

Clubs Matter

High School Programs and School Recognition

Keeping up with studies in school and training for skating requires teenagers to juggle both activities to maximize their time. It sounds easy, but we all know there is a lot more to it. There's homework, projects and other extracurricular activities, plus on-ice and off-ice training time, travel to and from tests and competitions, and all that goes with being a dedicated figure skater. So, what can your club do to help support and retain its teenage members, and to ensure they continue to participate through their high school years and make the most of their skating career?

Did you know that U.S. Figure Skating sends out numerous **test recognition letters** to high schools throughout the country recognizing the gains made by our skaters? This program has been around for more than 10 years and is open to all skaters who have reached the novice level or higher in any discipline.

Many skaters choose to lighten their load by cutting back on their skating in the last two years or so of high school as they prepare for college. To encourage continued participation, the **High School Program** was designed to allow skaters to represent their school in a team competitive environment – for the fun of it! U.S. Figure Skating also offers **school-affiliated** club memberships to make this process easier for high school skaters.

The **Graduating Seniors Certificate** is another way U.S. Figure Skating is supporting those who have stayed involved through high school and is open to all members of U.S. Figure Skating. Applied for in the spring of junior year, the letter, which is prepared by U.S. Figure Skating, can be used for college entrance applications. To learn more about all school-related U.S. Figure Skating programs, go to <http://www.usfigureskating.org/Programs.asp?id=67>.



February is U.S. Figure Skating Memorial Fund Month

The U.S. Figure Skating Memorial Fund was established in honor of the 1961 World Figure Skating Team members who lost their lives in a tragic plane crash. During the month of February, U.S. Figure Skating is asking rinks and figure skating clubs across the country to participate in a campaign to increase awareness of and raise money for the Memorial Fund by partaking in the Gold Medal Wishes program. This program, designed to educate skaters about the Memorial Fund, raises money through the sale of Gold Medal Wishes. The program offers rinks and figure skating clubs the opportunity to acknowledge skaters, parents, coaches and staff members for their commitments to the sport while supporting U.S. Figure Skating athletes.



Gold Medal Wishes will be sold by both rinks and figure skating clubs, and we are asking rinks to provide wall space in their lobby or in a prominent area in the rink where Gold Medal Wishes can be displayed. This fundraiser is similar to how supermarkets or banks display hearts or shamrocks with wishes during certain months of the year for various causes.

Participating rinks and figure skating clubs will be acknowledged in SKATING magazine and at www.usfigureskating.org.

2009 Membership Retention Survey of All Former Members of U.S. Figure Skating

The Membership Retention Task Force is asking for feedback. The goal of the task force is to gather information on why U.S. Figure Skating members leave the sport and/or give up their membership so that U.S. Figure Skating may develop a strategy to increase retention rates and make it easier for individuals to remain members of the organization. Participation in this survey is very important to current and future members of U.S. Figure Skating. Please send former members of your club the following URL below and ask them to fill out the survey. It will take approximately 10 minutes.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=l3Llr4LTPXn4fOLybn_2ftxQ_3d_3d

Mike Meyer—Chair, Membership Retention Task Force
Sam Auxier—Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

Important Reminder about the Coaches Registration Process

Here's a reminder about the new requirement for coaches who wish to continue teaching in any U.S. Figure Skating-sanctioned event. We are asking for your cooperation in verifying that all coaches who teach in upcoming test sessions, nonqualifying competitions and sanctioned performances have completed the registration process.

To expedite this step, please:

1. Have a place on the test or competition application for the coach's name and U.S. Figure Skating number, and ask if he or she has registered for the 2008-09 season.
2. Go to <http://www.usfigureskating.org/Story.asp?id=41529> to verify that his or her name is on the list. The lists of registered coaches can be found in both alphabetical order and by state.
3. Upon registration, on the day of the event, you can ask to see his or her coach registration card. If he or she is under 18, he or she does not need to register; he or she is considered a minor. Ask to see his or her school ID or driver's license.

The coaches' registration requires that a coach submit to a background check, which takes approximately 10 business days to process. An unregistered coach will not be able to become registered at an event, and the skater(s) will have to participate without him or her standing at the boards.

U.S. Figure Skating appreciates the cooperation and understanding of all members to help implement this program and to ensure that the environment in all U.S. Figure Skating programs is as safe as possible for all participants.

Questions? Please contact U.S. Figure Skating Member Services at memberservices@usfigureskating.org or 719.635.5200.

February 2009

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

Whether your club has been around for years or it was just formed, you are in for some interesting situations. Club members don't always click, rules are not always upheld and the traditional management techniques don't always work. By participating in our Club Education Seminars, you will learn groundbreaking ideas on how to successfully manage the day-to-day operations of running a successful and financially viable club. Go to <http://www.usfigureskating.org/Clubs.asp?id=233> to learn more. Club Education Seminars are one-day events that go from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. The registration fee includes all materials, lunch and afternoon break. Topics covered include:

- Legal and ethical responsibilities of board members
- How to recruit and retain club volunteers
- Risk management
- Board development and education
- Fiscal management and fundraising
- Strategic thinking
- Rink relations
- Working with your coaching staff

How to grow and retain members
Feb. 7 – Salt Lake City, Utah
Feb. 21 – Minneapolis, Minn.
March 21 – Philadelphia, Pa.
April 29 – Buffalo, N.Y. (prior to the Governing Council meeting) – 1–8 p.m.

Go to <http://www.usfigureskating.org/Clubs.asp?id=233> to find all registration forms.

May 11–13 — NARCE, Chicago, Ill.

Consider sending your board members, club officers and skating directors to NARCE, the skating industry's premier event, held May 11–13 in Chicago. This 2-½ day workshop will focus on teaching participants how to use the full array of U.S. Figure Skating programs to create a successful and financially viable figure skating program. Go to www.narce.com for more information and be a part of this great conference for everyone in the skating industry.

Advice from BoardSource:

Learn from the IRS about the new 990 filing. One of the big changes 2008 brought us was the revised Form 990. Numerous articles have been published that explain how to report compensation, and which policies the IRS is interested in and who needs to file which version of the form. The IRS web site (<http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=176667,00.html>) includes an FAQ section to address any remaining questions you may have before filing your next 990.

Check out this YouTube video about Northfield Skating School, produced by Kristen Asp for a class at Carleton College: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QeXSL-Iny5w>
What a terrific marketing idea!

