



American Youth Soccer Organization

**NATIONAL  
ANNUAL  
GENERAL  
MEETING**

June 7-9, 2019 Newport Beach, Calif.

**CANDIDATE ANSWERS  
TO NOMINATING COMMITTEE QUESTIONS**

AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

# 2019 QUESTIONS FOR NBOD CANDIDATES

The National Board Of Directors candidates were asked to respond to a set of seven questions. They were notified that their responses would be distributed to all Executive Members who are eligible to vote at the 2019 AYSO National Annual General Meeting (NAGM.) The candidates' statements and responses to these questions are listed on the following pages. Please review them carefully in preparation for your vote in the upcoming election at the 2019 AYSO NAGM in Newport Beach, California.

**The questions posed to National Board of Director candidates for the candidate statement were as follows:**

1. Describe specific accomplishments, improvements or projects in which your involvement was instrumental and had a significant impact on AYSO at the Region, Area, Section or National level.
  2. Describe the nature of your current involvement in your local AYSO Region, Area, Section or National programs.
  3. In light of AYSO's recent financial situation, what changes would you propose to create financial stability to ensure the future success of AYSO?
  4. How would you address the different needs of Regions, Areas and Sections based on geographic differences, particularly programs located furthest from the AYSO National Office?
  5. Why are you running for the National Board of Directors?
  6. If you had a blank slate for AYSO, how would you envision that it be structured?
  7. What specialty would you like to see on the NBOD?
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## 2019 National Board of Director Candidates:



Margie  
**CLOSE**



Michael  
**KARON**



Steve  
**MINTON**



Eileen  
**TABERT**



Matt  
**WINEGAR**

**Please Note:** The following responses from the candidates have been inserted as submitted by the candidate. The text has been formatted to fit this document. No other alterations or edits were made.

## Candidate Answers to Submitted Questions

(all answers submitted by Wednesday, June 8, 2019 at 11:59pm PT)

**Please Note:** The following responses from the candidates have been inserted as submitted by the candidate. No other alterations or edits were made.

### 1. Describe specific accomplishments, improvements or projects in which your involvement was instrumental and had a significant impact on AYSO at the Region, Area, Section or National level.

#### Candidate Answers:



Accomplishments and improvements in my Region are described in my statement above. On the National level, I served on the Extended Play Task Force through the conception, research, planning, member education and beginning execution of EXTRA, which has grown and thrived in AYSO and kept players in our programs. Assisting with the writing of the Tournament Handbook was an early staff and volunteer effort which resulted in a tremendously helpful tool for AYSO – and is now ready to be updated again. These projects were done with collaboration, careful study, buy in from the membership and calculated rollout to make them easy to access and understand.

I am a champion of the National Games and the volunteers who run them. I have attended most of the Games since their inception in 1988, worked at many and was instrumental in seeking proper compensation for the Section 14 volunteers who labored in the Games of 2016. We are grateful to Section 7 for hosting the Games in 2019, not letting this valued player event disappear. I served on the esteemed Task Force which has redone the Bid Package, and which will be seeking to have the Games back as a constant in AYSO, affording an opportunity for players of any caliber to participate in this weeklong celebration of everything AYSO.

As the NBOD liaison this year to the VIP Council, I led the collaboration of volunteers and designated elearning staff member in the updating of the VIP courses being offered at this year's EXPOs. Both the Power Point presentations and their corresponding lesson plans are relevant again. Our VIP manuals are in the process right now of being updated so that they can again be valid tools for new and existing programs. The Growth Plan designed by the Council is excellent, and we hope to begin to execute it soon.

The Volunteer Awards Task Force, formed by President Matt Winegar and led by me, has looked carefully and critically at the national awards which are given annually, to ascertain their value and possible new criteria. It is important to have recognitions which are meaningful and valid for the membership and we hope to learn from the membership what those might be and how we can best say "thank you" to those who give so much to AYSO.

As the chair of the Hall of Fame Commission, I reinstated the group in the original charter – an RC, AD, SD and two Hall of Fame members. For two years, this group

has taken their mission of consideration of nominations for new inductees very seriously and thoughtfully made recommendations which have resulted in the high honor of recognition of excellent and impactful volunteers.

The tough decision to change leadership at the AYSO Office was one which I championed for several months. One of the duties of the board is to make sure that its staff and volunteers act legally and ethically. It is critical that our leadership is of a high caliber and that trust is high on the list of qualities which the senior staff must have with the NBOD. I continue to work on the formation of a revised Whistle Blower Policy for staff and hope that the NBOD will act on instituting it soon. Rewritten a few years ago, in its current form it does not serve the employees or the organization well. I hope to bring this to fruition shortly.



