



## **The Tidewater Chapter of US Lacrosse Strategic Plan 2017-2019**

### **Introduction**

The Tidewater Chapter of US Lacrosse Strategic Plan identifies the priorities and goals of the organization and action steps to complete these goals. The Board of Directors established these goals and implementation metrics in relation to the organization's values and mission. Implementation milestones are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

The Strategic Plan includes areas of focus for the organization's concentration over the next 1-3 years. Each area of concentration includes specific goals and strategies with corresponding action steps. While this represents overall guidance for the organization, the Chapter recognizes it must maintain a level of flexibility in a rapidly growing sport and the ever-changing lacrosse landscape in the Tidewater area.

This plan is the embodiment of the Chapter's organizational goals and consistent with the mission established by US Lacrosse.

### **Mission**

The Chapter supports lacrosse at all levels in the Tidewater Virginia Area. Specifically stating the Chapter's mission is:

To unify, promote, and provide programs and services to the many aspects of men's and women's lacrosse in the Tidewater area. The Chapter serves as the geographic focal point for the education and development of lacrosse in support of the mission of US Lacrosse.

The chapter will achieve this mission by:

- Serving as the local representative of US Lacrosse bringing lacrosse programs & services to members in our jurisdiction.
- Actively and consistently communicate to chapter members.
- Serving as the unbiased, umbrella support organization for responsible growth of lacrosse in our area.
- Honoring players, coaches, and officials whose skill and conduct on the field, and in their professional lives, inspire in the youth of the nation a high regard for the game of lacrosse.
- Regularly interacting with other chapter areas in the areas of lacrosse promotion, expansion, preservation, information, education and networking.



## Strategic Plan 2017-2019

### **Vision**

The Chapter serves as a geographic focal point for the education and development of lacrosse and acts as the unbiased, umbrella support organization for the responsible growth of the sport within the Tidewater area. To protect the integrity of the sport, the Chapter strongly promotes and encourages US Lacrosse membership and adherence to USL Youth Rules and Best Practices for all area lacrosse organizations.

### **History**

The Tidewater Chapter of US Lacrosse is a 501c (3) organization founded in 1995. When the men's and women's national groups merged to form US Lacrosse in 1998, members of the existing HRLax League's leadership founded the Hampton Roads Chapter of US Lacrosse. The Chapter provided and encouraged local lacrosse playing opportunities for the entire Tidewater area through the administration of The HRLax League.

As the sport has continued to grow, more teams and leagues have formed and joined US Lacrosse with the goal to create a positive playing environment for all involved. The Chapter's focus has widened as it provides services for all US Lacrosse member organizations and lacrosse at all levels across the Tidewater Area.

In 2012 The HRLax League and the Chapter operationally split. In 2013 the financial and legal separation was finalized and both began operating as two unique organizations. In 2014 to lessen the confusion between Chapter and League, the Chapter formally changed its name to The Tidewater Chapter.

The Chapter provides a leadership role in virtually every aspect of the game offering numerous programs and services, leagues for youth and adults, regional events, and many services for US Lacrosse members. The Chapter also serves as an information resource for coaches, players, officials, parents and fans.

### **I. Area of Strategic Concentration: Sportsmanship**

Sportsmanship is a key component to developing good quality lacrosse experiences for officials, players, coaches and fans. The Chapter will concentrate on initiatives that focus on improving sportsmanship and a community understanding of the role of coaches and parents in demonstrating good sportsmanship.

I.1 Goal: Provide additional opportunities for parents and coaches to learn the rules and concepts of lacrosse.

I.2 Goal: Fully support, and publicize, the US Lacrosse Safety and Sportsmanship initiative "Compete with Class – Honor the Game."

I.3 Goal: Fully support, and publicize, "The Keeper of Lacrosse Project" movement focused on keeping lacrosse authentic through the preservation of culture and the promotion of character.

I.4 Goal: Provide PCA training opportunities for the lacrosse community in the region.



## Strategic Plan 2017-2019

### **II. Area of Strategic Concentration: Youth Player Development**

The Chapter will work to create a broader base of youth players, remove barriers where necessary, and provide additional support to expose new youth players to the sport.

