



Appendix C – Biographies for Election

1-Year Terms

President

Julie Van Hartingsveldt

Julie Van Hartingsveldt has played pivotal roles within the Clarington Girls Hockey Association (CGHA), from Secretary and Director of Fundraising to her current position as President. Throughout her tenure, Julie has demonstrated a leadership style grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory—inspiring change and fostering long-term sustainability for the organization. She’s led CGHA through both growth and challenges by consistently prioritizing fairness, transparency, and strategic planning, key principles that guide her decision-making.

Julie’s extensive expertise in non-profit governance, parliamentary procedure, government relations, and advocacy has been a cornerstone of her success as a leader. Backed by her recently completed master’s degree focused on these areas, she draws from a robust professional background, serving as Executive Director of the Durham Children's Aid Foundation. Her previous leadership roles at Durham College, Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences, and her career in professional sports with the Toronto Blue Jays and Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (MLSE) further underscore her versatility and leadership.

Before joining CGHA, Julie was the President of the Clarington Orioles Baseball Association, where she led the introduction of an elite program and the creation of a second tier for every division, setting the association up for long-term success. Her broader community involvement includes membership in the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade, further enhancing her leadership profile and network.

As President of CGHA, Julie has made tough but necessary decisions to ensure the long-term health of the association. Whether it's advocating for improved ice allocation, managing player attrition, or implementing policies for better governance, Julie’s approach embodies Situational Leadership Theory—adapting her leadership style based on the needs of the organization and its members. She understands that effective leadership requires not just making difficult choices, but standing by them with integrity and ensuring they serve the greater good.

Julie’s leadership has not only improved CGHA’s financial stability, but she has also elevated its reputation within the broader women’s hockey community. Her advocacy work

with the OWHA, municipal leaders, and other associations has strengthened CGHA's external relationships, while her commitment to inclusivity has ensured that every player—whether in House League or Rep—feels valued and supported. She believes that a strong president must not only manage day-to-day operations but also create an environment where diversity, inclusivity, and forward-thinking initiatives can flourish.

Julie's focus on the long-term success of the association, coupled with her demonstrated ability to handle the complexities of leadership, makes her the right choice to continue guiding CGHA towards a bright and sustainable future.

Brent Strand

Brent Strand is a father of 2 hockey-loving girls. He has been a dedicated member of the Flames organization since 2017. He has volunteered his time over these years, serving as head coach, assistant coach, manager, and/or on-ice helper for every team his daughters have played for, supporting newer coaches with learning league expectations and what's available for the development of their teams. Brent also joined the executive in 2019 and has served as the Equipment Director during his tenure, providing timely response and support to teams in both house league and rep with all their equipment needs. Additionally, Brent has volunteered with the First Shift Program since 2018, enjoying his part in coaching and supporting the development and interest of the next generation of Flames girls.

Outside of hockey, Brent has 15 years of experience as a senior-level manager, has coached girls' soccer, and enjoys the cottage and golf in the off-season. Brent's commitment for the upcoming year will be focusing efforts and time where it matters most – skill development and enhancing the love of the game for our current and future players.

Treasurer

Emily Martin

With six years of experience in bookkeeping and tax preparation for both corporations and small businesses, I bring a comprehensive understanding of financial management. Additionally, I have served as a board member with the Flames for several years, holding key leadership roles, including Director of Fundraising, Director of Communications, and most recently Vice President of Rep.

Registrar

Suzanne Hurley

Suzanne has been an integral part of the Flames organization, serving in various capacities

including player, parent, coach, trainer, manager, and executive member. Currently, she holds the position of registrar and is committed to creating a positive environment for player growth and development. Suzanne values open communication with members and is dedicated to enhancing the overall experience for everyone involved.

Director of Tournaments/Events/Fundraising

There are no nominees for this position.

2-Year Terms

Vice President

Hannah Boyd

Hannah has been nominated for Vice President of the Clarington Girls Hockey Association, bringing a unique, objective, and non-biased perspective to the role as a non-parent. Her deep passion for hockey, shaped as a former Flame, and her understanding of the sport's community impact make her an ideal leader for the association. Over the past two years, she has served as the Director of Tournaments, successfully coordinating events that have driven growth and success within the organization.

