

August 19, 2026

RE: Letter of Interest, USA Climbing Athlete Director Seat

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my interest in serving as an Athlete Director on USA Climbing's Board of Directors. My commitment to the sport and its community runs deep. I have been engaged with climbing for over 16 years, as a competitor and route setter, as the founder of a collegiate team, and in a range of roles across the climbing industry. I have also served in organizational roles that include Chair of the USA Climbing Athletes' Commission and member of the Audit Committee.

I want to join the Board because climbing has significant room to grow, both as a competitive sport and as a community, and I want to help shape that growth. The sport has also shaped me. It taught me to solve problems under pressure, to push through setbacks, and to work as part of a team. Those lessons carry into everything I do, and I want to apply them in service of USA Climbing's athletes and its mission.

My professional background spans real estate development and valuation along with investment finance, which aligns directly with several of the organization's key goals and directives, including the National Training Center project and the broader buildout the sport now requires. This is a pivotal moment for climbing. The 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles will be its first on home soil and the first to award separate medals in each discipline, and the Director elected to this seat will serve through the full qualification cycle and the Games themselves. That makes the next two years remarkably consequential for how USA Climbing invests in facilities, supports its athletes, and turns a home Olympics into lasting growth.

I am applying specifically for an Athlete Director seat, where my business and administrative experience, combined with my own background as a competitive athlete, allows me to offer strategic and creative direction that few athlete candidates can bring. I have already applied these strengths successfully as Chair of the USA Climbing Athletes' Commission, and I want to bring that same combination of business discipline and athlete perspective to the projects that will define the organization over the coming years.

I am also committed to broadening the appeal of climbing and growing its community, from the gym floor to the competition stage. I want the sport to stay accessible and welcoming as it grows, so that more people find their way into it and stay.

Thank you for considering my application. I would welcome the opportunity to bring my business background and my experience as an athlete and Commission chair to the Board, and to help USA Climbing make the most of the years ahead.

Warm regards,

Daniel Popowski

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