During the past three years, my involvement was instrumental on the following high impact AYSO National improvements and projects:

#### a. Putting AYSO back on a path to financial stability

During my first year on the Board, AYSO operations had a negative cash flow of over \$2 million. As National Treasurer for the past two years I have worked to restructure the budget process, reduce National expenses and negative cash flow by over \$1.5 million. I also proposed a minimum impact player fee increase (which the membership voted last year to accept) to bring AYSO to a projected cash flow breakeven next year.

#### b. Returning management and board focus to the "business of the business"

Working with my fellow Board members, Section Directors and management team, I was able to introduce meaningful discussion about the strategic changes we needed to make to make AYSO succeed during the next 50 years. These efforts culminated in an actionable 5 point program we are using to guide the organization's business strategy. Rather than being stuck in the same debate about what we should do, we are now taking specific actions to allow AYSO to advance.

#### c. Building consensus around an action plan to address key AYSO strategic initiatives

I believe that the leadership of local programs should determine how to best deliver AYSO services and programs to their own communities. At the same time, we must deliver support to local programs in a cost effective way. Striking the right balance between local program autonomy and an appropriate level of national

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support is difficult. Last year, working together with my fellow Board members I proposed, and the Board endorsed, an action plan consisting of the following key initiatives which are being funded in the MY2019 AYSO budget:

- Increase the number of player registrations
- Fix the registration and financial systems
- Add a significant fund development capability
- Implement the volunteer membership program
- Improve the level of customer service to local programs

#### d. Helping to strengthen volunteer input

Two years ago, we started to return programs to local control by putting control over EXPO's, the National Games Tournament and various Advisory Councils back in the hands of volunteers. This past year we started a program to assist local programs with identifying growth opportunities. Most important we are working together with the staff to figure out more ways to say yes to questions that come in from the field.



As Regional Commissioner (12 years) in Region 116, I oversaw player growth from approximately 750 players to over 1,200 players. I worked with local cities and school districts in securing fields for the growing region. I led a team of regional volunteers in developing a large dirt area at a local middle school into grass soccer fields, and renovated the school's existing grass area. I supported the creation of the region's VIP program which has continued for over 20 years.

As Area Director (18 years) in Area 11-S, I led the creation and growth of the AYSO Matrix competitive interplay program pilot with CalSouth. AYSO Matrix in Area 11-S has grown from 8 teams in FY2001 with approximately 120 players, to 33 teams in MY2018 with approximately 510 players.

As a member of the National eAYSO Commission (3 years, 2008-2011), I assisted in making improvements in eAYSO (version 2) to identify and eliminate bugs; add features; and improve the user interface for parents, and regional/area/section board members. I participated in conference room pilots along with several regional volunteers to identify issues with eAYSO pages for CVPA, Registrar, and Administrator (RC, AD, RCA, RRA) before the program went live.



- As the NBOD Vice President of Management/Administration I orchestrated the return of the Management Commission in its new format:

the Management Council. When the commissions were disbanded it created a sense of disenfranchisement for our membership. Many of our membership had expressed a desire to see more involvement of volunteers with appropriate skills sets that could work with staff on workshop creation and course content. The council members who applied and were selected represent as diverse a group of people as possible allowing them to make program and educational content decisions with an understanding of the unique needs of regions across the country.

- As the NBOD Liaison to Executive Member appointment/reappointment, I have worked with an AYSO office staff member to streamline the process of vetting Executive Members, new pilot regions, region status changes, that come before the board for approval thereby allowing the Board of Directors to focus more time on other important business.

- While chairperson of the National Management Commission I worked with Rosanne MacPhail to get approval from the Board of Directors to create and pilot RC Training (RCT). Once approved, with the commission members and Rosanne, we worked together to develop the current RC Training format and curriculum. I continue to instruct at RCT, most recently with Class #37, as well as help update and revise curriculum content.

- Understanding the importance of player growth to AYSO, I asked if the growth initiative workshops recently presented to select RCs from Section 3, 6/8 during their EXPOs, could be condensed to allow them for inclusion as a module during RCT. The original workshop creators/presenters were able to condense it, allowing the introduction of the Growth Initiative Module as the most recent addition to the RCT curriculum. This new module helps regional commissioners identify ways to increase player registration, identify what resources they need to accomplish their goal, identify barriers; solutions to overcome those barriers, create and leave with a plan for accomplishing their player growth goal when they return to their regions.

