

2021-2024 HIGH PERFORMANCE PLAN





ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The 2017-2020 Quad was a pivotal period for USA Gymnastics (USAG). The organization faced numerous challenges and experienced extraordinary changes. Despite these challenges our athletes continued to demonstrate athletic excellence highlighted by gold-medal winning performances by the Women’s team and a historic World Championship for Rhythmic in which two athletes finished in the top 10 for the first time ever.

The USA Gymnastics that has emerged from the crisis is a new organization led by new leadership with a new athlete-centric mission and a new set of values that prioritizes athlete safety and wellness while still supporting athletes to achieve their athletic dreams. In this High Performance Plan, USA Gymnastics asks for the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC)’s support in achieving athletic excellence on the world stage while providing the resources needed to give our elite athletes the holistic mental and physical support they need to thrive, not just on the Olympic stage, but also in life beyond gymnastics.

Mission and Values

The new USA Gymnastics is a mission-driven organization the puts what is best for the athlete community at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make. We listen to our athletes and provide platforms to embrace and amplify their voices. We consistently seek ways to help our athletes grow and thrive, both on and off the field of play. This is emphasized in USAG’s new mission statement:

*To build a **community** and **culture of health, safety, and excellence**, where athletes can **thrive** in sport and in life.*

With all of our actions, we are guided by a collective and unwavering commitment to ethical conduct and our core values of:

SAFETY – We promote a safe and inclusive environment for our athletes and our community.

ACCOUNTABILITY – We hold ourselves responsible and accountable for all of our actions.

INTEGRITY – We act with absolute integrity through values-based actions.

TRANSPARENCY – We operate and communicate with transparency.

LISTENING – We treat our community with the utmost respect and listen to their challenges and perspectives.

One example of how USAG has reformed its policies and procedures under our new core values is the new Selection Procedures for World Championships and Olympic Games where we have increased transparency into the process. In these Selection Procedures we now require an independent observer



to participate in the selection meetings and ensure the procedures are being adhered to. Following the meeting, the Program Director/VP will write a report detailing how the selection was made following the Selection Procedures. The report will be signed off on by the independent observer.

Like everything we do, this 2021-2024 High Performance Plan will reflect the new USA Gymnastics mission and values and reflect our athlete-centric approach. We look forward to partnering with the USOPC in supporting our high-performance athletes so they may ***thrive in sport and in life*** within a ***culture of health, safety, and excellence***.

Leadership

USA Gymnastics is an entirely new organization. Nearly 60% of our current staff were hired in 2017 or later. In 2018, with the support and guidance of the USOPC, an entirely new Board of Directors was seated, and the bylaws were rewritten. This new Board is comprised of majority independent directors. In 2019, new CEO Li Li Leung was hired. Since 2019, Li Li has hired a new, all-female executive leadership team, with diverse backgrounds.

New USAG Executive Leadership Team:

Li Li Leung, Chief Executive Officer (Hired March 2019)

Prior to taking on the role as CEO at USAG, Li Li served as a vice president at the National Basketball Association (NBA), where she was responsible for building, leading, negotiating and managing key partner relationships around the world. Previously, she was a managing director at the global sports management firm Helios Partners, where she built from the ground up and managed their China and London offices. Li Li, a former elite gymnast, represented the U.S. in the 1988 Junior Pan American Games. She was also a member of the University of Michigan gymnastics team.

Stefanie Korepin, Chief Programs Officer (Hired September 2019)

As a former Rhythmic Gymnastics National Team Member, Stefanie represented the US at the 1998 World Championships and the 1999 Pan American Games. Stefanie—who has an MBA from Georgetown University—originally joined the USAG Board of Directors in 2018 after many years as an athlete, Brevet judge, and Program Committee Chairperson at USAG. She left her successful career in the energy industry to join USAG full time in 2019.

Kim Kranz, Chief of Athlete Wellness (Hired December 2019)

Kim is a board-certified clinical specialist in sports physical therapy. Kim joined USAG in December 2019 with more than 25 years of experience in physical therapy, sports medicine, positive coaching, and sports psychology (14 of which were at a children’s hospital).

Lauryn Turner, Chief of Staff (Hired March 2020)

USAG’s new Chief of Staff has over 20 years of sports industry experience, specializing in business and cultural transformation. She has been a dedicated advocate, including as a leader



in athlete safety with The Foundation of Athletes 1st, co-creator of Women of Will that empowers female athletes, and is a volunteer for St. Jude's.

Carol Fabrizio, Chief Communications and Marketing Officer (Hired February 2020)

USAG's new head of communication and marketing is a former lawyer, equality advocate (former Commissioner for Colorado Civil Rights Commission), and spouse of an Olympian, who spent the last decade in various leadership roles in the sports leisure and travel industry and is passionate about effecting culture change.

Erica Koven, Chief Membership Officer

Erica joined the leadership team in 2020, after spending more than 14 years serving USAG's membership base and leading the member services department. Throughout her time with the organization, Koven has actively contributed to the day-to-day business operations of USA Gymnastics' membership and education sectors, connecting with every facet of the gymnastics community across all disciplines.

Program Leadership

Annie Heffernon, VP Women's Program (Hired as VP February 2019)

Annie came to work at USA Gymnastics in January, 2014 as the Women's JO Program Director and became the Vice President of Women's Program in February 2019. Prior to that, she owned and operated her own gymnastics club in the Kansas City area where she was responsible for the oversight and administration of all aspects of the club. In addition, she served the gymnastics community as the Kansas State Committee Chairperson and on the Region 3 Administrative Committee.

Tom Forster, Women's High Performance Director (Hired June 2018)

Tom has been a club owner, Aerials Gymnastics in Colorado Springs, since 1983. In his coaching career (1991-2001) he coached athletes in 14 international competitions including three World Championships and the 1996 Olympic team alternate. Tom is committed to creating an atmosphere of positivity and collaboration as we all strive for excellence. Every decision he makes comes from the position of listening to athletes and helping the athletes and coaches strive for their goals and feel valued for their efforts.

Jason Woodnick, VP Men's Program (Hired February 2020)

Jason was hired as the Men's Program VP in early 2020 after spending the last 10 years in Canada as a National Team Coach and Program Director at the University of Calgary and then as the Men's Program Manager with Gymnastics Canada. He has been involved in gymnastics since the age of six and was a USAG All-American at James Madison University. Jason has worked with athletes of all ages and he is most passionate about helping athletes to achieve their own goals.



Brett McClure, Men’s High Performance Director (Hired February 2017)

Brett has been involved with the men’s national program since he began gymnastics in the early 90’s and highlighted his career with 2 World Team Silver medals and an Olympic Team Silver medal in Athens, Greece 2004. Prior to his hire as the HPD, Brett spent 11 years coaching in the NCAA at the Air Force Academy, Stanford University and as the Head Coach at UC Berkeley while getting his degree in Business Administration with a focus in Organizational Behavior. He coached multiple National Team members throughout his coaching career, including a 2016 Olympian.

