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## Fall 2018 Midwest Regional Symposium

### Agenda

Friday November 16, 2018

10:00am—4:00pm

#### Hosted By

[Columbia Sailing School](#) at [Columbia Yacht Club](#)

111 N. Lake Shore Drive

Chicago, IL

#### Schedule of Events

##### **10:00-10:30 Welcome and Introductions**

US Sailing's Organizations Engagement Coordinator will make introductions and present an overview of the day.

##### **10:30-11:15 Topic #1: Hot Topics Related to Sailing Program Safety**

Steve Schram from Gowrie Group will lead an open discussion on safety issues facing sailing—topics will include prop guards, emergency action plans, training staff, and drone usage in sailing programs. He will also speak about useful safety tools and templates.

##### **11:30-12:30 Topic #2: Off-Water Engagement**

US Sailing will facilitate a discussion on the best on-land engagement for sailors of all ages. The conversation will cover rainy day activities, shoulder-season programming, classroom education and social calendars. Come prepared to share what's working in your organization.

##### **12:30-1:30 Networking Lunch**

Provided by US Sailing

##### **1:30-2:30 Topic #3: Facilities and Fleets**

US Sailing will lead a discussion on buildings and fleets, with the unique relationship between the Columbia Sailing School—a 501c3 sailing foundation—and the Columbia Yacht Club as a backdrop. Topics will include renovations, preventative maintenance, winterization, and how to optimize facilities to meet the needs of all sailors.

##### **2:45-4:00 Small Group Sessions**

Attendees will break out into smaller groups based on their role or area of focus—race officers, program directors, coaches, volunteers, etc.

##### **4:00-6:00 Social Networking Opportunity**

Please join us in the Columbia Yacht Club bar for continued conversation and socializing.

Please register in advance at: <https://www.ussailing.org/events/regional-symposiums/>

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### Columbia Sailing School at Columbia Yacht Club, 11/16/2018

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**Topic #2 Off Water Engagement:** US Sailing will facilitate a discussion on the best on-land engagement for sailors of all ages. The conversation will cover rainy day activities, shoulder-season programming, classroom education, and social calendars. Come prepared to share what's working with your organization.

Attendees broke into different small groups to discuss the following categories of constituents:

#### Volunteers

- At the Milwaukee Community Sailing Center
  - Their over 300 volunteers are rewarded with time on the water
  - They are organized in lists and vetted/overseen by the program director
- How do we vet volunteers without being too much of a hassle?
  - Safe Sport
    - Free with US Sailing member id
    - Consider making it required for all junior program volunteers
  - Insurance coverage from Gowrie
  - Background checks
- Where do we get volunteers?
  - From adult sailing programs
  - During membership enrollment process—collect interest
  - Make it compulsory(?)
  - Activate on National Honors Society required service
  - Set a culture of volunteerism by awarding prizes, awards, and recognition
    - Develop volunteer-specific swag
- How do we manage them?
  - Develop very specific volunteer descriptions so people know what they're doing
  - Consider automating—develop online forms and clean records so it's easier to pass it along
- Engage members in the winter! Develop workshops and social activities
- Where do we get them?
  - Award adult sailing graduates with free “tiller time” for giving back
  - Mentorship—bring a friend to volunteer at regattas, events, and comm
  - Encourage the next generation—entice high school kids who may have required service or who are interested in rounding out their college application
  - Advertise your program at the Strictly Sail show
- Race Committee
  - Everyone takes a turn volunteering for race committee—each boat takes a buy week to manage the race
- The ultimate takeaway is to make it as fun as possible!

#### Membership

- Consider developing year-round programming
- Schedule quarterly orientations
- Develop targeted incentives

- Club assets for member use
- Pay specific attention to the post-high school and post-collegiate people
  - Consider student deferment or develop a junior membership
- Social programs for non-sailors
  - Trivia night
  - Brunches
  - Movie nights
- Engagement
  - Keep youth involved beyond junior sailing—working and earning money becomes more of a goal than staying involved in sailing, so hiring summer staff is getting more difficult
  - Racine Yacht Club
    - Junior sailing reunion—taco bar and reunion to keep alumni engaged
    - Some sailors are intimidated...make it more accessible
  - Winter Program at the Foundry
    - Has 5 days of winter programming covering strength, agility, fitness, racing rules, STEM education, meteorology, water quality, boat building, repairs, team racing
  - Schedule safety classes
    - Make it open to non-members and consider using it as a recruitment tactic
  - Communication—shorter and more frequent

### **External Community Members**

- Develop a connection with parks departments and schedule lakefront experience day or clean up days
- Use Reach modules to give information back to local schools
- Consider partnering with the local fire department on safety issues
- Partner with ROTC programs
- Be sure to promote your programming to the larger community so you can rely on them for donations
  - Local news coverage to promote your youth education, outreach, and the needs of your facility
- Open your space up for meetings of local groups—or at least offer competitive pricing
- Organize a Veterans Day sail
- Organize blind sailing or adaptive sailing (download the adaptive sailing manual here: <https://www.ussailing.org/education/adult/adaptive-sailing/resource-manual/>)
- CREW U
  - A program to engage local non-members (and new members!) during the off-season by offering on-land education and a chance to network with boats for crew opportunities
- Why is engagement with Community Members important?
  - The need to draw new people into sailing
  - The fact that many (most?) sailing organizations are on public land and therefore have a responsibility to serve the public
- Who are the Community Members? (including collective entities)
  - All individual citizens of the area
  - Park districts
  - Schools, from pre-school through universities
  - Museums (especially – but not limited to – nautical museums and aquariums)

