



NOTICE OF CANDIDATES DECLARED FOR ELECTED OFFICE

Dear, Dojoshus & Black Belts:

The Judo Ontario Elections Committee has sought to fill the following Board positions in accordance with the by-laws governing their vacancies.

- President
- Vice-President (Finance)
- Vice-President (Technical)
- Vice-President (Operations)
- Vice-President (Regions/Equity)

The deadline to submit Declarations of Candidacy was August 20th, 2024. Judo Ontario received declarations to fill the five positions from the following individuals. Bios are included below this notice.

- President – Brian Kalsen (Acclaimed)
- Vice-President (Finance) – Heather West (Acclaimed)
- Vice-President (Technical) – Kevin Doherty (Acclaimed)
- Vice-President (Operations) – Justin Chan (Acclaimed)
- Vice-President (Regions/Equity) – Vitaliy Polyanskyy (Acclaimed)

Since only a single Declaration was received for each vacant position, all candidates have been elected by acclamation. Congratulations and best wishes are extended to the new and returning Board members.

The Judo Ontario AGM will be held on September 29th at the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre. The official AGM Notice, including meeting agenda and annual report will be sent out shortly, by email and posted on the Judo Ontario website.

Yours in Judo,

James Cunningham
Executive Director, Judo Ontario



BRIAN KALSEN – PRESIDENT



Brian developed a passion for judo at the age of 6. He remained committed to the sport and, in 1987, founded the Ottawa Judo Club, which currently has one of the largest registered memberships in Ontario. Brian’s background as an Executive Director in the not-for-profit sector, combined with his 10 years as President of Judo Ontario, has equipped him with invaluable skills in strategic planning, governance, compliance, advocacy, and more. This, coupled with his experience as the Technical Director of the Ottawa Judo Club, has enabled him to gain a deep understanding of the issues and challenges facing our clubs and members.

During his first two terms as President of Judo Ontario (2010–2014), he was instrumental in establishing the first provincial training centre in Canada and hiring Judo Ontario’s first professional coach. This initiative led to securing our current home at the Toronto Pan Am Centre, fostering opportunities for our athletes, increasing funding for our programs, and strengthening our partnership with the National Training Centre.

Brian Kalsen’s experience spans regional, provincial, and national levels of judo administration. He served as Regional Director for the East Region from 1994 to 2000, followed by roles as Provincial Coach and Team Manager from 2000 to 2007. Brian was also the Quest for Gold Chairman from 2006 to 2010 and Vice President of Judo Ontario from 2008 to 2010. He contributed as a Board Director for Judo Canada from 2014 to 2020 and has been the President of Judo Ontario since 2020. Brian has received several notable awards for his contributions to sports and volunteering. In 2020, he was honoured with the Judo Canada Presidential Award. Earlier, in 2011, he was recognized with the Government of Canada Award for his outstanding volunteer work. Additionally, in 2008, he received the Syl Apps Special Achievement Award from the Ministry of Health Promotion for his distinguished contributions to amateur sport.

With Brian’s unwavering passion for judo, he will continue his commitment by implementing the new strategic plan, expanding learning opportunities and programming for judokas of all levels, and increasing membership and services.

HEATHER WEST – VICE PRESIDENT (FINANCE)

Heather is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) who has served as Vice President of Finance on the Judo Ontario Board for the past 10 years. With experience across various industries, including distribution, not-for-profit, financial instruments, and government student loans, Heather specializes in financial accounting, auditing, privacy, and risk management. Her extensive background has greatly contributed to her effective management of Judo Ontario’s finances, tournaments, and other committee work.

Heather was first introduced to judo in the 1970s by her brothers, Glenn and Kevin. She achieved the rank of brown belt early on but stepped away from the sport. In 1999, inspired by her youngest son’s interest, Heather rekindled her passion for judo. Since then, she has become a vital part of the judo community, teaching at the Tora Judo Club, serving as an instructor, and contributing as Treasurer on the Tora Executive. She has also been the Tournament Director for the Tora Annual Tournament in 2021 and 2022, one of the largest tournaments in Ontario. Holding the rank of Yondan, along with NCCP Level 2 and National A referee status, Heather has shown unwavering dedication to judo.





