



## Board of Directors Elections – 2022 Biography and Candidacy Statement

### For Regional Board Director | South Region (III) *Jennifer M. Kirby*

#### BIOGRAPHY:

I was born in Bitburg, Germany as a German Citizen and my soccer roots run deep. I come from a strong German Mother and a Former US Army Ranger/Drill Sergeant Father. Choosing soccer at the age of 6 I knew that it would become a lifelong passion. Having spent most of my formative years growing up in Florida I came up through the ranks of what was then State Cup league play, High School soccer, and Florida Olympic Development Program as a goalkeeper. I was recruited to several colleges and ultimately landed at NAIA school Warner University in Lake Wales, Florida. I was fortunate enough to earn All American Honors there with a great group of coaches and players. Fast forward a few years and with 4 children (18yr, 15yr, 9yr old daughters and an 11 year old son), I found myself taking my first USSF Coaching course and coaching one of my daughters in the beautiful game. From there I have been involved in every position to grow my coaching and administration background. A lifelong student of all aspects of the game. I have served on the Board of Directors for a large club, run programs and implemented change when needed. Now holding a USSF B License I have found that success comes in many forms. I have won regional and state cup championships in youth soccer, turned programs around and helped create programs that were built to last. Currently I am on the coaching staff at Life University (Marietta, GA) as an Assistant and the Reserve Team Head Coach of a successful program as well as coaching within Southern Soccer Academy and doing so after spending many years as a Director, Coach, BOD Member, and Parent in the game.

I have a wonderful husband and support system that makes it easy to do what I was made to do and my children understand that our impact can be as big or as small as we want it to be. I will always be an advocate and cheerleader for players and hope to be a mentor to other Coaches and DOC's and Staff and pour into them as have so many have poured into me. Seth Davis said it well when he said, *"What I learned is that if a coach lacks sufficient persistence, he will be unable to complete the critical task of finding growth opportunities out of adversity."* Coaching and Administration give me the platform to not only develop players, but to help foster the growth of member organizations. Finding ways to bring out the best in clubs, players, and organizations is our job as parents, coaches, and governing bodies and that excites me. This in turn allows them to be successful on and off the field and given a chance to be a part of something bigger than themselves. The game of soccer is such a big world but the landscape of soccer is very tight knit with Players and Coaches alike. I look forward to seeing what US Club Soccer will continue to bring to the game. So thank you for the opportunity to share a bit about my background and ambitions.

#### CANDIDACY STATEMENT:

Jennifer M. Kirby  
Southern Soccer Academy (GA)  
US Club Soccer 2022



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At the upcoming US Club Soccer Board of Directors general elections, Four Regional Board Directors to be elected in 2022 will serve three-year terms, commencing on April 5, 2022 (31 days after the 2022 U.S. Soccer Annual General Meeting). To qualify for election to the Board, a Regional Board Director candidate must be currently associated with a member Club as a: director of coaching, president, or active coach, and have at least five (5) years of experience coaching competitive youth soccer, as the term competitive is at that time defined by the Bylaws or Policies. Board member candidates must also have attained at least a U.S. Soccer Federation 'B' coaching license, or its international or US Club Soccer equivalent.

I am seeking election to my first term as Regional Board Director for the South Region. The following is my Statement of Candidacy. I seek election to continue and expand my present role within the youth soccer landscape, locally, regionally, and nationally. As we emerge from the dark days of the pandemic, soccer will be an even more relevant and popular youth activity. My passion for the game and the children who play it, coupled with my leadership experience as a coach, Director of Coaching and administrator and will continue to advance US Club Soccer's guiding principles:

- Clubs are the vehicle through which players are developed, and US Club Soccer should help facilitate club development throughout the country.
- Clubs and their leadership should be the primary decision-makers in the structure and organization of soccer.
- US Club Soccer should provide leadership and a vehicle for clubs and technical leaders to work together to elevate the game and player development environment.
- Through US Club Soccer, all of a club's programs – rec, youth competitive and adult – are able to be united under one organizational umbrella, creating a "members for life" culture within each club. US Club Soccer's programming has all been developed with strong input from clubs around the country and with a minimum of rules and restrictions to allow efficient and innovative operations.

Without question, US Club Soccer is the standard for soccer clubs that are the foundation of growth and development creating pathways to the US National Team success. Professionally, my day job is full time mother to 4 children, full time youth Head Coach in the Atlanta youth soccer landscape, and Assistant Coach/Reserve Head Coach at Life University in Marietta, GA. Prior to these roles I held the following positions:

- Director of Coaching for Girls Select at Inter Atlanta FC. In this role I was able to:
  - Develop and improve coaches so that players maximize their potential at all ages
  - Peak 9 Girls Initiative Implementation
  - College ID Program Development
  - Coaching Education Initiative
  - Club wide Social Media Administrator
  - Staff Recruitment and Assignment
  - Girls Committee Chair
  - Diversity and Inclusion Committee
  - Communications Committee
  - Curriculum Development
  - Player Development
  - 2005 G Elite National League Team Head Coach - Finished 2nd In NL and 1st in GA
  - 2008 G Elite National League Team Head Coach - promoted from GPL to NL (Spring 2021)
  - Camp Director
  - 6 teams in State Cup 2020
    - 5 teams in the Elite 8 (03G Elite, 03G Premier, 04G Elite, 05G Elite, 06G Elite)
    - 4 teams in Final 4 (03G Elite, 04G Elite, 05G Elite, 06G Elite)
    - 3 teams in the State Final (03G Elite, 05G Elite, 06G Elite)
    - 2 teams crowned State Cup 2020 Champions (05G Elite –my team, 2006G Elite)



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- Saw an 8% growth from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 despite a pandemic. Carried 6 Select Girls teams in the National League this season.
  - Promoted the 04G Elite from Athena A to NL
  - 08G Elite qualified from GPL to NL (Spring 2021)
  - 04G Premier (2nd team) competed and won Presidents Cup
  - Spring grew by 1 more team from 12 to 13 Select Girls teams
  
- Former Director of Coaching Girls at Georgia RUSH (which is now RUSH Union)
- Former High School Assistant Coach (Flowery Branch HS, GA/Chestatee HS, GA)
- Former Assistant Director of Coaching at Alliance Soccer Club
- Former Board of Directors: Lanier Soccer Association (Gainesville, GA)
  - Recreational Director at Large
  - Recreational Director of Coaching

### Other Roles I currently hold:

- Current Region 3 ODP Staff 2005 Girls
- Current Goalkeeper Director for Southeast All American Soccer

### Coaching Licenses and Certifications I hold:

- USSF National B Coaching License
- United Soccer Coaches Education Level 3 Goalkeeper License
- Atlanta United Coaching Education Certificate
- GHSAA (Georgia High School Sports Association) Coaching Certificate

I look forward to being able to help the continued growth and development of Youth Soccer in the United States. Player, Coach, and Parent education are extremely important to me for the success of the sport in our country. I plan to continue my own coaching education this year with starting my USSF "A" License and starting my path towards coaching instruction with USSF. I want to continue to pour into my community, locally, regionally, and nationally, in the way past and present players, parents, coaches, and mentors have poured into me. Thank you for considering me as your candidate for the Regional Board Directors South Region seat. It would be an honor for me to represent US Club Soccer in this regard.