

ONTARIO
WEIGHTLIFTING
ASSOCIATION

PLATFORM **FOR ALL**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028



onweightlifting.ca

Our Mission

Govern and promote Olympic weightlifting in Ontario by helping athletes achieve optimum performance through expert leadership, services and programs.

Our Vision

Foster a thriving and supportive community where athletes, coaches, and officials excel at all levels. Through expert leadership, inclusivity, innovation, and a commitment to safe sport, we aim to elevate the sport and its impact.



Our Values

ACCESSIBILITY

Removing any obstacle that impedes full and equal participation in any aspect of our sport for individuals within the limits of our sport and our organisation's capacity.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engaging the full community that includes and surrounds our athletes, coaches and officials from family, school and support systems to include and engage them to promote the sport of weightlifting.

RESPECT

Show respect for everyone involved in the weightlifting experience, both on and off the platform. Win with dignity and lose with grace.

EQUITY & INCLUSIVITY

Fair and just distribution of resources, opportunities, and benefits within the sports environment, regardless of an individual's gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, or other characteristics.

INTEGRITY & SPORTSMANSHIP

The integrity of the **PERSON** is respected when human rights are applied and they are able to participate safely.

The integrity of the **COMPETITION** is respected when the rules in and around the field of play are fair and when the field of play itself is safe.

The integrity of the **SYSTEM** is upheld when our organization is properly governed and held accountable and system-wide policies and procedures promoting inclusion, fairness, and access are enforced.

Message from the President(s)

This strategic plan was developed to meet key governance requirements and to chart a course for the future of the Ontario Weightlifting Association. It was created during a significant period of leadership transition for our organization.

The development of this plan was led by Mike Miller, whose experience and dedication have been instrumental in shaping its foundation. Julia Ryan, incoming president, has served in an advisory role, ensuring a seamless transfer of vision and strategic priorities.

We view this document as a living guide, one that will be revisited regularly to ensure it remains aligned with our progress and adapts to new and emerging areas of need within our community.



Mike Miller

Outgoing President
2019-2025
Board member since 2016



Julia Ryan

Incoming President
Beginning Fall 2025

Meet the Board of Directors



Eva Martens

VP Administration
2022 - Present

Dave Earle

VP Operations
2021 - Present



George Vlahos

VP Finance
2014- Present



Linda Earnshaw-Rosario

VP Technical
2021 - Present



Introduction

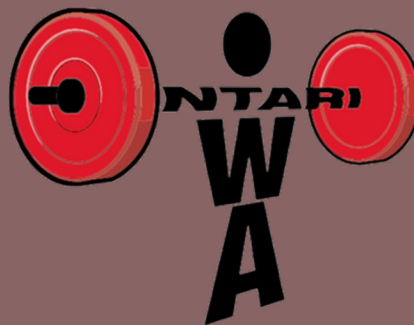
The Ontario Weightlifting Association (OWA) is the recognized governing body for the sport of weightlifting in Ontario. The OWA is a member of Weightlifting Canada Halterophile (WCH), the national governing body, which in turn is affiliated with the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF)



The Ontario Weightlifting Association was first established in 1968 with the formation of its inaugural executive board, and was officially incorporated in 1980.



Logo: 2022 - Present



Logo until 2022

The UPDATE

The previous strategic plan set a target for our vision of becoming the leading provincial weightlifting organization in Canada. Over the past four years, we have made significant progress toward that goal and, in many respects, can say we have succeeded. At the same time, there is still work ahead.

Our success was hampered by the Covid-19 Pandemic, which really affected our ability to host competitions and we suffered a sharp drop in membership. This required energy directed towards rebuilding our membership, but also pushed us to innovate towards more digital based solutions for both memberships and competitions.

This new plan represents the next step in elevating weightlifting in Ontario. It is the result of a collective effort and reflects the voices of our membership. Through an analysis of survey responses of the board and key stakeholders, key concerns were identified to direct this plan to prioritize membership growth, full implementation of safe sport practices, continuation of our evaluation of governance, and further sport development, supported with the creation of necessary committees focused on these tasks.



Strategic Goals

Safe Sport Practices

- Objective: Create a robust framework for athlete protection and well-being.
- Key Initiatives:
 - Develop and implement a Safe Sport Policy in alignment with national guidelines.
 - Create a training infrastructure for coaches, athletes, and volunteers on safe sport practices and child protection.
 - Provide a pathway for members to access a third-party complaint reporting system.
 - Engage with mental health professionals to provide resources for athletes.