Hannah also brings valuable board experience from her time as Secretary of the Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre, where she strengthened her organizational and leadership skills while fostering meaningful connections to her Indigenous roots. This experience adds a deeper cultural understanding and commitment to inclusivity, which she brings to the CGHA.

Professionally, Hannah has spent 15 years as a Class One Funeral Director and now works as a Corporate Trainer for a prominent funeral and cemetery company in Toronto. Balancing her professional role with her dedication to the hockey community and her proud identity as a mother, Hannah brings a fresh and balanced perspective to her nomination. Her blend of objectivity, cultural awareness, and leadership makes her an excellent candidate for Vice President of CGHA, poised to guide the organization into the future with fairness and inclusivity.

Melissa Wilson

I have been an active member with the Clarington Flames since my daughter got bitten by the hockey bug in 2019. I have helped within the organization for a couple of years as a team manager and have been on the executive for approximately the past two seasons as

the Director of Wellness and Safety. In that role, I have worked at providing support for our trainers, onboarding a concussion management program, and continuing to develop our mental toughness program for our Rep teams. Outside of my involvement with the CGHA, I am on the Board of Directors for a nonprofit called Lead Thru Sport, whose mandate is to promote leadership in sport for female athletes working to keep them in sport.

I have also been fortunate to play several sports at the provincial, national, and international levels, specifically in Touch Football, Flag Football, Ball Hockey, and Field Hockey throughout my athletic career, and believe that those experiences will assist in the role of Vice President.

I believe that making myself available to our members to hear their concerns and to be able to effectively communicate our league's direction are a priority. A focus on hockey and development, providing mentorship and opportunities to develop for our coaches, and supporting our current athletes at both our house and rep levels while encouraging new athletes to join the CGHA are crucial.

Secretary

Magda Bonner

With over 20 years of organizational and administrative experience, Magda Bonner is a dedicated professional eager to contribute her expertise to the association as Secretary. Her strong background in managing complex tasks and supporting leadership teams positions her as a valuable asset to the organization. Passionate about giving back, she looks forward to playing a key role in ensuring the continued success and growth of the association.

Director of Player Development (House/Rep/HPP/Goalie)

Matt Holla

With more than a decade of minor hockey experience as a head coach, assistant coach, and trainer, Matt Holla has been part of boys' and girls' teams spanning a wide range of ages and competitive levels, helping to foster a culture of growth, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Matt looks forward to using his experience to support and work with the CGHA coaches and managers, ensuring they have the skills, support, and resources needed to thrive in their roles. He strongly believes in the importance of putting development first, creating a positive and supportive environment, as well as promoting continuous improvement and learning for the betterment of the organization and its athletes.

Matt is eager to bring his expertise, passion, and forward-thinking ideas to this important role.

Director of Technology/Webmaster

There are no nominees for this position.

Director of Equipment

Kyle Dean

Hello, my name is Kyle Dean. I am a hockey enthusiast and a very proud hockey parent! My goal from day one has been to stay as involved as I can in my daughter's hockey. Last year I coached a U9 house league team, "the mighty minions," and this year I am the goalie coach for the U9 B team, where my daughter plays. I was a career goalie at a high level and I'm looking to share my experience with any goalie willing to listen and learn.

This brings me to being nominated for the position of Director of Equipment with the CGHA. Whether voted into the position or not, I am excited to have the opportunity and will continue to stay as involved as possible. I look forward to sharing my knowledge to continue moving Clarington forward and improving the opportunities for our girls in our own community. I believe it is important to keep our homegrown talent here and attract other high-level talent to our great organization! As for the position, my promise is to be honest and available at any time to help and answer everyone's questions/concerns.

Jason Armstrong

My name is Jason Armstrong, and I am running for Director of Equipment. I am a father of three girls, two of whom play within the Flames organization, while my youngest awaits her opportunity to learn to skate. I am the current U11A Head Coach and have been a part of the Flames organization for a number of years now, volunteering my time coaching and helping out wherever possible. My coaching experience consists of U9B Head Coach, U9A Assistant Coach, U11A Head Coach, fundamentals on-ice helper, and House League Assistant Coach, with other coaching experience with various teams outside the Flames organization.