Caroline Hunt, Rhythmic Gymnastics Program Director (Hired April 2007)

As a former Rhythmic Gymnastics National Team member, Caroline represented the US at the 1992 and 1993 World Championships. Caroline joined USAG Board of Directors as an Athlete Representative and, upon receiving her Master’s in Education from Stanford in 2006 along with her Brevet judging certification, left her teaching career to become the Rhythmic Program Director in 2007. She has served 3 Olympic cycles as a member of the FIG Rhythmic Technical Committee.

Jacqui Godfrey, Trampoline and Tumbling Program Director (Hired September 2017)

Jacqui brings over 20 years of experience in sports operations and Board governance to her role at USAG. Prior to arriving in the U.S. in 2016, Jacqui held senior positions at three national sporting organizations, her most recent role being Director of Operations at Gymnastics Victoria, Australia. Jacqui is a FIG Brevet judge, officiating at events including World Championships and Youth Olympic Games.

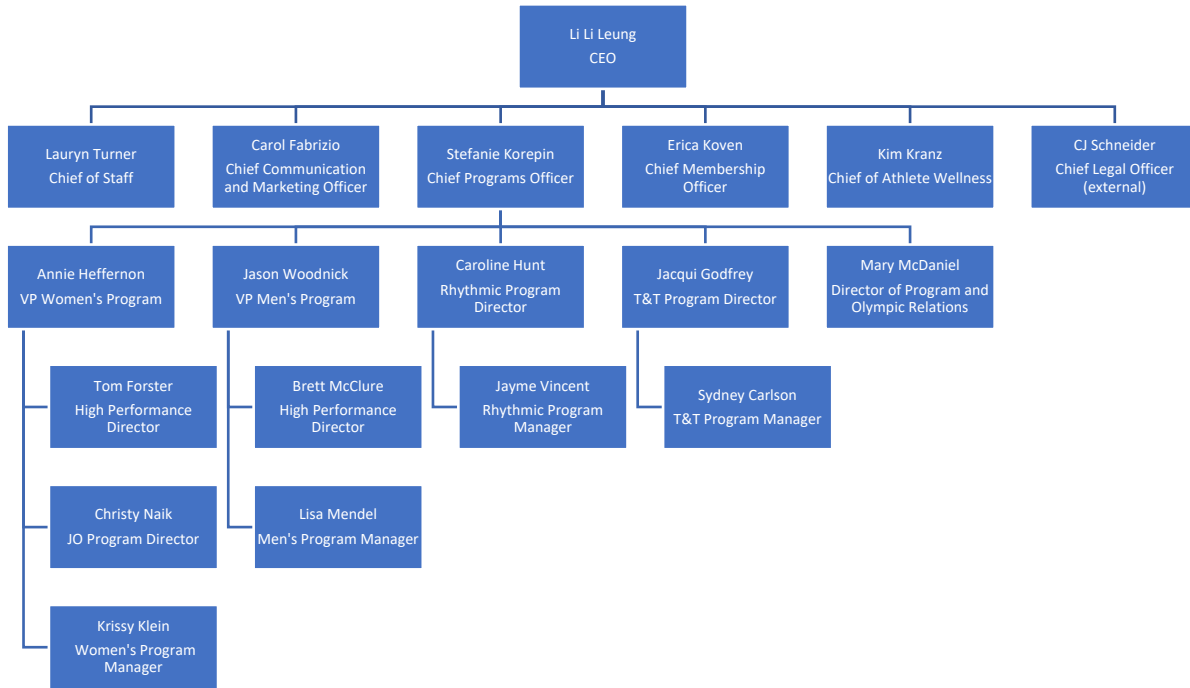
Mary McDaniel, Dir. of Program Development and Olympic Relations (Hired October 2018)

Mary came to USA Gymnastics in October, 2018 with over 30 years of coaching experience in Women’s Artistic Gymnastics. She began her career at McCracken’s Gymnastics in Olathe, Kansas where she was Managing Director and Head Coach of the women’s program. She continued her career as an assistant coach at the University of Kentucky and Auburn University. Mary’s passion is supporting the athletes in all disciplines of gymnastics.



Organizational Chart

This chart depicts the Executive Leadership Team and Program Staff.





HIGH PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Disciplines

USA Gymnastics is responsible for six competitive gymnastics disciplines:

- Women’s Artistic Gymnastics*
- Men’s Artistic Gymnastics*
- Rhythmic Gymnastics (which includes two sub disciplines – Individual* and Group*)
- Trampoline and Tumbling (which includes three sub disciplines – Trampoline*, Double-Mini, and Tumbling)
- Acrobatic Gymnastics
- Parkour

* Indicates the discipline is part of the Olympic Games programming.

This 2021-2024 High Performance Plan focuses on our Olympic disciplines but also includes our newest discipline—Parkour—as we believe there is a strong possibility that Parkour may be included in the 2028 Olympic Games.

What’s new in the 2021-2024 High Performance Plan

The 2021-2024 Quad High Performance Plan will be different than any other in that we will be requesting resources to support our athletes through both the postponed 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games and the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. Additionally, all of our disciplines have set an 8-year strategic plan with the goal of USA success at the LA 2028 Games. You will notice an increased focus on the developmental pipeline with a particular focus on the athletes that will be eligible to compete in 2028. Finally, you will also notice USAG’s increased focus on Athlete Health and Wellness, in line with our new mission and values. With that comes a request for increased funding in athlete wellness initiatives. We believe the USOPC shares in our commitment to supporting the whole athlete and setting them up for success in life, not just on the competition floor, and hope this shared commitment is reflected in financial support in this area.



MEN'S ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

Overview

As this quadrennium comes to a close, the U.S. Men's Artistic Gymnastics Program is poised for a stellar showing at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in 2021. This quadrennium saw the men's team earn two individual World Championships medals. The first from Yul Moldauer, a bronze medal on the Floor Exercise in 2017 and the second from Sam Mikulak who won a bronze medal on the High Bar in 2018. At the 2018 and 2019 World Championships, the U.S. men's team placed just off the podium, in fourth place, while qualifying the team to Tokyo. The talent is apparent, and the belief is strong within the men's program that a podium team result at the Tokyo Olympics is attainable.

High Performance Director, Brett McClure was hired in 2017 and was given a clean slate to mold the HP program in his vision. With the retirement of the majority of the Senior National Team from the previous quadrennium, there were many new faces and an opportunity to bring about a new culture within the program. This shift in culture included creating more objectivity to the national team camps and selection processes as well as creating incentives for athletes and coaches to reach specific benchmarks.

One major realization over the last few years was that our Senior team lacked depth, especially in their start values. Russia, China, and Japan, the quadrennium's top three teams, can produce numerous athletes with some of the highest start values in the world on each event. It was established that in order to create a deep pool of Senior athletes who have world class start values, the work needed to be done at the Junior development level. The Junior athletes needed to be achieving Senior level start values to allow for a seamless and immediately impactful transition into the Senior level.