II.1 Goal: Remove barriers to participation. Continue to provide information to expand awareness of the game, and participation opportunities, throughout the region, to schools, civic organizations and parents as necessary.

II.2 Goal: Provide guidance to school districts pursuing PE and assembly programs for area elementary schools and middle schools.

II.3 Goal: Evaluate, and revise if necessary, our current grant programs to better meet the needs of lacrosse growth and provide resources where necessary to foster this growth.

II.4 Goal: Work to create inter-league cooperation to promote positive growth of the sport through.

III.5 Goal: Increase opportunities for participation in underserved communities.

### **III. Area of Strategic Concentration: College Recruitment Education and Exposure of High School Players**

As players continue to develop in the Tidewater area, it is important to provide the necessary information and, where appropriate, the opportunity for college recruitment and exposure. Parents, players and coaches are in need of guidance during the recruitment process.

III.1 Goal: Work to create and/or improve resources for coaches, parents and players to better understand the timeline and process of college recruitment and selection. This includes providing current NCAA/NAIA recruiting compliance information as well as providing a resource for questions.

III.2 Goal: Explore the possibility of fielding Chapter sponsored teams for entry into US Lacrosse regional events (and subsequent National event if qualified). The Chapter will emphasize the true "All Chapter" nature of the teams and focus on widest recruitment of players to try out for the team.

### **IV. Area of Strategic Concentration: Safety**

Lacrosse has changed significantly over the last 25 years. Rules, equipment and athleticism of participants have evolved considerably and continue to influence the frequency, severity and nature of lacrosse injuries and, as a result, player safety. The nature of lacrosse-related injuries has a significant influence on the growth of the sport. While the Chapter understands lacrosse is a physical sport, it is important to set standards to protect the health and well-being of the player. There is a direct correlation between sportsmanship and safety and improvements in



## Strategic Plan 2017-2019

sportsmanship will help decrease the level of injury related penalties and aggressive game atmospheres.

IV. 1 Goal: Provide opportunities for coaches and parents to learn more about injuries and injury prevention.

IV. 2 Goal: Establish and require high standards of sportsmanship in all phases and levels of the sport.

IV.3 Goal: Distribute all emerging safety information relating to the game, associated rules changes, and relevant equipment safety issues.

### **V. Area of Strategic Concentration: Recruitment and Retention of Qualified Officials and Coaches**

Qualified Officials and Coaches are the cornerstone of a successful lacrosse program. The Chapter believes the “pipeline” must be constantly filled with new volunteers and staff to meet the growing nature of lacrosse in the Tidewater area.

V.I Goal: Provide Coaches Education Programs (CEP) to offer Level 1, 2 and Level 3 Coaches Certification opportunities for boys and girls coaches at all levels.

V.II Goal: Create and/or improve programs to recruit, develop and retain qualified officials to support the growth of lacrosse.

V.III Goal: Create and/or improve programs to recruit, develop and retain qualified coaches to support public & private High School programs, and all youth programs in the area.

### **VI. Area of Strategic Concentration: Varsity Status for Public High School Teams**

Lacrosse, in the Tidewater region, has been a varsity sport for years within the private school system/Tidewater Council of Independent Schools (TCIS). To provide playing opportunities for our U-19 aged players at a varsity level is key to the growth of the sport. The Chapter acknowledges the challenges of getting lacrosse accepted within the Virginia High School League (VHSL) will require addressing funding, school and district support, however the Chapter feels these are attainable goals.

VI. 1 Goal: Develop a strategic plan to integrate lacrosse into the school system(s) at the earliest stages (Elementary and Middle schools).

VI. 2 Goal: Increase the number of school sanctioned lacrosse clubs – with the understood goal of being good representatives of each host school, and demonstrate the positive value lacrosse brings to the student body. Establish and require high standards of sportsmanship for each club.

VI. 3 Goal: Establish liaison with VHSL to pursue alternative options of attaining VHSL status for HS teams – to include entering as independent schools or a regional set of teams.

VI. 4 Goal: Provide opportunities for coaches and parents to learn more about VHSL status and efforts within the region.