

To the Hockey West Island Community,

My name is Paige O'Keefe-Carlyle, and I'm running for Vice-President, Single Letters.

### **A player**

Hockey has been integral to my life for 37 years and counting. While growing up in Prince Edward Island, I had the privilege of representing both PEI and Team Atlantic in several tournaments. One of my most memorable experiences was competing at the Senior Women's Esso Nationals and sharing the ice with my childhood idols and hockey legends, Cassie Campbell, Hayley Wickenheiser, and Caroline Ouellette.

Hockey brought me to Montreal, where I played for the Concordia Stingers while attending university. After moving to the West Island, I was fortunate to find a team through a fellow HWI mom, and I've been playing with them ever since.

### **A parent**

I officially became part of the HWI community in 2009 when my stepson started playing. There were so many early mornings at the rink! But, these marked the beginning of my journey as a hockey parent, which continues today with Morgan playing in U21, and Sophie in U11.

### **A referee**

In 2010 I started a new hockey chapter as a referee. HWI's officiating staff welcomed me into the community and helped me progress to the provincial level within two years. In my third year as a referee I was selected to officiate at a National Championship tournament in British Columbia. It was an honour to work alongside some truly inspiring individuals, including some who are now referees in the PWHL.

In 2012 I was asked to join the referee supervision crew. Supervisors teach and evaluate and mentor young officials to ensure they are set up to succeed, and to navigate the game's challenges. I'm proud to be part of a refereeing association that values development at its core.

### **Coaching**

Being called "Coach Paige" will never get old. I began coaching my daughter in pre-novice in 2019, and that experience lit a spark in me; I want to learn more, and to connect with each player. I have just wrapped up my sixth season as a coach, and the joy that I feel seeing players grow, smile, and surprise themselves is something I'll always cherish.

## **Volunteer support**

In May 2023, I was asked to join the selection committee for HWI's new technical team, which is responsible for player evaluations and professional training throughout the season. I'm excited that our choice of 400-feet Hockey is an incredible asset to our association.

## **The future**

I see the role of VP, Single Letters as a natural extension of my collaboration and dedication to the organisation. HWI's success is borne from strong leadership, dedication, and teamwork. If elected, I will continue to work closely with the tech team during tryouts to ensure that every child is placed where they can thrive. I will support coaches, especially new ones, and make sure they feel equipped to lead. Coaching takes time, heart, and effort, but we're fortunate to have incredible resources and experienced coaches who are willing to help. Let's take full advantage.

I will also focus on ensuring that division convenors are chosen and supported before the beginning of the season. And, I will work hard to ensure that parents are heard, whatever their concerns. Whether it's an issue within a team, an alternative idea, or even praise, I'll listen. We may not always agree, but my ears are open.

No matter your child's skill level I want every family to feel that they belong.

The relationships I've built in the Hockey West Island community as a parent, a referee, a supervisor, a coach, and a volunteer all mean the world to me, and I'm eager to do more.

Let's continue to play, coach, cheer, and grow together as a hockey community.

Yours in hockey,

Paige O'Keefe-Carlyle