



Linda Paul (USA)

Past President and CEO, USA Diving

2017 Paragon Award / Competitive Diving

Linda Paul has been a part of USA Diving for more than 16 years. She joined the organization as Director of Business Development in 2001 and since has been involved in nearly every aspect of the organization. In 2010 she was named President and CEO of the organization and immediately began organizational improvements.

USA Diving Code of Regulations: In 2012, Paul started laying groundwork to simplify and make them easier to understand. In 2014, the membership unanimously approved that the code be placed in the hands of the Board to work more like a business. In 2015, language was incorporated to support Safe Sport, an important program USA Diving and other NGB's support along with the USOC.

Technical Rules of Diving: In 2013, Linda started the process of updating rules by putting in place a Rules Restructuring Committee. They were charged with cleaning up rules and meet management policies at USA Diving as the organization evolved from a volunteer organization to a professional staff driven one.

Board Composition: In 2015, when she discovered it was over-looked, she was able to secure support and eventually add a National Federation of State High Schools position to the Board of USAD. This was important as there are over 14,000 high school aquatic programs in the USA. This also led to the partnership of USA Diving, NISCA and NFSHS in developing a beginner diving coaches course that launches in the 2017-2018 season.

Sponsorship: While at USA Diving, Paul brought on sponsors and increased sponsorship. She first approached long time printer, Sports Graphics, followed by Innovative Edit, that produced the first website for USA Diving to be developed at no cost. Years later, through her relationships and patience, Paul added Nike, Coca-Cola, Rocktape, Airweave and Pulsair.

Financially: Following the 2012 Olympic Trials, Linda hired TSE Consulting to help devise a plan to better leverage the biggest asset of the NGB – the Olympic Trials. The result officially engaged the USOC and NGB as partners in the process. A new bid process was implemented with greater participation from more cities and a substantially higher revenue was guaranteed for USAD. It also encouraged more community support and improved participant experience, laying new groundwork for the 2020 bid process.

TV/Social Media and Membership: In 2011, after 20 years of no television coverage, Paul was able to get the Summer National Championships televised that included shots from the Goodyear blimp. Linda started working with Takeit Live to make sure that when USAD was not on TV, the events would be live streamed. In 2014, she was part of a small group that was invited to meet in Seattle for Project 32 organized by NBC. From this meeting, an idea was launched to start televising the National Championships of the various NGB's to steadily engage the audience more than just once during the Olympics cycle. That idea has now become a reality in 2017 with the Team USA Summer Champions Series.

Numbers under Paul's watch steadily rose as a new social media strategy was implemented. Membership numbers have also steadily risen during her tenure from 5058 in 2010 to 8930 in 2016. She also initiated a USA Diving Hall of Fame with the help of Cynthia Potter and Peter Lasser, known as the Rings of Honor.

International Success: Under Linda's tenure, USA Diving finally returned to the podium in both the 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games. Winning four medals in 2012 including gold in the Men's platform in a thriller finish with David Boudia's stunning win. In 2016, USA Diving returned to the podium again winning three medals that included Steele Johnson, Mike Hixon and Sam Dorman in addition to David Boudia.

Linda Paul announced her retirement in 2017, and will be remembered for assisting in the growth and success of the organization through many challenges.