

## PRESIDENT'S 2021 AGM REPORT

**2020 Challenges:** None of you will be surprised that the past 12 months have presented a number of new challenges to ISA and our member clubs, leagues, players, coaches and volunteers. I salute ISA's staff for its quick and effective adjustment to the challenges presented by the pandemic and its efforts while working remotely to protect our members and players. I salute our clubs for taking the steps necessary to protect the physical well-being of their players and the financial well-being of their organizations. Our challenges were increased by the decision of some neighboring states to prohibit play in the Spring and Fall, which drove some out-of-state players into Indiana to train and play. Throughout this period, there were no reports of play-related Covid-19 transmissions, that is, no reports of spread involving players, coaches, referees or spectators attending games. Responsible social distancing, masking, hand and ball sanitizing all contributed to transmission containment. It is impressive how promptly and effectively the membership has managed a pandemic for which none of us were prepared. We will continue to work diligently for participant safety as we head into the Spring 2021 season of play.

**Soccer Landscape:** US Soccer, with little warning, abandoned their expensive and extensive Developmental Academy program in 2020. The MLS stepped into the void with a partnership with US Youth Soccer and the launch of MLS Next and their embrace and support of the Girls Academy. It is too early in the US Youth Soccer/MLS partnership to fully understand its impact, and the MLS Next and the Girls Academy are also in their infancy. We will continue to closely monitor the new programs and their effect on the development of elite players and we will remain proactive in our efforts to positively influence these programs to better serve our members.

**Five Star Program:** Indiana Soccer's Five Star Program continues to be an important initiative to solidify the stability of our member clubs. The goal of the program is to introduce and

institutionalize best practices. There are many facets to building a strong not-for-profit organization that is fiscally responsible, well governed and administered, one that has the interest of its constituents at the forefront and delivers value to those constituents. The Five Star Program identifies five components necessary to a successful NFP and encourages each member club to focus on those components. The components of the Five Star Program are:

- Governance: The way an organization manages its affairs, stewardship
- Alignment: Shared purpose, mission, and visions
- Marketing & Communication: Creating demand and exchanging information
- Risk Management: The identification and mitigation of threats
- Education: The transfer of knowledge

Since the last AGM, eight clubs have joined the 5-Star program by submitting documentation for at least one of the stars. This brings the number of clubs enrolled in the Five Star Program to

12. The eight new clubs submitting documentation to begin the work on their 5-star status were:

- Zionsville Youth Soccer
- Vigo County Youth Soccer
- Cutters SC
- Millennium Soccer Academy
- United Soccer Alliance of Indiana
- United Elite FC
- FC Evansville
- Fort Wayne United FC

During this past year, the 12 participating clubs have submitted documentation for 27 individual stars, 18 of which have been awarded. Zionsville Youth Soccer Association recently earned all five stars and has become the fourth 5 Star Club in the state joining Fort Wayne Sport Club, Greenfield Area Soccer Club, and Michana Echo as the member clubs who have earned all five stars. We urge all member clubs to invest in your club's stability and future success by joining

the Five Star Program. If you have not started this process, we urge you to contact Angel Hall (angel@soccerindiana.org) who will be delighted to start your club on its Five Star journey.

**The Stevens Act:** All amateur sports--youth and adult soccer included--are connected to the United States Olympic Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and subject to congressional governance. The applicable legislation is the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act of 1978 (commonly called the “Stevens Act”), passed with the intent of protecting amateur athletes. The Stevens Act has since been amended, first in 1998 and most recently in Fall 2020. The most recent amendments (like the Safe Sport legislation) were triggered by the abuse of young athletes by the heinous conduct of some well-publicized criminals (Dr, Larry Nassar, the serial abuser of female gymnasts, being the most notorious). The 2020 amendments to the Act affect each National Governing Body (NGB) attached to the USOPC. The relevant NGB for us is the United States Soccer Federation. The downstream effects on US Soccer are currently being monitored by Indiana Soccer since a response by US Soccer likely will impact Indiana Soccer’s members clubs. Stay tuned on this one.

**Registration update.** The pandemic had a negative impact on ISA’s registration numbers. As indicated below, overall registrations were down approximately 34% as compared to 2018/19 results. Registrations declined for all categories of play: travel experienced a 12% drop; rec+ 42%; recreation 44%; and adult 42% reduction. Current fiscal year registration numbers are not back to the 2018/19 levels, but are significantly higher than this past fiscal year and trending in the right direction thanks to the hard work of our member clubs.

	TVL	REC+	REC	ADULTS	TOTALS
2019-20	15,447	3,765	19,134	1,764	40,110
2018-19	17,478	6,310	34,376	3,043	61,207
2017-18	17,872	5,870	33,571	2,680	59,993
2016-17	18,456	4,448	34,553	2,729	60,186

**ODP:** The expansion of services offered by the ODP staff resulted in significant program growth under the leadership to Todd Sheely. ODP is serving 25% more players than a year ago which is quite an achievement when compared to the impact of the pandemic on player registrations. One reason for this success is the increase in participating clubs that are encouraging their players to supplement club training with ODP training. This collaboration is good for our players as they pursue their playing goals and objectives. ODP is investigating more ways to provide the players in Indiana with a competitive advantage.

**ISA’s Direction:** A year ago, your board held a day-long strategic planning retreat which was facilitated by Ryan Vaughn, president of The Indiana Sports Corp. The Association’s Vision, Mission, Purpose and Core Values statements were fine tuned. As a reminder, the following are the result of the strategic planning session and these results are used to guide the board decisions and the day-to-day actions of the staff:

- Purpose statement – “Indiana Soccer’s purpose is to improve lives through soccer.”
- Mission Statement – “Indiana Soccer’s mission is to remain a premier service organization by providing leadership, organizing play, educating community stakeholders and developing youth and adults through soccer.”
- Vision Statement – “Indiana Soccer’s vision is to make soccer accessible to all.”
- Core Values
  - Diversity and inclusion
  - Integrity and respect
  - Fair and safe play

- Leadership and Service

We will continue to govern and direct Indiana Soccer based on these beliefs and principles.

**Outreach Program:** At last year's AGM, we announced an Outreach Program as the signature initiative of Indiana Soccer in 2020. The objective of the initiative is to bring the game to underserved communities throughout the State. Planned program elements included bringing the game of futsal to schools and institutions, converting unused park facilities to futsal, and training physical education teachers to incorporate soccer and futsal into class and after-school curricula. The program got off to a flying start with school programs underway in Vigo County and a partnership with Christel House Academies, a premier charter school serving a diverse student body in inner city Indianapolis. Then came the pandemic. The inability to gather indoors in groups dramatically slowed the progress of the program, but Indiana Soccer's board remains committed to this initiative. We will re-energize our efforts to move forward with this important initiative when conditions permit.

My heartfelt thanks to all of you in the Indiana Soccer community for your commitment to the game and our players. All the best as we move forward into a better 2021!

Respectfully submitted,



Alan Brown, President

Indiana Soccer Association, Inc.