- Nearby commercial establishments (restaurants, hotels, retail shops, etc.)
- Boat owners unaffiliated with a yacht club or other sailing organization
- Community service organizations (Lions, Rotary, etc.)
- Veterans associations (might be a good focus to increase diversity)
- Visitors, tourists
- Marinas and boat yards
- Festival organizers
- Non-aquatic outdoor recreation organizations (hikers, runners, skiers, etc.)
- Goals
  - Promote sailing as a sport open to all (see below)
  - Make sure general public is aware of the sailing community's contribution to the common good (environmental activities, programs for disadvantaged youth and persons with disabilities)
  - Build communication and interaction within the sailing community to achieve the two previous goals (see below)
  - Retaining membership in sailing organizations (onshore and near-shore activities for non-sailing members of family: yoga, paddle boarding, book clubs)
- Promoting Sailing for everyone
  - Increase sailing opportunities for public, including free sailboat rides, First Sail
  - Corporate partnerships: employee teambuilding retreats in a sailing context, inclusion of sailing in employee wellness programs (subsidized lessons)
  - Draw in vacationers and festival attendees with specialized short-term sailing opportunities
  - Invite other outdoor groups (eg. running clubs) to special sailing events

- Partnering with schools
  - REACH
  - Develop scholarship programs for kids
  - Taking sailing simulators or radio-controlled miniature boats to schools
  - Boat building program in H.S. woodworking class
  - High school and college racing teams
  - Parents are often crucial in terms of transporting their children to the sailing venue. Moreover, if they buy-in to the program, they contribute their own time and money. Build in appreciation events for the parents (kids take their parents out sailing, end of season banquets, etc.)
  
- Building communication and interaction within the sailing community
  - Summer Sailstice
  - Lakefront Open House involving all sailing schools, yacht clubs, marinas along shoreline
  - Club crawls (can include non-sailing organizations)
  - Encourage/incentivize private boat owners to take people out sailing
  
- Challenges pertaining to location
  - Interacting with neighboring landowners who may feel inappropriately privileged because they paid top dollar for lakefront property
  - Proximity to public utilities. For example, one program was threatened with shutdown because its proximity to a water treatment plant was viewed as a homeland security threat.
  - Lakefront jurisdiction is sometimes unclear (Park district versus Municipality)

## Staff

- Utilize the LMSRF grants to help defray the costs of education
- Develop an “counselor in training” program to build a pipeline of paid staff.
- Be open to hiring older/ retired people
- Be thoughtful about scheduling of Level 1 courses
- Be mindful of the ratio
- Offseason events: fall awards banquet, winter party, and spring party
- Staff cycle—recruiting, training, working, **retaining**
- High school sailing extends the shoulder season
  - An opportunity to hire but also requires more staff
- Monthly winter workshops
  - Covering topics like maintenance, making Christmas ornaments, splicing, navigation)
- Encourage/ subsidize off-season education like NSPS/ Sailing Leadership Forum
- Program leadership needs to advocate with board members to keep salaries competitive
- Work to level up current staff to levels 2 and 3...make clear that there are career avenues in the sailing community

## Youth

- New Buffalo doesn't have a youth program because the harbor/ beach access doesn't allow for small boats

- Suggestion to do smaller, more accessible racing and get kids on the water as crew
- Adventure Sailing incorporates REACH plus local civics and engineering history
- RYCYF has adjusted REACH to different age levels
  - Employing in the winter and off-season
- SAIL Chicago
  - Urban Sailing
    - Take kids for boat rides 1 time for week
    - Relies on support from local foundations
- Employ your youth to promote your club by encouraging them to post on their personal social media
- Attend boat shows
- Bring a boat to the farmers market
- Attract people with new boats—change the culture
  - Kids don't want to sail broken boats

### **Problems and Solutions**

- What is happening to kids (10-12) that they don't want to race?
- How are we competing with other sports?
- Bringing in treasure hunts—pair with education and other places to sail
- Take overnight trips and backpacking trips
- Use other resources to keep kids excited
  - Coast guard, sheriff tours, alliance for great lakes, aquariums
- It's about building a community and trying to accommodate different groups
- Giving students freedom to explore and have FUN
- “Free Sail Friday” every week for anyone who signed up for any session all summer (2 hours)
- Pirate Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Decorating Boats
- Flexibility is important—allow and encourage students to participate in multiple activities
- STAR Wars—collect stickers for sailing outside of class...reward lifelong sailing
- Give free tuition to junior sailors to encourage them to work *and* sail
- Getting to a community center in the winter and putting the boats in pools
- Publicize the programs' good deeds and accomplishments to the membership to make them understand why it's important to support the youth program