- As an AD I worked with a fellow AD Caucus facilitator to change the AD caucus format, making it a positive, productive discussion of issues facing EM from around the country & engaging in problem solving to provide recommendations to the Board of Directors and the AYSO Office in hopes of eliminating or alleviating the issues. The next year the same format was applied to the RC Caucus as requested by the RCs. I hope to see these caucuses return next year at NAGM.

## Candidate Answers to Submitted Questions

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I have been involved in numerous projects which have impacted my home region and AYSO at the National level. As Regional Commissioner, I worked with my board to achieve Platinum status through the RAP program for the first time, and reintroduced the region's annual tournament. I also secured new office and storage facilities and worked with the school district to make field improvements. At the National level, I was chair of the Development Commission which created the AYSO Labs and President's Circle programs and initiated the creation of the AYSO Playground program. I then chaired the U-4 Task Force that launched the AYSO Playground program.

### 2. Describe the nature of your current involvement in your local AYSO Region, Area, Section or National programs.

#### Candidate Answers:



Currently I am a Section staff instructor who, when asked, leads courses at Roadshows and EXPOs and enjoys especially the opportunity to work with new AYSO instructors – it is gratifying to meet and to mentor some really extraordinary volunteers who want to share their expertise and outlooks with others and who are willing to take their time to learn and practice their craft.

I am on the National Board, serving as the chair of one commission, liaison to a Council and a Task Force and sitting on additional committees. Results of that involvement are in the other questions here. Personal life circumstances make it difficult right now for involvement at the Regional level, but with three grandchildren being eligible to play next membership year – two of whom live with me -- I am bound to be out at the fields again soon. I went out to see several Playground programs to view first hand how the program is being run in my Area and how it works for the kids and their families. Very impressive programs are running, with amazing volunteers who are so great with these little kids and introducing them and their families to the benefits of AYSO. I also visited two of the larger Southern California VIP tournaments to support the volunteers and to see the families enjoy their players' participation fun events. This afforded me an opportunity to talk with those who run the programs and find out what their needs are. Currently I am trying to secure Spanish translation of a couple of the most-used VIP documents.



My current responsibilities as an NBOD member require an almost full time commitment. I spend most weeks on multiple conference calls with key staff and volunteers, followed by work on various projects and analyses.

While this doesn't leave a lot of extra time, I do regularly instruct at AYSO courses at the Region, Area and Section

levels (and at the Ken Aston Camp) and consult regularly with my Region, Area and Section volunteer leadership on issues affecting their programs.



As Area 11-S Director, I oversee an Area Staff which provides support to the five regions within Area 11-S. Area 11-S provides or assists with coach, referee, and management training to local regional volunteers. Area 11-S, Area 11-R and Area 11-V (Tri-Area) conduct programs in San Diego County where there are not enough teams for individual Areas to operate alone (e.g. 16U-19U, Spring Select, VIP).

As Area 11-S Director, I also assist Section 11 Staff with Section Championships tournaments (e.g. 16U-19U, 10U-12U-14U Core & All-Stars, and Western States Championships).



- Assisted my home region in starting up for fall MY2018 season.
- Volunteering at a neighboring region tournament as the Referee Admin.
- Volunteering at Section 9 tournaments
- I am the current Section 9 Treasurer
- NBOD Liaison to Sections: 6, 8, 9, and 11.
- NBOD Liaison to the National Management Council
- Member of Operating Committee for the NBOD
- Member of Awards Taskforce
- Member of Section, Area, Region Structure Task force
- RC Training Instructor
- I work on an ongoing basis to update and revise RC and AD Training course materials.



I currently serve as Management Administrator (RMA), Director of Referee Instruction (RDRI), and Assistant Tournament Director for my home region, 10/W/304, North Oxnard, CA. I am also an Advanced Referee and try to referee as much as I can during our primary season and playoffs. I also serve as staff during the Area 10W playoffs. I am currently a member of the National Board of Directors (NBOD) and serve as the AYSO National President.

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### 3. In light of AYSO's recent financial situation, what changes would you propose to create financial stability to ensure the future success of AYSO?

