

# SWPACC Board of Director Elections

2023



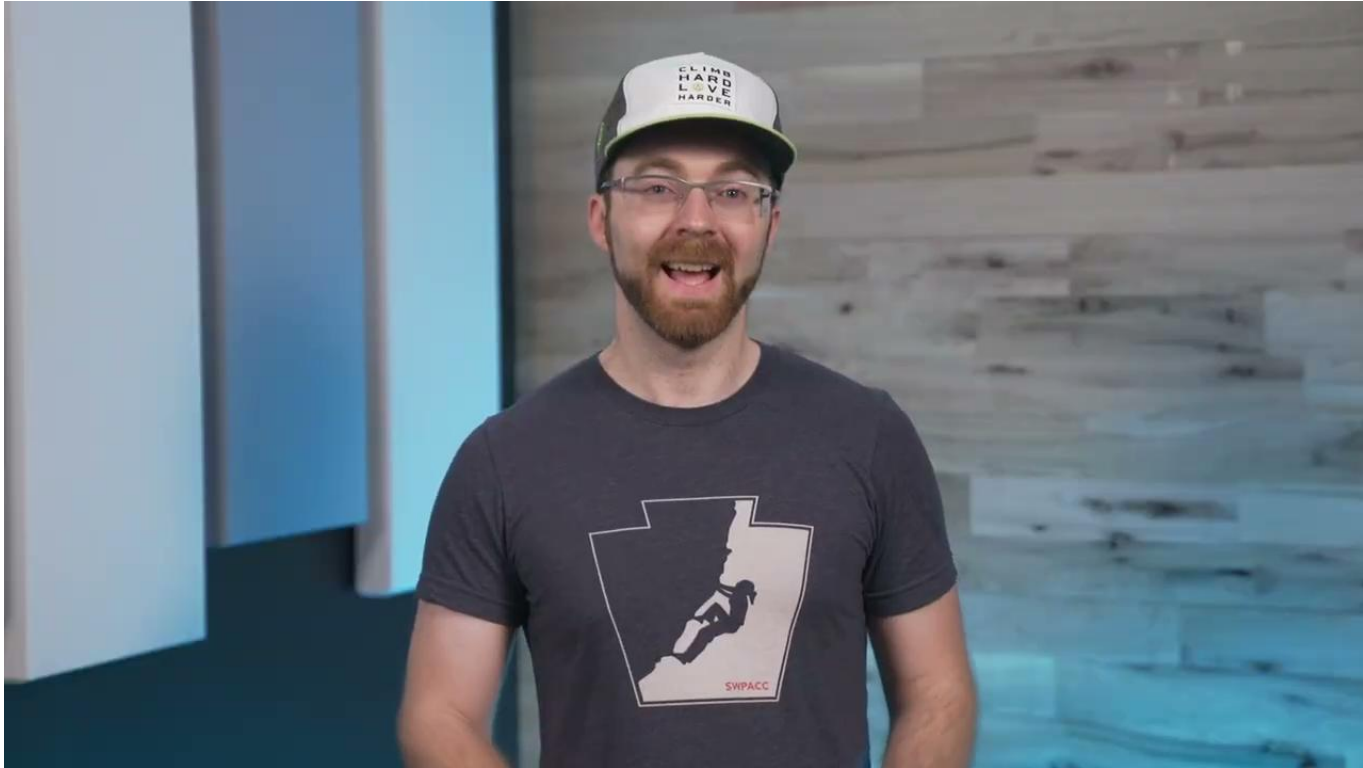
# Caleb Hills (he/him)

While I've only lived in Pennsylvania for five and change, I've spent all of that time climbing outside and investing in development and stewardship efforts. I currently co-chair the Access and Stewardship Committee which involves organizing committee meetings, planning work days, and working on access to "new" climbing areas. I've gained experience with almost all aspects of development from scouting new crags, to working lines, to bolting, to trail building and more. In my career I train new employees at my company and that teaching experience carries over to all aspects of access and stewardship as I love sharing techniques and expertise on the best ways to do things. (Or gear. I'll always happily talk about gear.)

I love taking new climbers outdoors and regularly organize beginner friendly trips to McConnell's or other local crags and also occasionally organize weekend climbing trips. I'm also actively involved in the Climbers for Christ organization and am working on starting a Pittsburgh chapter.

If appointed to the board I expect to continue all my current access and stewardship related duties but also intend to help bring focus to the new climbers in our community who are making the transition from gym to crag.