In 2019, the first Artistic Junior World Championships took place in Gyor, Hungary. The Junior U.S. men were coming off a gold medal team performance at the 2019 Berlin Junior International competition against many of the top countries in the world. The Junior National Team was beginning to see results from their development plan starting to emerge. At the World Championships, the U.S. men's team finished in seventh place and secured a fourth-place finish on the rings from Isaiah Drake. This was an eye-opening result from our program and allowed for more buy-in from the coaches in welcoming a new strategy for increasing start values in the developmental program. This new strategy involved setting higher standards and pushing international level benchmarks during our camps, providing more international competition opportunities to more athletes and tying those opportunities to the stated benchmarks. This has established a culture to allow athletes to compete higher difficulty without the fear of being passed over for camps and international assignments and utilizing the Kinduct platform and video submissions to track athlete development across the country. Consistent oversight by our men's program medical staff and the use of USOPTC Sports Performance services for these Junior athletes will be vital in monitoring their health as their skill level and difficulty increase.

This new strategy, which was initiated at the beginning of the quadrennium, picked up significant momentum following the 2019 Junior World Championships as athletes began to quickly build on the



strong fundamental transformation that occurred over the course of the quad. By early 2020, many Junior athletes were already reaching Senior level benchmarks, which was confirmed at the 2020 Winter Cup Challenge where three Junior athletes qualified for the limited Senior division at the 2020 U.S. Championships as part of the 2020 Olympic Trials process.

Prior to COVID-19 putting a halt to the 2020 competition season in March, the U.S. men jumped out to an impressive start with two gold medals at two FIG World Cup events. First, Stephen Nedoroscik earned a gold medal on the pommel horse at the Individual Apparatus World Cup in Melbourne, Australia. Then, Sam Mikulak earned a gold medal in the all-around at the American Cup, which is part of the FIG All-Around World Cup series. Both events are part of the qualification system to earn two individual spots to the Olympic Games. The Junior men had been assigned to multiple international competitions and were expected to reach the podium at each event. Unfortunately, they did not get the opportunity to show their abilities.

The men’s program continues to utilize the USPOTC in Colorado Springs for our Resident Athlete Program, under Head Coach, Andriy Stepanchenko, as well as the NCAA system for the majority of our National Team members. We will continue to support both of these opportunities, however with the uncertainty surrounding Olympic sports at the NCAA level due to financial implications from COVID-19, the Resident Program becomes much more valuable as we look to the next quadrennium. In August 2020, the University of Iowa announced it will be cutting its men’s gymnastics program and, unfortunately, we anticipate others to follow suit.

Leadership/High Performance Team

- Stefanie Korepin, Chief of Programs
- Jason Woodnick, Vice President of Men’s Program
- Brett McClure, High Performance Director
- Dusty Ritter, Development Program Coordinator
- Raj Bhavsar, Development Program Assistant
- Lisa Mendel, Men’s Program Manager
- Brandon Wynn & Danell Leyva, Athlete Representatives
- David Kruse, Medical Director/Men’s Program Physician
- Brandi Long, Athletic Trainer
- Men’s Program Committee
- Junior Olympic Program Committee
- Junior National Coaching Staff

The men’s program staff has undergone several significant changes in 2020. Jason Woodnick has joined USAG as the new Vice President of the Men’s Program. Jason is based at the head office in Indianapolis and will oversee all aspects of the Men’s Program. This is a change from the previous quadrennium where the VP was located in Colorado Springs.



Raj Bhavsar, bronze medalist at the 2008 Olympic Games, has been brought on staff as the Men's Development Program Assistant. Raj will support the Men's Development Program Coordinator in continuing to develop our Age Group and Junior athletes. He will also take the lead on utilizing the Kinduct platform for the Junior program. Raj is highly respected among both athletes and coaches and has been a well-received addition to the program.

Brett McClure will continue to serve as the High Performance Director of the men's program. He will continue to develop the strategic plan for national team members with the goal of achieving podium results internationally as a team and individual event focus. Brett will collaborate with national team coaches, athletes, and expert technicians in creating and implementing training plans aimed at improving the quality of athletes' training and performance utilizing a data-driven approach.

Dusty Ritter, the Men's Development Program Coordinator, will continue to lead the Junior program and oversee the Junior national team. Dusty and Raj will work with our new Junior National Coaching Staff to increase the junior standards to be competitive with the top countries in the world. The main goal is to have the junior athletes performing at a Senior level, which will prepare them for the smooth transition to the Senior category.

The men's program recently appointed a new Junior National Coaching Staff (JNCS), consisting of established and experienced coaches as well as young coaches who are eager to contribute to the program. They will be responsible for continuing to provide leadership in technical development and execution to the Junior Program. Another primary responsibility of the JNCS is to coordinate with the Regional Elite Development programs to support a consistent message of National Team goals and benchmarks.

The medical staff for the men's program has also experienced several changes. Kim Kranz has joined USAG and serves as the Chief of Athlete Wellness. She will oversee USAG's strategy and execution of athlete health and wellness initiatives. Dr. David Kruse, who has worked with the men's program for many years, is now the Medical Director for USA Gymnastics while continuing in his role with the men's program. Finally, Brandi Long has been hired as the full-time athletic trainer for the men's resident program at the USOPTC. With the addition of these key roles, as well as the additional athletic trainers and physical therapists who work with the men's program, our athletes will be provided with consistent and expert medical care.



2021-2024 Mission

High Performance

High Performance Goals:

2021

- Qualify two individual spots to the Tokyo Olympic Games
- Team medal at the Tokyo Olympic Games
- 2 Individual medals at the Tokyo Olympic Games
- Three individual medals at the World Championships
- Team gold medal at the Junior Pan American Games
- Multiple Junior athletes performing 29.00-30.00+ start values internationally
- Introduction of Senior Development Team

2022

- Team medal at the World Championships, qualifying a team of five athletes to the Paris 2024 Olympics
- 2 Individual medals at the World Championships
- 1st place team Pan American Championships
- 5 Individual medals at Pan American Championships
- At least two Junior athletes qualify to World Championships Trials

2023

- Team medal at the World Championships
- 3 Individual medals at World Championships
- 1st place team at Pan American Games
- 5 Individual medals at Pan American Games
- Team medal at the Junior World Championships
- Senior Development Team athletes achieving 94.00+ start values

2024

- Team medal at the Paris Olympic Games
- 4 Individual medals at Olympic Games
- Identify new benchmarks for 2028 quad
- Implement strategy for team gold medal at 2025 Junior World Championships

2028

- Team CHAMPIONS at the Olympic Games in LA

The initial goal for 2021 is to earn two additional qualification spots to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics through the Individual All-Around World Cup Series and the All-Around competition at the Continental



Championships. In achieving that goal, the U.S. men will qualify the maximum number of athletes (6) to Tokyo and provide the greatest number of opportunities to win medals.

