious meeting rooms (not to mention a 24/7 bowling alley). There will be seminars and forums available to delegates as well as the ever-popular Club Education Seminar.

So, please, watch your mail for this important information. We'll send the official announcement and registration forms to the club secretary and a copy of the announcement and letter (no forms) to the president. I encourage you to register your delegates and prepare to let your club's voice be heard!

Feel free to contact us at Member Services (memberservices@usfigureskating.org) with any questions you may have.



Helpful Links

U.S. Figure Skating mission statement: <http://www.usfigureskating.org/About.asp?id=71>

Club Education home page: <http://www.usfigureskating.org/Clubs.asp?id=233>

National Skating Month: <http://www.usfigureskating.org/Clubs.asp?id=234>

Board Source: <http://www.boardsource.org/>