# Caleb Hills (he/him)



# Joel Brady (he/him)

I love SWPA climbing and climbing development, and I'm dedicated to its sustainable future. As a current board member and formerly president of the organization, I've had the great pleasure to contribute to this mission as I've seen the organization grow and fantastic new leaders step forward. I look forward to continuing to providing support as I can, particularly in the areas of DCNR collaborations, the Climb Pittsburgh initiative, and probably most critically addressing the SGL closures.

Joel Brady (he/him)



# Makenzie O'Connor (she/they)

I've always felt most like myself when I'm outside - and even more so when I'm up high and can find little respites among the treetops. I want to help foster the feeling of connection, belonging, and joy that climbing brings to me and I know it takes effort to break down barriers to access as well as build protections for natural areas.

I'd love to be part of a climbing coalition that broadly fosters this connection with the natural world and more specifically promotes responsible climbing development and conservation and works to increase access, inclusion, and equity in the climbing community and beyond.

I have experience with being on a board after serving on the DEI committee of the Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy but most of my experience with this kind of work is with uplifting and supporting my own small climbing community of friends. It would be amazing to do this on a larger scale and I'd be happy to join the efforts of SWPACC and hopefully bring new energy and perspective to the board! Thank you for your consideration and please reach out if you have any questions at all. With care, Mak

# Makenzie O'Connor (she/they)



# Mallory Ulizio (she/her)

I am new to the climbing community (since February 2023), but have fallen in love with the sport (primarily indoor). I am a lifelong resident of Southwestern PA, with no plans to move in the future.

My background is in social services, both government and non-profit. I am a licensed social worker in PA who is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all spaces.

For the last 5+ years I have worked in non-profit management as a director of quality and compliance programs. Compliance and quality provides exposure to all areas of non-profit management, allowing my involvement in issues related to accounting, human resources, facilities management, and strategic planning.

I have long had a desire to be a member of a non-profit board, but have had difficulty finding a position that would not be a conflict with my work and is something I am passionate about.

I believe my experience in the non-profit realm and my perspective of being newer to the sport would be an asset to the board.



# Marcus Shoffner (he/him)

My name is Marcus Shoffner, I live in Pittsburgh and have been climbing for less than a year. I care about accessibility to the activity of climbing and the diversity of individuals participating. Professionally, I'm the President & CEO of the Outdoor Inclusion Coalition. I bring experience in recreational development and community engagement at a local and state level across stakeholder groups like governmental agencies, NGOs, and community groups. I sit on state-level outdoor boards including the Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Committee for the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Council.

Marcus Shoffner (he/him)



# Mike Varlotta (he/him)

Aside from my family, climbing is the thing in my life that I most value and most enjoy. It's had such an enormous impact on my life that I feel compelled to share the activity with anyone and everyone else who might get it the way I get it. Having climbed for over 30 years now, I've witnessed a great deal of changes in the community and how we are using the limited resources out there. I want to continue to be a positive mentor to the many folks who are new to the community and also do everything in my power to grow and protect the resources that are the life blood of what we do.

Mike Varlotta (he/him)



# Sara Whitlock (she/her)

The skill set I bring to SWPACC is in communications and media relations. I work for a scientific society in DC where I connect journalists with scientists for their stories, do media training for scientists, and I also do freelance science writing and podcast/video production.

I imagine I could contribute to SWPACC by helping with any written materials, sending emails, and advocating for support. My job has helped me become a fearless emailer and cold caller, whether I'm organizing an event, handling a delicate situation with the media, or pitching stories to journalists.

I'm motivated to volunteer with SWPACC because of how I got my start in climbing. I took the Explorer's Club rock school two years ago, and I am so grateful to everyone who volunteered their time to help me learn and integrate into the community. When I visit our local crags I'm amazed by all the work and money it must take to develop these gorgeous places to climb. I'd really like to contribute to that effort in whatever way I can and make sure that as many people as possible are able to enjoy climbing in our area.

Sara Whitlock (she/her)



# Valerie Kramer (she/her)

I have been climbing for over 25 years and am grateful to all those who have developed climbing areas, written guidebooks and taught and guided new climbers - I have been the lucky recipient of their work. I would like to contribute to developing and support the outdoor climbing community and resources in Southwester PA. I have been a long time supporter of the Access Fund and their work and have appreciated their efforts in many climbing areas in the US. I have a broad business background and would be happy to apply it to supporting SWPACC.

# Valerie Kramer (she/her)