Strategic Goals



Increase Membership Base

- Objective: Grow membership through targeted outreach and engagement programs.
- Key Initiatives:
 - Launch an awareness campaign to highlight the benefits of Olympic weightlifting, focusing on youth, women, and underrepresented communities.
 - Create partnership programs with schools, universities, and community centres to introduce weightlifting as a fitness option.
 - Offer introductory workshops and clinics for newcomers to the sport.

Strategic Goals

Improve Organisational Excellence & Governance

- Objective: Build a robust and transparent structure that effectively serves our members.
- Key Initiatives:
 - Update our bylaws to meet current standards (ONCA compliance).
 - Establish a regular schedule to review and update key policies, starting with Harassment and Accessibility.
 - Establish an **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee**, an **Athlete Council**, a **Coaching Programs Committee**, and a **Competitions Committee** to ensure diverse voices guide our decisions.



Strategic Goals

Sport Development

- Objective: Create a clear and supportive pathway for all participants to achieve their potential.
- Key Initiatives:
 - Improve the quality of sanctioned events through clear standards, a strategic calendar, and consistent member feedback.
 - Draft a "Pathway to Excellence" document detailing selection criteria, funding tiers, performance expectations and progression models for Youth, Junior, and Senior provincial teams.
 - Set yearly goals for retention, training and promoting technical officials.



Strategic Goals



Financial Strength & Growth

- Objective: Ensure the long-term financial health of the OWA through diverse revenue streams.
- Key Initiatives:
 - Develop professional sponsorship packages to attract new commercial partners.
 - Run engaging annual fundraising campaigns to support specific programs like athlete development.
 - Proactively manage and seek out government and sport grant opportunities.

Implementation

TIMELINE



- Q4 2025
 - Establish a policy review schedule and assign leads to finalise safe sport policies.
 - Establish TORs and put out calls for EDI, Athlete Council, Coaching Programs, and Competitions Committees.
 - Establish a safe sport training infrastructure.
- 2026
 - Launch an awareness campaign regarding safe sport policies.
 - Hold inaugural meetings for all new committees.
 - Expand outreach to schools and community centres.
 - Grow online presence and establish a regular communication schedule.
 - Draft "Pathway to Excellence" document.
 - Develop and launch the formal sponsorship package.
 - Relaunch OWA newsletter with new template and content strategy.
 - Implement the first recommendation from the EDI Committee.
 - Launch the 2027 fundraising calendar.
 - Implement and develop a third-party complaint system.

Implementation

TIMELINE



- 2027
 - Establish and fund the support model for provincial teams.
 - Enhance partnerships and sponsorships with local businesses.
 - Cultivate a feedback loop with members for continuous improvement and publish the first "State of Competitions" report.
 - Engage with mental health professionals to develop athlete resources.
- 2028
 - Continue executing annual cycles: membership renewal, fundraising calendar, policy reviews, and NCCP scheduling.
 - Develop and launch a formal coach mentorship program.
 - Review and refine the "Pathway to Excellence" document based on feedback from all relevant committees.

Evaluation METRICS



- Safe Sport:
 - Number of trained coaches and volunteers in safe sport practices.
 - Reports and resolution of any safety-related incidents.
- Membership Base:
 - Annual membership numbers and demographics.
 - Retention rates of existing members.
- Sport Development
 - Number of athletes, coaches and technical officials per team.
 - Progression of athletic performance.
 - Number of certified coaches and their ongoing education participation.
 - Retention, training and promotion of technical officials.
 - Number of partnerships with schools and community centres.
- Financial Strength & Growth
 - New sponsorships per year.
 - Fundraising dollars raised

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the persons who helped contribute to developing and informing the creation of this strategic plan and helping keep our sport moving forward.

Thank you to

Julia Ryan

Erica Hall

Amanda Braddock

Mike Miller

Eva Martens

Linda Rosario-Earnshaw

George Vhalos

Dave Earle



The CONCLUSION

The Ontario Weightlifting Association's strategic plan for 2025–2028 emphasizes advancing safe sport practices, expanding membership, and fostering athlete, coach, and technical official development. By strengthening governance, building financial stability through sponsorships and fundraising, and deepening partnerships with schools and communities, the OWA will create a safer, more inclusive, and sustainable environment. These initiatives ensure that Olympic weightlifting continues to grow and thrive across Ontario.



Contacts

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