#### Candidate Answers:



Upon receiving the draft budget for 2019, I did a three-page analysis of what I saw and forwarded it to our National treasurer with questions on proposed increases in many costs, choices of spending, the number of employees represented in the expenses of a department, etc. As of this writing, we are still in the process of determining a budget for this coming year. I will not support a budget like the original draft which took resources from volunteers while increasing expenditures on staffing. Until the NBOD is clear on what services are being provided by staff and those which are being requested but not met, we cannot reasonably allocate funding – budgeting of resources must be carefully calculated to cover needed costs.

AYSO at the national level needs to live within its means and put aside what we can for reserves. Tighter control by the NBOD and the Finance Committee, of which I am a member, must be exercised over the registration fees which come in through our local programs. It is critical to use that money to serve the membership by asking, again and again, what they need from a national level and determining on a cost-efficient basis, how to deliver that. Customer service is high on the list – what does that look like and what personnel do we need to ensure timely, accurate and meaningful feedback? We are finally back to using volunteer professionals who so generously donate their time in the area of curriculum and other expertise. Insurance, financial assistance, tax preparation, national marketing and sponsorships are some of the areas which should benefit all programs and need careful management. Sponsorships have been lagging, and it is important to know what our options are as an organization for securing meaningful and acceptable sponsors to defray some costs. Board input into decisions that cost money is important and part of our responsibility. We are fortunate to have a Treasurer in Mike Karon who is smart and savvy and has taken a lot of his time to seek answers to our financial issues. I will continue to ask questions and expect answers.



I believe we are taking the necessary steps to create financial stability. We have reduced expenses where possible, raised fees where necessary, made the appropriate leadership changes, built consensus around the path forward, started to attract potential partners who can help us succeed and developed a detail level execution plan that we have just begun. The single most important factor that will determine our future success is our ability to work together (both volunteers and staff) to attract more families to AYSO. I am confident

that we have the right programs, the right values and the right group of dedicated volunteers and staff to succeed. I think the best way I can contribute to future success is to continue to encourage a stronger partnership between the AYSO Office and local programs.



A Vice President at my prior employer made a couple of observations that appear appropriate to AYSO as well:

1. No company has successfully shrunk itself to financial success.
2. In answer to the question “What does the owner of a restaurant want?”, the VP stated that the owner wants customers to come back.

AYSO needs to return to player growth. I don't foresee any financial model that will make AYSO sustainable with continuing player loss. From a marketing perspective, it is cheaper to retain existing customers (i.e. players) than it is to try to attract new customers (players). Once parents take one child to another soccer program, then they are more likely to take their remaining children if that program provides a positive experience. Benchmarking other soccer programs that have shown growth could provide AYSO with some additional ideas to emulate.

Blue Sombrero continues to be a major problem for parents to register their players, and for volunteers to register themselves as volunteers. Blue Sombrero is a negative experience that I believe turns parents off and encourages them to seek alternative soccer programs. The registration process needs to be easy, quick, intuitively obvious, and easy to correct errors in the registration application if a parent or volunteer notices an error with their completed registration form.



- There is no magic bullet; it is going to take combined strategies to create financial stability. With our declining player numbers, depending on player registration fees as a major source of funding the National budget is simply not a sustainable model. Being diligent while reviewing expenditures and making necessary cuts to keep the budget trim is a necessary function of the Board of Directors, which I will continue to support if reelected. I also purpose/support the following as measures to help create financial stability:

- AYSO was given a grant to attend a series of seminars and assigned a mentor aimed towards helping the AYSO board and key office staff members to set up and implement Fund Development. A Fund Development Plan was created to help us recognize fund raising sources we haven't utilized yet, such as our Alumni. With over a

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million alumni, donations could be significant. It is also necessary for AYSO to identify an individual who would lead our Fund Development efforts. If reelected, I will continue to push these efforts forward.

- While player growth shouldn't be the only means of bringing in money to the National budget, it is a source nonetheless. Recognizing this, the Board of Directors approved a Growth Initiative Plan currently being piloted in Section 8, which we hope will help us understand how we may need to change to induce growth. With growth comes increased dollars to the National budget and allowing for more financial resources and support for your community programs. I will continue to promote and support that Growth Initiative Plan.



The current National Board, with the support of our executive membership has taken significant steps to ensure that the National AYSO budget is balanced and healthy. Michael Karon, National Treasurer, has provided leadership which has reduced the AYSO Office costs by over \$1.5M, successfully achieved EM support for a player fee increase, as well as providing critical direction to our finance staff. The key to further stabilization is the growth of player registrations. All levels of AYSO must participate in bringing more AYSO soccer to more kids, which also helps the AYSO bottom line.