Once the qualification process for Tokyo has concluded, the primary goal of the men's HP program will be to earn a team medal at the Tokyo and Paris Olympic Games while also trying to maximize individual medal opportunities. The men's team finished fifth at the 2016 Olympics and has back-to-back fourth place finishes at the 2018 and 2019 World Championships, respectively. In order to make the podium, we will have to overtake Russia, China or Japan who have been the top three teams throughout the quadrennium.

For Tokyo, the four-man team will likely consist predominantly of all-around athletes. However, with the Olympic qualifications allowing for up to two individual qualifiers, the U.S. may have the opportunity to send their strongest individual apparatus specialists who may not be a part of the four-man team. This will increase our medal potential in Tokyo.

Looking ahead to Paris and even Los Angeles, if we want to achieve consistent team medals and individual medals at World Championships and Olympic Games, then our mission really starts with the developmental program because it will have direct correlation to our success at the Senior level. We are just now starting to see the results from athletes who have gone through the program since the strategic overhaul several years ago. As more athletes continue to come through the program, we should see a deeper pool of very competitive Junior boys who will be able to transition to the Senior level and immediately challenge for spots on World and Olympic teams. By 2024 and 2028, our start value depth should challenge the likes of Japan, Russia and China.*

*For International Competitive Analysis – see Appendix A

Culture

The men's program will continue to promote mental and physical well-being, collaboration and inclusivity, transparency, and objectivity. Gymnastics is an extremely demanding sport, both physically and mentally. Historically, coaches have been asked to play numerous roles when it comes to developing an athlete, especially at the Junior level. However, our program has the capabilities and staff to ensure that health and wellness of both athletes and coaches alike are a top priority. We should not be asking our coaches to play the roles of nutritionist, physical therapist, and/or sports psychologist. This is not safe for the athletes, and not fair to the coaches themselves. We need to ensure that health care professionals are able to work with our junior and senior national team athletes regularly by providing access to Sports Performance resources at the USOPTC and/or by increasing the number of athletes eligible for Elite Athlete Health Insurance.

The men's program has started to shift the culture over the past few years, thanks to the vision from program leadership. However, we must continue to work to gain the trust from the athletes and ensure a positive environment for everyone. We will continue to provide consistent communication and encourage open dialogue from within the community. The athletes will have a louder voice when



it comes to creating training plans, developing selection procedures, and finalizing lineups for competitions. By involving the athletes in the development of these documents, we reduce the potential for any disagreements to occur or any grievances to be filed. These processes are still fairly new and over the course of the quadrennium, as we can show that we are always acting with the best interest of the athletes at heart, we will earn their trust in our leadership.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our men’s program leadership made it a priority to keep in constant contact with our athletes and coaches, and to ensure we were providing them with any and all resources that they needed while they were not able to train. We set up weekly virtual training sessions and meetings with both the Junior and Senior National Team members. Once they started getting back into the gym, we reached out to each individual National Team athlete and their families to discuss how they were feeling both mentally and physically in their return to training and offer up any resources or services to assist them in getting back to normalcy. The feedback from the athletes was extremely positive, and therefore, we will continue to have regular check-in meetings with our National Team members as we move forward.

Grassroots Development

COVID-19 will have a significant impact on the grassroots level of the men’s program. Some gyms will not survive, and some gyms will make the decision to cut their boys programs because of budget restraints. We will likely feel the effects from this pandemic for several years. However, in 2021 the men’s program will introduce our new Junior program manual, which will include a brand-new club track designed specifically for athlete retention and growth. A strong push must be made to get this program off the ground around the country. The new 3-track Junior program should provide more linkage and clearer direction between programs for gymnastics clubs, ultimately allowing men’s club programs to sustain themselves while providing greater depth to our Junior team.

In addition to the new Junior program, there must be a strong innovative marketing campaign to promote men’s gymnastics in the U.S. We must start thinking outside the box. Ideally, we would like to see a competitive series or tournament created, similar to the Bundesliga in Europe, where athletes can earn prize money and increase their exposure. Increasing our partnerships with fitness or cross-training organizations seems like a logical step in promoting the health benefits of gymnastics as well.

Action Plan: Strategies, Training Centers, and Planning

Key Actions for Olympic Success

- Develop Junior strategy built around achieving World level standards and creating a large pool of internationally experienced athletes that are well-prepared for the Senior level
- Provide opportunities for Juniors turning Senior to maintain National Team status and continue to be involved in the Elite program during their maturation period
- Ensure that Senior team athletes are able to train at institutions that support the athletes’ international goals while providing access to scholastic and/or employment opportunities



- Sports Performance support for all National Team athletes

Strategies

Moving forward, there are key strategies that will support the work of the coaches of our top athletes at the Junior level. Sustaining and increasing competitive international opportunities is the single greatest motivating factor driving athlete achievement. Refining a system of selection for both national team selection and international assignment that removes the fear of performing higher start values in competition domestically will be critical to sustaining the culture of the U.S. Men's Program to compete effectively in world competition. Effective use of virtual platforms will be imperative in order to track performance and keep athletes and coaches focused between training camps and throughout the year. Establishing specific benchmarks and incentive systems that are consistent with winning start value and routine construction expected in 2028 and beyond are essential to continuing the momentum we currently have. Creating a Senior Development Team for athletes who have aged out of the Junior program but are not ready to compete with our top Seniors, will allow for the seamless transition from Junior to Senior status while those athletes go through their physical maturation period. The Senior Development Team will be an integral part of our National Team program as it will be focused on preparing those athletes for the future at the International level.

Finally, recognition for programs that can become reliable training centers, producing a consistent and healthy environment for developing internationally competitive athletes, is necessary as a solution to the potential decline of the NCAA programs due to COVID-19.