My occupation is a Project Coordinator/Estimator. I manage a team of 20-30 employees in the construction field on any given day, ensuring deadlines are met and jobs are completed in a timely manner, professionally and safely.

I am currently the Equipment Director of the Lady Blue Knights Lacrosse Club. My duties consist of making sure all 22 nets are in good condition at the start of the season before distributing to 7 different locations across Brooklin, Whitby, and Oshawa. My role is also to make sure each team has all equipment necessary to run a successful program. These items consist of first aid kits, balls, cones, pinnies, etc.

Having two daughters playing the sport of hockey within the organization, I am determined to help grow the women's side of the sport. With my board experience, knowledge of the game of hockey, and my drive to give back to the community, I believe I would be a great asset to the organization.

Ice Scheduler

Craig Smith

With a proven track record of excellence in sports scheduling, Craig Smith is an exceptional candidate for the Ice Scheduler position with the Clarington Girls Hockey Association. Since taking on the role of ice scheduler in 2021, Craig has demonstrated remarkable organizational skills and a deep commitment to ensuring that games and practices are scheduled smoothly and efficiently.

Craig's expertise extends beyond ice sports; he has also served as the diamond scheduler for the Clarington Baseball Association since 2019. His experience in managing schedules for multiple sports showcases his versatility and adeptness at handling complex logistical needs across different types of facilities.

Craig's strong relationships with the Municipality of Clarington have been instrumental in securing the best possible ice times for the hockey association. His dedication to leveraging these connections ensures that our teams have access to high-quality facilities, which is crucial for their development and success. Craig's passion for sports, coupled with his ability to coordinate schedules across multiple sports and his commitment to maintaining excellent relations with staff, makes him the ideal choice for this role. Voting for Craig is a vote for enhanced scheduling efficiency, strong community ties, and continued excellence for the Clarington Girls Hockey Association.

Kristen Connor

Kristen is the VP of Operations for a global SaaS-based organization based out of Whitby, Ontario, where making a difference in our community is at the forefront of both her and the company's values. Kristen manages 196 people globally, focused on finding efficiencies and streamlining operations. She has an Honours Degree in Criminology and is also a Certified Fraud Examiner with over seven years of experience working in the banking

industry, where adherence to policy, procedures, rules, and regulations are at the forefront of her responsibilities.

Kristen has been an active member of the Clarington Flames organization since 2020 when her two daughters entered the U9 and Fundamentals programs. She has been the trainer and on-ice staff/coaching in all five seasons. Presently, Kristen is managing the U11A team and has done so for the 2023-2024 season as well. She also plays hockey herself, playing in multiple leagues around the region. She brings a wealth of knowledge from the many years she spent in competitive sport, including competing on behalf of Canada at two World Baton Twirling Championships and winning multiple awards during her four-year varsity volleyball career.

She has been a coach in the community for Baton, Volleyball, and Hockey for many years, with the firm belief that it is important to give back to sport and the community. Kristen prides herself on clear and effective communication with a focus on being highly responsive, as she believes this is the key to success.

3-Year Terms (Concluding in 2027)

Director of Communications (Sponsorship/Brand)

Stephanie Hartford

My name is Stephanie Hartford, and my daughter currently plays for the U11BB team. A little of my hockey background: I grew up playing for Durham West Lightning, playing between the BB/A team all the way through until I left for university. When I came back from school, I helped on the bench of my sister's A team. I volunteered as a dressing room mom during my daughter's first year of U9B and was the manager and trainer for her second year on the U9B team. For the upcoming season, I am the U11BB manager.

I feel as though my love for hockey and my experience as an Event Director will allow me to succeed in this position. I have been in the golf industry for 20 years and have been involved in planning many junior golf events, corporate events, weddings, charity events, and special occasions. With this experience, I have very strong people skills, problem-solving skills, and experience dealing with my own staff and managing different personalities. I would love to offer my skill sets and allow them to be of value to the organization. Anything I can do to help grow the organization and allow for a great experience for all involved would be my goal moving forward. I would love the opportunity to positively impact our organization and aid in its growth and development of our "Flames family."