### 4. How would you address the different needs of Regions, Areas and Sections based on geographic differences, particularly programs located furthest from the AYSO National Office?

#### Candidate Answers:



Proximity to the AYSO office should have no effect on addressing needs of geographically distant Regions, Areas and Sections that can be met by a paid staff. An office, as I see it, should be a center for services which are more difficult to deliver through the volunteer corps – insurance coverages, website design for national branding, sponsorship acquisition, high end fundraising, required financial oversight, legal support, program support, customer support, field acquisition and advocacy. Distance should not affect the services which our members receive.

As to the different needs inherent in program delivery from one community to the next, this Board is open to flexibility which falls within parameters – we cannot put any player or volunteer at risk, legally or ethically. With that understanding, the variety of programs now available meet most needs; the ability to pay for services was another stepping stone to Regions being able to operate as they so needed; paid coach trainers was an additional step. What changes Regions continue to need

to thrive should be brought to the Board for quick and reasonable assessment. One model is to service smaller Regions with support from a group of volunteers who have the specialties needed such as coach, referee and management training – taking off the burden of having seven board members in a small Region without those resources. This was eloquently written up by the Section Three Director and could be the answer to preserving Regions which feel that they must abandon AYSO because they are not following the rules. The current Board is open to and encouraging Regions in need of potential exceptions to national procedures to ask.

RC Training can be more localized, just as many of us who were trained through the RAMP program experienced – more training delivered to states and communities instead of needing to bring everyone to a California setting. The first of these offsite trainings was in Lansing, MI, asked for and implemented when I was director over the Management Program. Not everyone was on board, but it was an excellent training – and a few additional offsite trainings have been held and successful. Opening this training model to make it more accessible is doable and logical.

Another potential structure contemplated in the 2012 Strategic Plan was to consider paid personnel in strategic locations across the United States acting as resources who would be judged on measurable goals of growth and service to the communities which they serve. Financially we would need to be much sounder to consider this approach, but volunteer satellite offices so placed might be the next step to consider for our organization -- if the membership believes that having a brick and mortar access to staff is important to them and will accomplish what they need from paid staff. **Any** paid support is relevant and valuable **only to the extent** that there are good employees, with a determined mission, and with impeccable follow through.



First, we need to ask (not tell) local programs what we can do to help them. My experience with a Player Growth Seminar we ran in Sections 3 & 8 (both "remote" Sections) this past year made it clear that local programs know what they need to succeed. In some cases, there are some basic rule and policy changes we need to consider. In other cases, we have to provide a different type of support. We have recently put in place a working group to triage policy and support exception requests so that we can do a more effective job of responding to non-routine requests as they come in. Second, as we understand the number and type of requests we are receiving, we need to develop support strategies that are responsive to needs we are not now

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meeting effectively. This will require allocation of resources to meet these needs. Finally, if it makes financial sense to add support staff closer to local programs, we should do so.



Since all of my 34 years with AYSO have been in Southern California, I cannot say that I know all of the issues affecting Regions, Areas and Sections in other parts of the country. However, I think that a Commission or Task Force to investigate those issues and propose solutions would help to improve the situation. Also, more businesses across the country continue to move to online offerings to conduct business and provide customer support. These online solutions work best when there is also human customer support available.



- We must acknowledge there are different needs for our regions based on geography and other factors. My past experience as a Section Director for a section consisting of 5 very large states with regions ranging from small and rural to regions in large cities, I know there are vast differences in what they need and how they function; one size does not fit all! We must develop a mechanism to seek input from regions across the country so we can become more aware what those differences are and how we can adapt our structure to allow each region, regardless of size or location, to achieve success. Our Section Directors have provided good input but I believe it is also necessary to hear directly from Area Directors and Regional Commissioners. If reelected, I will make this a priority.

- I would like to see Regional Commissioner and Area Director Caucuses return to our NAGM. In the past these caucuses provided excellent opportunities to hear directly from each other; large or small, rural or metropolitan, about their needs, issues, etc., to discover how different they are and also how similar. Collectively they were able make recommendations to the Board of Directors and Office Staff about how to better provide the support they needed.



The current National Board has already taken steps to recognize the geographic and size differences of our over 800 regions. We have begun work on building a scalable RAP tool; we allow the more isolated regions to register players by birth year; and we have begun to look at different governance models and board requirements based on region size. During the next two years we expect to continue to provide our regions with even further flexibility.