Juniors

As mentioned in previous sections, the Junior program is still in the early stages of their strategic re-organization, but we are seeing results much faster than expected. Our top Juniors are already challenging and earning spots on the Senior National Team in their first year of eligibility. The program will continue to develop elite athletes that will strengthen our Junior and Senior teams to meet the demands of World competition using the following strategies:

Junior Training Camp Program:

- Identification of routine composition requirements and start values on each event
- Athletes required to show composition with 8 value parts "C" or higher in each Element Group (EG)
- Target Goal: Routine composition "D" or higher in each EG
- Establish benchmarks of 30.00 start value in All Around
- Identify priorities in skill development in certain areas where weakness is identified
- Establish culture of no fear in competing upgrades tied to camp selection
- Continued refinement of basic skills by expanding basic requirements to Senior level skills
- Promote a wider repertoire of skill development at all levels
- Use of Kinduct and Google Drive platform to track athlete development
- More statistical analysis (Kinduct)



- Raise the standards of Junior National Team participation to match those of the Senior team

Junior International Competition Assignments:

- Assignments tied to start values, training camp performances, and meeting benchmarks
- Most assignments must be identified before Winter Cup
- Develop competition strategy by evaluating each competition in terms of competitive level and start values needed
- Increase opportunities to expose more Junior team athletes to international competition, which leads to a more experienced pool of athletes who are comfortable competing on the international stage

Selection to the Junior National Team:

- Use internationally competitive standards as the base for team selection
- Include more meet performances in selection ranking
- Expanded open selections to the team and tie those selections to start value
- Establish a minimum start value for team selection

The strategy is clearly to encourage international start values and create incentives for those athletes who meet those benchmarks. Currently, all of our financial incentives and bonus structures are centered around Senior team athletes and coaches. However, moving into the new quadrennium and beyond, we would like to build a financial incentive program for Junior team coaches and their clubs. Equipment costs and staffing costs when a head coach is away at a competition or camp can be challenging for a club. Ideally, we will help offset some of those costs that are necessary in producing an elite athlete. Additionally, creating a coach incentive for attending training camps, similar to what is done at the Senior level would be a positive way of supporting those coaches who attend camps throughout the year.

Developmental

The men's Future Stars Program is a talent identification program that routinely produces future World and Olympic team members. This program is essential to our overall success. The Future Stars national competition selects 50 athletes to the team, and approximately 25 of them are invited to the National Future Stars camp, where the athletes and their coaches are introduced to the requirements of creating a high-performance training plan. The Future Stars camps are one of the program's top resources for coach development by getting to work with our country's top coaches and staff. For the next quadrennium, we will look to expand the numbers for Future Stars camps, which will allow us to reach a greater number of coaches and provide them with a hands-on learning experience in a camp environment.

Seniors

The standards that have been set at the Junior level will lead to increased depth at the Senior level. This is key to creating a Senior team of athletes who have world level start values, international experience, and a strong work ethic. The team will also be experienced in understanding team



strategies and hitting benchmarks for assignments, which will prepare them for more objective selection procedures at the Senior level.

A key element to the program will be the transition from Junior to Senior. Historically our athletes have struggled to make the Senior team for several years, dropped their difficulty level, and lost motivation for international success. By expanding the Senior team to include a Senior Development National Team for ages 17-19, we will focus on those athletes for increased motivation, accountability, and development for international success. These athletes will be invited to all Senior camps and will be eligible for international competition selection.

The men's Senior program revolves mainly around two pathways: the NCAA system and the USOPTC resident athlete program. COVID-19 has forced every university to make drastic decisions to be able to sustain their programs. Men's gymnastics programs are likely not as safe as they once were, which makes the resident program much more vital to our program overall. As we look to the future, both pathways will need to continue to provide value to our top athletes so that they are able to choose the best option for their scholastic, gymnastics, and personal endeavors.

While the NCAA programs will hopefully continue to be our main pipeline for World and Olympic team members, we believe there are opportunities to make the USOPTC resident athlete program a more appealing option for those that wish to go that route. Several key factors that will go into making the USOPTC more appealing for top Juniors transitioning to Seniors (18 years old), include:

- USOPTC Education – Junior athletes, and their parents, need to be educated on the benefits of the resident program and all of the incredible facilities and staff that are a part of the USOPTC. Much like collegiate coaches are able to provide recruiting information and host athletes on visits, the same needs to be done for the USOPTC. We will need to provide informational packets and invite athletes to experience life at the training center for a trial period.
- Scholarship Program – We will need to provide a scholarship equivalent for an athlete joining the resident program so athletes can receive their degree like they would if they were competing for a University. Currently, we have a program that works with the USOPC, but our hope is to build a relationship with University of Colorado - Colorado Springs and OPTC athletes so they can attend in-person on campus classes. A lot of times the reason for not coming to the OPTC is the lack of degree and scholarship opportunities.
- Culture – The USOPTC training environment will continue to promote a very high level of technical coaching as well as a “team first” mentality, comparable to the collegiate programs and previous resident teams of the 90's and 00's. If athletes can train in an environment that promotes both of those aspects, then they would be more likely to join the program. Utilizing the strategies and goals from previous resident teams, our focus is to provide the best coaching staff available that will motivate the country's best athletes.
- Competitiveness – If we attract our top juniors to join the resident program out of high school, they will continue the direction of higher difficulty, international experience, and maintaining the tools to continuously compete against and beat our top NCAA athletes. Currently, our top NCAA athletes have not been challenged by any resident athletes other than Sam Mikulak, which creates a mindset that the resident program is no more beneficial than an NCAA



program. With previous teams, the resident program was able to maintain the higher standard and win multiple medals throughout World Championships and Olympics. Something has to change within the NCAA program if we want to keep challenging for medals. Boosting the performance within our resident program will help all parties.

USAG must continue to support our collegiate programs that have been so important to the men's program for many years. Many of our men's program athletes dream to compete for a NCAA team and if those opportunities are eliminated, it will be a major blow to our sport. For our men's program to reach the highest level, it is imperative that the NCAA programs allow and encourage National Team athletes to pursue international opportunities and world-class standards. USAG will continue to support the collegiate programs by providing complimentary memberships to each team and creating a NCAA sustainability task force with top coaches, administrators, and dignitaries who will be at the forefront of creating strategies to keep men's gymnastics alive at the collegiate level.

Training Camps

The training camp structure for the men's program will continue to be vital in our ability to track athletes' development and success at reaching benchmarks. Junior camps will continue to be split into Level 8/9 camps and Junior Elite Level 10 camps to be able to involve a greater number of athletes. This also helps to provide incentive for younger athletes while pushing older athletes. Our Future Stars and Developmental camps at the Regional and National levels are extremely important to developing our future elite athletes as well as their coaches. At the yearly Future Stars National camp, we run a National Coaches Workshop simultaneously, which provides coaches with numerous educational tools. We are also exploring ideas on expanding coaches' education at our national team camps beyond the national team coaches that have athletes attending. This may create a larger base for education and revenue opportunity to support our program.

For Senior camps, we will increase the number of invited athletes to include our Senior Development Team and those previous national team members that may have just missed the most recent round of re-ranking. This will provide motivation to those athletes and create a more competitive atmosphere with our experienced Senior athletes. Additionally, having these younger athletes and fringe athletes involved in the Senior camps will prepare them for when they become the more experienced leaders of the team.

While the men's program utilizes clinicians throughout the year, we would like to be able to mirror the women's program who bring in contracted experts to every training camp held throughout the year. Ideally, we could bring in foundational coaches to work with juniors and several high-level coaches to focus on specific technical development, coaches who specialize in working with athletes through growth spurts, experts in creating training plans, and physical and emotional development specialists. This may also include apparatus experts to narrow the focus of our expert clinicians and national team development.



