

My name is Eric Webber, and I am proud to announce my candidacy for President of Hockey West Island.

Over the past two years, I've had the privilege of serving as VP of Single Letters. I'm proud of the contributions I've made as a member of the executive. We've achieved a great deal, and I truly believe there is even more we can do to improve on what we've done.

Community service has always been a core value for me. I've been a member of Pointe-Claire's Volunteer Rescue Unit and have taught community First Aid with Pointe-Claire CPR. When my son began playing hockey, I knew I wanted to be just as involved as my father was when I was a kid. That's when I started coaching.

Since getting involved with Hockey West Island, I've worn many hats. I've been head coach for three teams and an assistant coach for a few others. When the opportunity to become VP of Single Letters arose, I took on the challenge - and I'm very glad I did.

Serving on the executive has given me a deep appreciation for the complexity of this organization. With over 700 players and hundreds of coaches, managers, and volunteers, Hockey West Island is a community in itself. I've also served as CHL Governor, representing HWI in the league where our single-letter teams compete.

In addition, I've stepped in as convenor for both the U11 and U15 divisions, participated in selecting and integrating our new tech team, and worked closely with coaches to make sure the on-ice portion of our "Intro to Hockey" program (Bauer First Shift) was a success.

For those who don't know, the spring 5-on-5 league was my initiative. With the help of an incredible group of volunteers, we launched the program and quickly sold out available spots. As a pilot project, it's been a tremendous success - we continuously adapt based on feedback, and I'm excited to expand on it with other initiatives that give players meaningful ice time and keep them engaged.

Understanding that hockey can be expensive, our executive has made a concerted effort to keep registration fees low and offer affordable skills clinics. We've also ensured that the spring league remains accessible to families. I'm currently planning a gear and stick exchange to get quality used equipment into the hands of players who need it, getting forgotten gear out of garages and basements into the hockey bags of those who can use it.

I'm continually inspired by the dedication of our volunteers and the strength of our coaching teams. While we celebrate our teams' successes this season, I believe the truest measure of our efforts is player retention. Most of our players are staying with hockey.

This year, we reached out to families who hadn't re-registered, learned from their feedback, and convinced several of them to register and to give hockey another try. Many went on to have incredible seasons. Those families messaged me about their successes throughout the year, and I was proud to follow their progress and their victories.

I'm running for President because I believe deeply in the work we've done, and in the work still ahead. I'm committed to continuing this momentum, building on the initiatives we've started, and supporting this incredible association and its community.

From the kid who just wants to have fun with their friends to the one who wants to make a career of hockey, every player matters, and their experiences with HWI should be positive ones. I want to help make that happen.