### 5. Why are you running for the National Board of Directors?

#### Candidate Answers:



Outside of my family, AYSO has been my passion for 35 years. It was a significant influence in the life of my family -- a place to play, make life long friends and a great organization into which to put our time and energy. All my sons coached, two refereed and my daughter was a mainstay at our NAGM Silent Auction for years. They learned as youngsters to give time to a community program that gave back. I have three young grandchildren, kids of those kids, who will be eligible to play in AYSO in 2020. My hope is to be a part of a board that assures through its fiscal responsibility and ability to lead and choose good leaders, that AYSO is a viable organization in the years to come. I want it to be alive and to thrive. That takes the kind of person who I know I am -- a hard worker, a thorough researcher, a person with some historical and positional perspective, and one who is willing to listen to all sides to make decisions, but to not compromise based on politics, perception or personal agenda. Being on the board is hard, and different than serving in a local program. It requires a big picture view -- but none of us can ever forget the communities who are the virtual lifeblood. If we are not remembering them, we cannot make good decisions. I would like to continue to lead AYSO in a direction of which we can all be proud.



AYSO has been an important part of my life for almost 5 decades, when I started as a (not too talented) player. I have seen and experienced firsthand how AYSO builds better, stronger communities. I want to pass it on.



With 41 years of engineering and manufacturing business experience in problem solving and 34 years of AYSO volunteer experience, I feel that I would be an asset on the National Board of Directors. I am an excellent problem solver. I am confident that I can help the National Board of Directors identify solutions to the problems facing the National organization, especially issues facing the Regions, Areas and Sections.



I have been an AYSO volunteer for 25 years. I've enjoyed each of the positions I've held and have grown tremendously personally and professionally. Each job has given me a unique perspective into AYSO. Many asked after I was elected 3 years ago to the Board of Directors, how I liked being on the board. My answer was always the same; I was enjoying the work but the work is very different than any of my previous roles in AYSO. While no longer working at the community level where the reward for my hard work is seen in the happy faces of kids, the boards work is more removed and often result in making hard decisions that impact the long term viability of the organization. That said; I have enjoyed the opportunity to serve as a member of your Board of

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Directors for the past 3 years. During that time the board has initiated some new programs such as the Growth Initiative Lab. This lab will give the Board of Directors the opportunity to evaluate the “out of the box” things that have been or will be tried to determine how different ways to structure programs could result in growth. I would like the opportunity to continue to encourage this kind of thinking and to work collaboratively with my colleagues on the board and section directors for your benefit.

I'd also like to continue to work as a board member to ensure transparency in the decisions the board makes, providing the why of our decisions and ensure continued open communication to all of you. I commit to listening to you and represent your needs if reelected as a member of the Board of Directors.



AYSO's player path and volunteer coaches made a significant positive impact on my two daughters. Volunteering is my way of paying it forward. I have been fortunate to serve in a number of different AYSO positions, and I believe I have made a difference in each of those positions. The current Board is engaged in a large number of initiatives that can make improvements in the quality of our players and volunteers AYSO experience. I would like to continue to contribute to these improvements in my second and last term as a member of the NBOD.

### 6. If you had a blank slate for AYSO, how would you envision that it be structured?

#### Candidate Answers:



I like that AYSO has a national identity, and that would be a starting point for me. How do we keep our national culture when we are so diverse geographically? What would bind us together if we were to redesign ourselves? Social media and communication since 1964 has changed so dramatically that we are able to connect with each other across the country within seconds. But communities are divergent in their family populations, sport and other extracurricular activities, cultural identities and volunteer availability. Since 1974, ten years into AYSO's existence, persons who loved AYSO's inaugural philosophies of Everyone Plays, Balanced Teams and Open Registration began pushing back about half-play time, balancing teams, etc. Human nature. For many years thereafter, the debate raged on and off about try-out programs, about elite programs, about free substitution without monitoring, about balanced competition instead of balanced teams. In many situations, Regions did what they felt worked for them – sometimes what worked depended on what the current leadership wanted for their own children. The “affiliate” concept grew out of some other organizations programs or teams wanting to join us, but

also wanting to pay their administrators, coaches, referees, other key persons who in most Regions are volunteers. In my Region, when I joined as it turned only seven years old, Balanced Teams was not even on the radar. So, what to do. This board has discussed the need for local flexibility within bounds – where it can help a program to start, to flourish and to grow. Ideas about this are in the question about geographic needs. The financial model of one entity can be a benefit and a burden. Changing this, such as having individually owned franchises, would need significant study of any similar organizations to answer questions such as what are the challenges of such a model and is there a strategic business case for doing it? Where it may solve a few problems, it may create others. AYSO's brand is strong and has withstood the test of time for 55 years – the question is can we grow again and exist in a world of strong competitors with the model that we have. Are we stagnating in player growth because of our structure, or for other reasons? I do not have a pat answer, as it is not an easy question. But I am open and willing to discuss it with anyone and to listen and help decide what is best for most.