The Senior men have had the opportunity to train in Funabashi, Japan over the past several years, and we would like to incorporate that opportunity for our Juniors as well. The training center and hospitality in Funabashi is among the best in the world and being able to have our Juniors train alongside the top Japanese athletes would be a great motivation tool as well as provide a marker for how competitive we are with them. Additional international training camps with PAGU federations and other top countries will be utilized to assess our competitiveness and serve as motivation for the athletes.

Sports Performance Services

The Sports Performance team at the USOPTC has been an excellent resource for our Resident Athletes and our Senior team athletes, and we'd like to continue utilizing these services over the next quad. Services such as nutrition, sports psychology, and strength and conditioning have all proven to help our elite athletes in creating their training plans and maintaining their overall health and wellness. COVID-19 has shown that athletes don't need to be on-site to utilize these services. Virtual meetings and trainings can be created to reach athletes who may not be local to the USOPTC.

Historically, USOPTC Sport Performance resources have been targeted at Senior team and Resident Athletes. We need to start providing these services for our Junior team as well. We know strategically, Juniors are elevating their skill level to that of the Seniors. Therefore, they must be provided the same access to the sports performance professionals. The health and wellness of our athletes cannot be compromised in developing athletes who are well-rounded in every facet of preparation, competition, and recovery. The Athlete Health and Wellness section of this document will better outline the proposed Sports Performance services that we would like to offer to our National Team athletes.

The USOPC's Athlete Career and Education Program will play a necessary role in helping our elite team athletes prepare for life after gymnastics. Skills such as resume writing, personal finance, and career planning will help our athletes in their transition from full-time athlete to full-time employee once their careers are over.

The Kinduct platform for tracking Junior and Senior athletes has proven to be one of our program's most important tools. Our High-Performance Director and JO Program Assistant are able to enter competition scores from U.S. and foreign athletes, allowing us to be able to track not only the development of our team domestically, but compare them to the top teams in the world. This platform will continue to provide data which will assist in determining athlete rankings and verifications for international assignments. Through the past quad, the men's program has been using a free trial of Kinduct, but for the next quad and beyond, we will likely need to pay for the service. Additionally, we are thrilled for the opportunity to merge with USOPC Sports Medicine as they've transitioned to this platform. With Strength and Conditioning, Medical and Athlete Performance all located in one location, this will minimize the burden on the athlete reporting on multiple platforms.



New Proposed Initiatives

The men's program is introducing many new initiatives at the Junior and Senior levels that will require additional support. These initiatives will be integrated into our program beginning in 2021.

- Increased support for all-around World Cup events – These events are used for Olympic qualification and require traveling a reserve athlete and coach as well as medical staff. This was required for 2020 but will now be necessary for 2021 due to postponed World Cup events.
- Tiered funding structure for National Team athletes – Create a tiered funding structure to support Junior and Senior National Team athletes that will allow for increased funding based on performance at major competitions.
- Assistant coach for the USOPTC Resident Athlete Program – Should the resident program grow throughout the next quad; they would require a team focused assistant coach to create a more NCAA-like environment and make the training center a more attractive training option for our young Senior athletes.
- USOPTC Scholarship Program – Provide educational funding for athletes who wish to pursue elite gymnastics through the USOPTC resident program.
- Summer Training Initiative at USOPTC – We would like to host NCAA athletes, who are required to leave school for the summer, at the USOPTC. This group could work together for several weeks in an environment that would improve our team comradery and elevate our level and quality of gymnastics.
- Incentives for Junior coaches and clubs.
- Increased international competitions for Junior National Team members – Supporting more international competitions for our Junior athletes will allow an increased number of athletes to gain international experience in preparation for the Senior level.
- Elite clinicians at all training camps - Bring in foundational coaches to work with juniors and several high-level coaches to focus on specific technical development, coaches who specialize in working with athletes through growth spurts, experts in creating training plans, and physical and emotional development specialists.
- Continue relationship with Funabashi, Japan and introduce Juniors – Continue to bring Senior National Team members to Funabashi to train at their training center. Also, provide opportunities for Junior athletes as a way to show them the level they should be aspiring to achieve.
- Create a similar program we had with Funabashi with Paris in preparation for 2024 Olympic Games.
- Sports Performance access for Junior National Team – Introduction and consistent follow up with Junior athletes in the areas of strength & conditioning, nutrition, and sports psych services. Senior National Team and Resident Athletes will continue to have regular access to the Sports Performance resources (refer to Athlete Health and Wellness section of this document).
- Kinduct platform – Increased funding to cover the cost of the Kinduct analysis platform, which helps to track our athlete development and competitiveness internationally (we plan to apply for this funding through the 2020 USOPC Technology & Innovation Fund).
- Introduction of new Junior program in 2022 – The new Junior program will be presented in 2021 for implementation in 2022. The program will feature club, national, and elite categories,



and will require a strong push to the community. Webinars, clinics, and in-person demonstrations will be required to introduce the program to the community.

- NCAA Initiative – The men’s program will provide complimentary athlete memberships for each varsity and collegiate/GymAct program with the intent to provide financial support as well as allow for our athletes to pursue a collegiate gymnastics opportunity.
- Athlete inclusion in selection processes – Senior National Team athletes will be involved in creating the strategies and processes for team selection to international events.
- Independent Observers for selections – The Men’s Program Committee will utilize an Independent Observer for all selection meetings. The Observer will review and sign a report of the meeting submitted by the VP to verify that proper processes were followed.



2021 Calendar of Events

2021		
1/6-10	Level 10 Jr Elite Team Camp	USOPTC
2/24-26	Winter Cup Challenge/Elite Team Cup	TBD
3/7-11	Senior Team Camp	USOPTC
3/10-13	World Cup (IE)	Doha, QT
3/18-21	UCIC	Calgary, CAN
3/25-28	DTB Polka World Cup (AA) and Team Cup	Stuttgart, GER
3/26-27	World Cup (AA)	Birmingham, GBR
4/2-3	World Cup (AA)	Tokyo, JPN
4/9-10	International Junior Team Cup	Berlin, GER
4/15-18	Pacific Rim Championships	Tauranga, NZL
4/16-17	NCAA Championships	Univ. of Minnesota
4/29-5/2	Sr Pan American Championships	USA
5/13-16	JO National Championships	TBD
5/16-17	2021-2024 Age Group Competition Program Rollout	TBD
6/3-6	US Championships	Fort Worth, TX
6/5-20	Jr Pan Am Games	Cali, COL
6/16-20	Level 8/9 Jr National Team Camp	USOPTC
6/24-27	Olympic Team Trials	St. Louis, MO
6/24-27	National Congress	St. Louis, MO
7/6-11	Olympic Team Camp	USOPTC
7/12-16	Level 10 Jr Elite Team Camp	USOPTC
7/23-8/8	Olympic Games	Tokyo, JPN
7/30-8/3	Future Stars Camp	USOPTC
8/18-29	World University Games	Chengdu, CHN
Aug/Sept	Chairmen's Summit/JOPC Meeting	TBD
TBD	Intercontinental Judges Course	TBD
9/15-19	Junior Development Camp	USOPTC
9/19-23	Level 10 Jr Elite Team Camp	USOPTC
9/23-27	Senior Team Camp/World Trials	USOPTC
10/10-14	Level 8/9 Jr National Team Camp	USOPTC
10/18-24	World Championships (IE)	TBD
11/11-14	Future Stars Championships & Nat. Coaches Workshop	USOPTC
12/2-6	Level 10 Jr Elite Team Camp	USOPTC
12/12-16	Senior Team Camp	USOPTC