Director of Development (Coaches/Managers)

Jeff Pimm

I have been a member of the Flames Organization since 2018 and currently have a daughter playing U11AA. I have volunteered with the Flames since 2021 in many capacities but have experience being a Head Coach in the House League, DS, and Rep programs (Currently the U11AA head coach). I am a current Executive Member with the Clarington Flames, focusing on Player Development and Sponsorship. I have assisted in streamlining the vendor process for our on-ice development program for rep teams, which has taken some of the burden off of the rep teams. I have also previously served as Director of House League for the Pickering Hockey Association. I am committed to ensuring coaches and managers at all levels have the tools and information they need to provide the best possible experience for all members of the organization.

Director of HPP & Rep (High-Performance Program & Representative Teams)

Derek McGrath

Derek is a dedicated high-performance coach for the Clarington Flames Girls Hockey Association, with a passion for developing young athletes in hockey. With extensive experience and a deep understanding of the game, he has played a pivotal role in creating a competitive and supportive environment that fosters both athletic and personal growth.

As a former athlete, Derek understands the demands of high-level competition and brings that insight to his coaching. His approach emphasizes skill development, strategic thinking, and mental toughness, ensuring his players are prepared to succeed on and off the ice. Known for his innovative training methods and his ability to motivate and connect with players, he is committed to building a culture of excellence and growth within the organization to provide a High-Performance Program.

Director of House League

Mandi Levesque

Mandi Levesque is a healthcare professional who has dedicated her life practice as a nurse working at a leading-edge trauma hospital in Toronto, Ontario. As a rehabilitation nurse for acute and chronic neurology and oncology disorders, Mandi is dedicated to rebuilding the lives of adults recovering from life-changing illness or injury. In addition to her full-time job, Mandi is passionate about serving and giving back to her community where she resides in Bowmanville, working as a casual nurse at a long-term care facility in Durham, as well as volunteering her free time with an organization that provides innovative

programs for members of the community diagnosed with developmental disabilities that are positive and inclusive through recreational, social, and learning experiences.

In addition to Mandi's professional growth, she has spent over a decade here in Bowmanville raising her family—volunteering in her daughter's recreational sports (soccer, dance, baseball/softball, hockey) in both House League and Representative programs as a coach, manager, and trainer. Mandi has been a member of the Clarington Girls Hockey Association for over eight years and spent the majority of that time as a certified Level 2 Trainer. Mandi's passion and dedication to giving back to her community found her applying for a seat on the CGHA Executive Board in February 2024, where she vowed to make integral contributions and changes to the House League and Developmental Stream (DS) program as the House League Director. Since joining the Executive team earlier this year, Mandi has initiated Convenor roles (new to the CGHA) to enhance fair play, safety, and communication with all members and players, and she has made a progressive change to the DS program to enhance growth and development for our young female athletes. Mandi is committed to leading and working in a collaborative environment, bringing her strong communication and interpersonal skills to help change the future of women's hockey.

Director of Wellness/Safety

Jay Bonner

Jason Bonner has played hockey his entire life, competing at the Bantam and Midget AAA levels as well as a partial season in Junior A. Jason has 22 years of law enforcement experience, including roles with the Toronto and Durham Regional Police Services. His passion for hockey is evident in his 17 years of coaching, beginning with house league teams and most recently coaching at the U13A Rep level for the past two years. Jason, a member of the Clarington Girls Hockey Association (CGHA), began coaching his eldest daughter, who is now 24 years old. Jason, who is in his third year on the CGHA Board of Directors, has always prioritized equal opportunities for all players and is dedicated to the empowerment and development of female athletes and coaches.

Jason's background makes him ideally suited to oversee the Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) process, implement player initiatives, and navigate disciplinary matters. His law enforcement background, combined with his time as a coach and board member, positions him to effectively advocate for the safety, well-being, and development of players in the CGHA.

Referee in Chief/Timekeeper Scheduler

Danielle Taylor

Danielle Taylor is a dedicated and experienced official, currently nominated for Referee in Chief for the Clarington Girls Hockey Association. With seven years of experience as a Referee in Chief, Danielle has demonstrated exceptional leadership and a deep commitment to the sport. Her extensive knowledge of hockey rules and her passion for fostering fair play and sportsmanship make her a strong candidate for this pivotal role. Danielle's contributions have been instrumental in enhancing the quality and integrity of the games she oversees.