If I had a blank slate, I would form a group of geographically based, separate entities that provide all of the local management and support services for surrounding Regions, using a combination of paid staff and volunteers. I would create a much smaller AYSO Office to provide only those services that are necessary to source on a National scale.



I first need to work with the National Board of Directors to understand how the current AYSO structure is limiting the organization from resolving problems. I would also benchmark other youth organizations to see how their structure would benefit AYSO.



I don't know that I'd change much. I believe our volunteer run organization is amazing. Our special volunteer spirit motivates many to give so much of their time and talent, which makes us unique! Our philosophies define who we are and set us apart from all other soccer programs, to the point that others want to be like us.

Back in 1964 when AYSO got its start, those pioneers had the right idea, keep it simple, easy to run, fun, and child focused. We've grown a lot since that time but there are lessons to be learned from those early days of AYSO. If I changed anything I would look to:

- Simplify the administrative work

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- Make it easier to start new programs
- Allow regions to run their programs in ways that makes sense in their communities but also adheres to our Vision, Mission, Philosophies, Safe Haven and risk management policies.
- Keep in mind that sometimes when making decisions about rules, policies, etc., "Less is More".



That is a very good question. We have a number of task forces and committees that are looking at ways to potentially alter our governance structure.

As one large non-profit, all of our regions potentially share in the liability than can be caused by the careless behavior of a few. It may be time to look at creating sub-corporations or an affiliate model that mitigates this threat. We may also have to consider distributed paid services to support our Sections and promote player growth. There are many intriguing opportunities and options.

### 7. What specialty would you like to see on the NBOD?

#### Candidate Answers:



Given the discussions over time about specific knowledge that could help the organization by being represented on the Board, I think that there are a few choices which we could and should pursue.

One is a dedicated fund raiser who is knowledgeable about non-profit opportunities and ways in which to approach a broad alumni base – many of whom loved AYSO as players and parents – and who may be interested in supporting the growth and sustainability of our organization. We will never be viewed as a traditional charity, but if we were to hold a capital campaign for instance – for a permanent headquarters – I believe that there are people who would be pleased to help us reach that goal. Others might be inspired to give to help us to provide opportunities to play soccer by starting up Regions in places where they are not – based on our belief that AYSO does child soccer and a child team experience better than most organizations.

Another thought is an expert in developmental disabilities. We want to revitalize our VIP program and be sure that we are addressing a changing world, keeping up with techniques and terminology, and putting forward the best opportunities for persons with disabilities. We have asked experts over time to analyze the VIP materials and practically; we need to have more precise input into how Regions are able to optimally run this program in their communities with limited participants and diverse participants. Our model of inclusion is unique and no one size will fit each Region, so insights into best case scenarios for varying situations would be welcome.

Lastly, we should be open to having a current parent representing our current parent base to guide us in ideas that work for those who are rearing children now – what they need, what works for scheduling, what is important to them in a team sport or any extracurricular activity, what is cost effective. My own daughter is the busy mom of twins, working and taking a course to facilitate that job – and even with their dad and myself helping with child care, she has little time to spare. She grew up volunteering with AYSO and worked for and volunteered for Special Olympics for years and no doubt will want to volunteer with her kids when they reach Playground age in a year. How she will find the time, and energy, is daunting. But this is not an untypical life for a current parent of young children. We can always use such a perspective direct from those living such lives!



I would like to see more financial and general management expertise on the NBOD. I think it would also be good to form an advisory group comprised of parents of young children.



AYSO is a nonprofit business. Like all businesses, AYSO needs to grow, develop new products and programs, and control expenses to stay within a balanced budget. Possible specialties on the NBOD: Marketing to grow existing and new regions; and Central Procurement to negotiate national volume price reductions on uniforms and equipment to provide an additional choice for regional procurement.



Since the resignation of one of our outside directors, I think it would be beneficial for someone with strong connections to US Soccer to be a member of our board and who can apprise us of changes that are coming and how or if we need to adapt.