Note:

- All camp and USOPTC event dates are tentative pending USOPTC confirmation
- Dates, site and participation in specific international invitational and World Cup Events not yet determined



*Important Note***

At the time of submission of this High Performance Plan, the current landscape of NCAA gymnastics, especially with regards to the men's program, is changing drastically. The NCAA programs are one of the main pathways that house our National Team athletes and produce our World and Olympic team members. In the coming weeks, several collegiate men's programs may be eliminated due to financial restrictions stemming from COVID-19. Should we lose multiple collegiate programs, our entire developmental strategy and funding allocation will need to be re-structured. We would request the opportunity to re-submit the Men's High Performance Plan at a later date, after we can come together with USOPC and USAG leadership to determine the new direction for the men's program.



MULTI-DISCIPLINE

Athlete Health and Wellness

A new Athlete Health and Wellness program was established in late 2019 at USA Gymnastics. In December 2019, Kim Kranz was hired as the VP of Athlete Health and Wellness and has since been promoted to Chief of Athlete Wellness, now overseeing the Athlete Health and Wellness as well as the Safe Sport departments. The Athlete Health and Wellness department is focused on providing holistic care to our athletes including mental health care, sport psychology, nutrition, strength and conditioning, physical therapy, medical and athletic training services, life skills development and more.

USA Gymnastics also created an Athlete Health and Wellness Council in 2020 that was created to act as advisors to the Athlete Health and Wellness program around health and wellness related policies, protocols, position statements, and educational topics needed for our community. The Council meets monthly to discuss these items. 2020 Athlete Health and Wellness Council members are representatives from all disciplines and represent multiple layers of the organization from programs to medical staff to athletes.

The current members are:

- Kim Kranz, Chief of Athlete Wellness at USA Gymnastics
- Dr. David Kruse, Medical Director at USA Gymnastics
- Dr. Aurelia Nattiv, Sports Medicine Physician and Independent Council Member
- Karen Cogan, Sports Psychologist, USOPC
- Dr. Michael Devine, Athlete Representative (former T&T athlete)
- Jessica Renteria, Athlete Representative (former Acro athlete)
- Annie Heffernon, VP Women's program, USA Gymnastics
- Beth Darling, PT, ATC, Team healthcare provider, Rhythmic
- Taryn Moore, ATC, Team healthcare provider, T&T

In June and July of 2020, a survey was sent to all national team athletes asking for their input on health and wellness needs and several key areas were identified. The most requested need was for additional mental health/sport psychology support. Athletes feel that the mental demands of being an elite athlete are not being met sufficiently and they would like more access to mental health and sport psychology at camps and events. They also felt that this support should start at a younger age, perhaps with developmental level camps. As such, we are requesting support in the HPP for a full-time sport psychologist/mental health professional, hired by USAG, who would be a regular presence at camps and premier events for all disciplines. This individual would provide individual counseling as needed both at camps and events and via telehealth as well as group educational sessions on a variety of mental health topics. This individual would be an integral part of our medical team and would develop a network of mental health practitioners to support our athletes. We also request additional support from Karen Cogan. We would like Karen to be available at our Premier events to support our Senior National Team athletes and would like each Senior National Team athlete in Women's and Men's artistic, Rhythmic and Trampoline to have the opportunity to have up to 12 individual visits with Karen



each year. Ideally, Karen would attend at least 2 camps per year for each discipline to provide general education to our National Team members and also provide coaches with mindfulness training. Lastly, we would like to partner with a telehealth mental provider to provide expanded access to mental health services for our elite athletes and members.

The next item identified in the survey by the athletes was a need for additional nutritional support. We request that USA Gymnastics Junior and Senior National Team athletes be allotted up to 6 individual sessions per year with the Team V nutritionist in order to ensure that they are building healthy nutritional plans to meet their training and competition needs. Additionally, we request that a Team V nutritionist attend up to 2 camps per year for each discipline to provide nutrition education to athletes and coaches. Funding for healthy food choices is often a challenge for National Team athletes and we hope to work with the USOPC, our partners and donors in the next quad to provide opportunities for additional nutritional funding.

Lastly, athletes identified a need for assistance around transitioning out of elite sports. We ask for continued support from the ACE program at the USOPC but also funding to partner with an organization who can help us design a gymnastics-specific curriculum and support structure for athletes who are considering retirement, forced to retire or have decided on retirement. We feel that engagement on this topic cannot start early enough and we will seek to incorporate talks on this during at least 2 camps per year per discipline as well as provide tools and resources to our National Team athletes. Additionally, USAG plans to bolster our relationships with our alumni network and plans to provide opportunities to volunteer and stay involved in the sport for our retired athletes.

Disciplines within our sport also have specific requests to benefit their teams.

The Men's National Team has requested additional Sports Medicine/Sports Performance support to provide a 360 degree review of each athlete's current health metrics including movement screening, functional strength assessment, training load, nutrition, sleep and sport psychology to determine on an individual basis where changes can be made that would lead to gains in performance. We request support from the USOPC to provide this service.

Additionally, the Men's National Team requests support in creating personalized strength and conditioning plans for all Junior and Senior National Team members for both in-season and off-season training plans. We request 6 individual S&C sessions for every Men's National Team athlete to establish, monitor and modify plans as needed. This service is necessary for our men's National Team (especially at the Junior level) as we look to 2024 and 2028 and move to overtake the top teams in the world.

The Trampoline program is requesting annual High Performance assessments for their top 3 male and top 3 female athletes with monthly to bi-monthly follow-ups for each athlete.

We continue to support the medical needs of our athletes via providing physician, physical therapy and athletic training coverage to our National Team athletes. David Kruse, MD, was named Medical



Director of USA Gymnastics and Taryn Moore was permanently moved into a Medical Administrator role. Additionally, National Team medical staff were named to each discipline to more directly support the medical needs of the athletes. Our National Team medical staff is responsible for regular (typically weekly) communication with all injured athletes, coordination of medical appointments/imaging and ensuring that all home-based providers are communicating with the National Team medical staff around the athlete's progress and needs so that care between home and camps/events is seamless. National Medical team staff also check in regularly with non-injured athletes to ensure that they are healthy both physically and mentally and that there are not any unmet needs. This additional support to our athletes will require us to pay our National Team medical staff a monthly stipend in addition to per diem rates paid while they are on site at camps and events.

