

For Immediate Release

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Contact: media@safesport.org**SafeSport Board of Directors Welcomes Four New Members***The volunteer board of directors includes athletes, professionals dedicated to ending abuse*

Denver, CO – The U.S. Center for SafeSport today announced the election of four new board members. SafeSport, a 501(c)3 non-profit, is governed by a [board of directors](#), which includes athletes as well as sport-engaged professionals in capacities that include ethics, compliance, equity, health, and safety. Board members advise the Center on core business functions, long-term sustainability, strategic planning, and regularly evaluate the Center’s performance through its outcomes and metrics. The board also approves the annual budget, audit reports, and material business decisions, ensuring all legal and fiduciary requirements are met.

The following board members started 3-year terms in January 2024:

- Matt Cenedella, COO, Women’s Tennis Association
- Julie Fabsik-Swarts, CEO, Employee Assistance Professionals Association
- Scott Rochelle President & CEO, National Retired Basketball Players Association
- Katy Spaulding, Chief of Staff, Allison

Paralympic gold medalist, April Holmes, took the helm as board chair in June of 2023, and is the first athlete to serve in this role.

“We are thrilled to welcome our new board members, each bringing a wealth of diverse experience, ideas, and expertise,” said April Holmes, U.S. Center for SafeSport board chair. **“Their addition will undoubtedly enhance our board’s collective intelligence, propel the Center’s athlete safety objectives, and set us up for greater success and accountability. We are also grateful for the unwavering commitment of our outgoing board colleagues – thank you, Julie Novak and Connie Smotek, for your service to athletes.”**

“As SafeSport continues to grow and evolve, we uphold our commitment to continuous improvement,” Ju’Riese Colón, CEO, U.S. Center for SafeSport said. **“The new voices on the board will add value to our efforts to end abuse in sport while prioritizing our responsibility to athletes.”**

About Matthew Cenedella

As Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer for the Women’s Tennis Association, Matt assists the chief executive officer in numerous areas including strategic planning, member relations, and financial development. He oversees the WTA’s finance, fast-data monetization, treasury, human resources, compliance, information technology, and office administration, as well as onsite operations. Prior to joining the WTA in 2010, he held roles with IMG Worldwide and finance roles at several other institutions. He earned a bachelor's degree from Notre Dame, a Master of Business Administration

degree from New York University, and holds Certified Public Accountant and Certified Internal Auditor designations.

About Julie Fabsik-Swarts

Julie Fabsik-Swarts, MS, CFRE, CAP, CEAP, is a skilled and dynamic nonprofit, association, and sports leader with more than 35 years of experience. Raised in New York City, Julie has worked for Pennsylvania State University, the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the Seattle Organizing Committee of the Goodwill Games, the Purple Heart Foundation, UC Berkeley, Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania, and the American College. Julie also led the National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials Association and served as executive director of USA Synchronized (Artistic) Swimming. In addition, she led the National Postdoctoral Association, serving over 80,000 early career researchers. In her spare time, Julie has served as a nationally-rated women's gymnastics judge and is certified to officiate collegiate tumbling and acrobatics (NCATA) competitions. Julie is currently CEO of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association, an organization dedicated to supporting thousands of professionals through employee assistance programs throughout the world.

About Scott Rochelle

As president and chief executive officer, Scott Rochelle oversees the National Basketball Retired Players Association's overall strategy and execution of its mission to successfully transition former NBA and WNBA players into life after basketball. With a focus on organizational growth, his leadership prioritizes leveraging strategic partnerships for the benefit of former players. Scott has previously served the Association as General Counsel as a senior executive leading the areas of partnerships, programming, and chapter development. He has served on the Board of Trustees for the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame since 2018. Prior to joining the Association, Scott led the Sports and Entertainment practice group for a Chicago law firm, with a focus on professional athlete business consulting, contract, and endorsement representation. Scott earned a bachelor's degree from Morehouse College, a master's in education, and juris doctor degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

About Katy Spaulding

Katy Spaulding is the chief of staff for a global integrated communications agency, where she supports business operations, cross-functional collaboration, and employee engagement. She has more than 15 years of strategic communications experience, consulting for some of the biggest consumer and technology brands in the world and has spent the last nine years in senior operations roles, including as general manager and senior vice president of client service and operations, overseeing the company's Northwest region. Katy is an amateur equestrian in the sport of three-day eventing and competes and volunteers throughout the Pacific Northwest. She graduated with a degree in public relations and business administration from the University of Oregon and lives in Portland with her husband and two dogs. Katy is a member of the volunteer SafeSport Athlete Advisory Team (SAAT) and will continue in that role acting as a liaison between SAAT and the board.

Need for Abuse Prevention in Sport

The U.S. Center for SafeSport is the nation's only independent organization dedicated to ending sexual, physical, and emotional abuse in U.S. Olympic and Paralympic sport. The Center emerged in response to high profile cases of sexual abuse of minor athletes within Olympic and Paralympic sport in the mid-2010s. With the mission of making athlete wellbeing the centerpiece of the nation's sport culture, the Center has since been setting safety policies and receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints of abuse and misconduct. The Center also serves as an educational resource for sports organizations at all levels, from recreational sports organizations to professional leagues.

With the goal of ensuring athletes within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement of are safe, supported, and strengthened, the Center:

- Establishes safety policies, including the [SafeSport Code](#) and the [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies \(MAAPP\)](#).
- Investigates and resolves allegations of abuse and misconduct and levies sanctions, including temporary and permanent bans from sport.
- Delivers comprehensive abuse prevention education within and outside of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

About the U.S. Center for SafeSport

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 codified the U.S. Center for SafeSport (the Center), as the nation's safe sport organization. It furthered the Center's independence while underscoring its authority to hold individuals accountable. It also charged the Center with developing policies, procedures, and training to prevent abuse and misconduct in sport.

In October of 2020, the Empowering Olympic, Paralympic, and Amateur Athletes Act of 2020 became law, even further strengthening the Center's independence and oversight functions while mandating minimum funding requirements for the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee.

The Center opened its doors in March of 2017.

Reporting and Resources

[Report here](#) to the U.S. Center for SafeSport if you have experienced abuse or misconduct—or if you have reasonable suspicion of abuse or misconduct inflicted on, or by, someone in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. You can also call 833-587-7233 to make a report.

If a situation does not involve sport or anyone within the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement, you can contact [RAINN's 24/7](#) online hotline or call 800-656-HOPE (4673).

For anyone in crisis, the [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) provides 24/7 free and confidential support at 988lifeline.org or by calling 988.

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