It would be highly beneficial for the Board of Directors to have someone who has experience in fund raising. As I mentioned earlier we cannot rely on Player fees to subsidize the National Budget. Fund raising is something the board has identified as a means to provide the financial resources to offset operating costs and the ability to support regions, areas and section and their programs. An individual with that expertise would greatly benefit the board and organization.



The Board has had several discussions regarding the desired qualifications for our two outside director positions. I currently favor an AYSO parent for one position and someone with a medical or child development background for the other position. We are also looking at the creation of an independent board of directors for the AYSO WHEN foundation. The chair of that board should also have participation in NBOD meetings

# 2019 QUESTIONS TO CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL PRESIDENT

The National President candidate was asked to respond to a set of three questions. They were notified that their responses would be distributed to all Executive Members who are eligible to vote at the 2019 AYSO National Annual General Meeting (NAGM). The candidate's biography, statement and responses to these questions are listed on the following pages. Please review them carefully in preparation for your vote in the upcoming election at the 2019 AYSO NAGM in Newport Beach, California.

## The questions posed to National President candidate for the candidate statement were as follows:

1. What do you feel makes you qualified to be AYSO NBOD President? Please provide information about your leadership experience and leadership style.
2. What is your 1, 3, 5 and 10 year strategic vision for AYSO?
3. Describe specific accomplishments, improvements or projects in which your involvement was instrumental and had a significant impact on AYSO at the Region, Area, Section or National level.
4. Describe the nature of your current involvement in your local AYSO Region, Area or Section programs.
5. How would you address the different needs of Regions, Areas, and Sections based on geographic differences, particularly programs located furthest from the AYSO National Office?
6. What motivated you to run for National President?

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## 2019 National President Candidate:



Matt  
**WINEGAR**

**Please Note:** The following responses from the candidate have been inserted as submitted by the candidate. The text has been formatted to fit this document. No other alterations or edits were made.

## Candidate Answers to Submitted Questions

(all answers submitted by Wednesday, June 8, 2019 at 11:59pm PT)

**1. What do you feel makes you qualified to be AYSO NBOD President? Please provide information about your leadership experience and leadership style.**

**Candidate Answer:**



As my candidate profile indicates, I have I successfully lead large city government departments and served on several non-profit boards, including in the capacity as president. I still am retained as an interim community development and planning director as agencies recruit for permanent directors. My leadership style has always been inclusive. Under my leadership, the NBOD has been more inclusive and respectful of the of the participation and feedback of the Section Directors, and has had far more outreach to the Executive Members as we have implemented the player fee increase and Volunteer Membership Program.

**2. What is your 1, 3, 5 and 10 year strategic vision for AYSO?**

**Candidate Answer:**



It is challenging to state a response in a short answer.

One-year Vision: Successful implementation of the Volunteer Membership Program

Three-year Vision: Successful integration of improved financial systems, including critical evaluation of the registration system

Five-year Vision: Player registration over 500,000; alternate Region governance models created

Ten-year Vision: Continued player growth with programs in all 50 states

**3. Describe specific accomplishments, improvements or projects in which your involvement was instrumental and had a significant impact on AYSO at the Region, Area, Section or National level.**

**Candidate Answer:**



Please see [Question 1](#) of the NBOD questions.

**4. Describe the nature of your current involvement in your local AYSO Region, Area or Section programs.**

**Candidate Answer:**



Please see [Question 2](#) of the NBOD questions.

**5. How would you address the different needs of Regions, Areas, and Sections based on geographic**

**differences, particularly programs located furthest from the AYSO National Office?**

**Candidate Answer:**



Please see [Question 4](#) of the NBOD questions.

**6. What motivated you to run for National President?**

**Candidate Answer:**



I have served as National President for two terms/ years. I was initially encouraged to run by several of my fellow Board members. I have enjoyed dealing with the challenges of the position, and there are many. I would be honored to continue to apply my leadership skills as National President for another year.

**Please Note:** The following responses from the candidates have been inserted as submitted by the candidate. No other alterations or edits were made.

## Candidate Answers to Submitted Questions

(all answers submitted by Wednesday, June 8, 2019 at 11:59pm PT)

**Please Note:** The following responses from the candidates have been inserted as submitted by the candidate. No other alterations or edits were made.



American Youth Soccer Organization

**NATIONAL  
ANNUAL  
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June 7-9, 2019 Newport Beach, Calif.