Athlete recovery centers (ARCs) at our events have become a key component of athlete recovery post-training and competition. USAG will look for new partnerships and ways to enhance existing partnerships to provide additional funding for equipment, supplies and staffing of our ARCs.

Within our sport, there is a significant need for additional education for stakeholders. In order to ensure National Team coaches have current, evidence-based information to keep athletes healthy and safe, we need to provide ongoing education. Our medical teams and others within our networks are capable of providing this education. We also must provide continuing medical education for our National Team medical staff and the gymnastics sports medicine community to ensure a ready and highly trained workforce educated in all aspects of providing care to elite athletes to support the needs of athletes at all levels, including the next generation of Olympians. The Athlete Health and Wellness staff at USAG is willing and able to provide and support this education but funding is needed to support preparation of the content as well as travel to present education to a variety of audiences.

We will also continue to work internally to enhance the athlete's voice. As noted above, the requests in this plan came primarily from athletes who were surveyed to determine their needs for additional health and wellness support. Our athlete's council will also investigate whether they need more resources, including education in athlete health and wellness, to best support the athletes and ensure that they are able to represent their needs.

USAG will strive to secure additional resources and funding through new revenue streams, partnerships and donations to provide support for these initiatives. We, like the USOPC, are committed to athlete health, wellness and safety as we move forward with significant cultural change in our organization.

With these additional pieces in place, we feel that our athletes will have a noticeable and significant improvement in their holistic wellness which, we anticipate, will have a positive impact on their readiness to compete at a high level and ensure they feel supported as they pursue their dreams.



Future Training Center

During the 2021-2024 Quad, USA Gymnastics plans to develop a state-of-the-art training center that will service all gymnastics disciplines. The training center will be critical infrastructure needed to achieve our mission. The training center will be the site of all developmental and National Team camps, coach/professional clinics, sport conditioning, athlete wellness resources, and more. We envision a facility that includes:

- World-class Women’s Artistic facility and equipment to support developmental and National Team athletes
- World-class Men’s Artistic facility and equipment to support Future Stars and National Team athletes
- A Rhythmic facility with 40-foot ceiling height, multiple competition carpets and ballet/dance room
- Top of the line T&T equipment in a facility with 40-foot ceiling height
- Indoor and outdoor Parkour obstacle courses
- Cafeteria staffed with professional cooks and sport nutritionist
- World-class sports medicine center, possibly in partnership with a renowned hospital
- High Performance/Wellness center with strength and conditioning resources, mental health services, recovery center, Pilates, etc.
- Open spaces for athletes to relax and socialize with their peers from other disciplines and/or other sports
- Office space for USAG staff to serve as new HQ

The ownership and structure of this facility is still to be determined as we will be evaluating multiple financing options and partnerships, both private and public. Following USAG’s exit from bankruptcy, an RFP will be issued. Our goal is for this facility to be up and running by the 2025-2028 Quad. USAG is not seeking any USOPC financial support for this initiative at this time.

International Relations

USA Gymnastics long term objectives and international relations strategy has the following areas of emphasis:

- Maintain a presence at the highest levels of leadership within the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) and Pan American Gymnastics Union (PAGU).
- Host international events on a regular basis to include annual competitions, camps, training exchanges, academies (coaching certifications) and other educational events.
- Develop mutually beneficial opportunities to increase our partnership with the FIG.
- Develop a strategy in connection with PAGU and Pacific Rim (PANGF) countries.
- Develop a pipeline of future candidates for FIG engagement.
- Influence positive change in the development of rules and policies that govern our sport, and to protect the interest of our athletes.



Appendix A – Men’s Artistic International Competitive Analysis

International Competitive Analysis – Senior

Russia

Russia is the defending World Team Champion after finishing second in 2018. They have produced the last two World All-Around Champions, Artur Dalaloyan and Nikita Nagornyy. They have tremendous depth on every apparatus and are consistent in their performances. They will be the team to beat heading into Tokyo and will likely stay at the top of the class looking ahead to Paris.

China

China are the defending World team silver medalists in the team competition, following their gold medal winning performance in 2018. The next top two All-Around athletes from this quadrennium are from China, Xiao Ruoteng and Lin Chaopan. China may have even more depth in the AA with 2019 AA finalist Sun Wei becoming more consistent last year, although they may only be limited to those three athletes. If all of them are healthy, they’ll have the ability to bring on hotshot specialist, Zou Jingyuan. He brings three events at a caliber not met on the world stage, and specifically on Parallel Bars by over a point. This brings a significant advantage for China and could arguably make them the favorite for team gold if this scenario plays out successfully.

Japan

Japan has finished third at each of the last two World Championships, but they will have the full support behind them when they compete at home in Tokyo. Two of their most decorated athletes, Kohei Uchimura and Kenzo Shirai were not a part of their World Championship team in 2019 and may not be a part of their team in Tokyo, but Japan has plenty of young talent to contend for the podium once again. Their strategy for 2019 was to compete the maximum amount of difficulty since already qualifying to Tokyo 2020 the year before. This young team is now experienced competing the higher start values to compete with Russia and China.

USA

The U.S. men have placed fourth at the last two World Championships. In order to attain a podium finish for the team, we will need to surpass one of the top three countries in the world. In order to do so, we will need to increase our start values across the board. In a 3-up, 3 scores count team finals scenario, we know that Russia, China, and Japan will have three strong start values on each event, which will present a challenge. The change in team format from 5 to 4 may actually work in our favor since the top three countries have such significant standout specialists they’ve used in the last two World Championships.

International Competitive Analysis – Junior/Developmental

Japan

Without a doubt, they are the program with the most depth in the world, consistently turning out Juniors who can make the direct transition to their Senior World and Olympic teams. They are the



model for the U.S. program currently. They showcase a strong technical foundation that allows progression to high start value routine construction with no element group weakness.

Ukraine

Ukraine produced the highest start values at the 2019 Junior Worlds. The net effect of this was showing our program what was possible at the Junior level. Two Ukrainian athletes posted over 32.00 AA start values with 8-skill FIG routines. However, their major weakness is a lack of depth. It remains to be seen if they can survive team formats going forward to 2024 and 2028.

China

China continues to show very high aptitude for difficulty and execution and will continue to be a constant threat as one of the top countries in the world. Like Japan, they have the ability to produce Junior athletes who can move directly to the Senior team. They place benchmark achievement above immediate competitive success in their Junior ranks, which supports a long-term vision of the high ceiling that will be required in competitive gymnastics of the future.

USA

The US program is perhaps one of the deepest in the world with all nine region's elite development programs working in concert with the national team vision. The support of leadership to provide greater international opportunities is the driving force behind the motivation of coaches and athletes to go head to head with China, Japan, Russia, and other top countries. The talent pool and pipeline for the Junior National Team is strong and portends expected success building into 2024-2028.