Heather has also volunteered as the Judo Ontario Team Manager at Nationals and the Canada Games. She was honored with the Judo Ontario Outstanding Board/Committee Contribution Award in 2017. Additionally, Heather has served as Tournament Director and Chair for the Hatashita Ontario Open from 2022 to 2024, further demonstrating her organizational skills and commitment to the sport.

Heather's contributions to both her local judo community and the provincial organization reflect her deep dedication and the positive impact she has made on Judo Ontario over the years.

KEVIN DOHERTY – VICE-PRESIDENT (TECHNICAL)



Kevin Doherty started judo before he could walk, under the tutelage of his father, William Doherty, the founder of the Budokan Judo Club. He has held various positions on both Judo Ontario and Judo Canada boards, including Vice President of Technical for both organizations. Kevin's experience spans provincial and national committees, and he is a three-time Olympian, a World bronze medalist, and the personal coach of Olympic Bronze Medalist Jessica Klimkait. In 1996, Kevin was inducted into both the Judo Canada and Judo Ontario Halls of Fame. Kevin was presented his Hachi Dan (8th) in 2024.

Professionally, Kevin holds a BSc and has practiced as a Doctor of Chiropractic for over 20 years. As the chief instructor at Ajax Budokan Judo Club, he has played a crucial role in developing grassroots and elite athletes, referees, and advancing judo at both the provincial and national levels. His contributions have resulted in the production of over 50 black belts, underscoring his commitment to the growth and excellence of judo in Ontario. Kevin's blend of competitive experience, technical expertise, and dedication to judo positions him well to elevate the sport.

Judo has been Kevin's life's work; with his competitive background and technical ability, he is well-equipped to support and advise the technical committees of judo in Ontario.

JUSTIN CHAN – VICE-PRESIDENT (OPERATIONS)

Justin has been doing judo for 36 years, starting at the age of 5 in an after-school program at his elementary school. He continued learning judo in a recreational after-school program at his high school until he was 16 when he decided to focus on competitive judo when he joined Sheffield Judo Club and later the JCCC Judo Kai. After graduating from high school, Justin dedicated every day of the week to training, going to different clubs every night to find mat time. Unfortunately, when he was only 20 years old, he suffered a nasty shoulder injury at the Quebec Open that would not properly heal over the next two seasons. This is when he decided to go to law school in the UK, where he trained with the Welsh national judo team for four years. Unfortunately, in his first year there, his ACL was torn by an illegal kawazu-gake at the British University Championships in 2007.



Justin has always had a passion in spreading the love for judo. He started by helping to run the beginner class at the Hart House Judo Club at the University of Toronto in 2003. Upon returning from law school, Justin became the head instructor of Toronto Judo Kai (then known as Thornhill Judo Kai). After two years, he opened up Hayabusakan Judo Club in 2012. His students have won numerous national and international tournaments.



In 2021, Justin also became the head sensei for the RMC Judo Club in Kingston whose major tournament every year is against the West Point Judo Team that consists of 25 matches between students between the two clubs. RMC was only 3 matches away from winning in 2024.

Justin also owned his own Bay Street law practice for a decade where he practiced commercial litigation and corporate law. Recently, he joined Keyser Mason Ball LLP as a commercial litigation partner. He uses his legal background to help in Judo Ontario matters since returning to Canada in 2010. He served as Chair of the Legal Committee and the Constitutional Committee for Judo Ontario from 2010 to 2020. From 2020 to present, he has been the Vice-President (Operations) for Judo Ontario. In addition to this, he runs two regional tournaments every season and supports many other tournaments to encourage the development of judo (especially competitive judo) in Ontario.

VITALIY POLYANSKY – VICE-PRESIDENT (REGIONS/EDI)

Vitaliy Polyanskyy began practicing judo at the age of 10 in Dnipro, Ukraine, and trained at the Taifu Judo Club until 2009. He has achieved international success at both the junior and senior levels, representing Ukraine at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Between 2003 and 2009, he also won medals at the European Cup, World Cup, and Grand Slam events. Later, as a representative of Canada, Vitaliy became the World Master Champion in 2017 and 2018.



In 2010, Sensei Vitaliy founded the Taifu Judo Club and has produced more than 25 black belts over the last 14 years. Under his leadership, the Taifu Judo Club has been recognized multiple times as Club of the Year by Judo Ontario and Judo Canada. In the last two years, the club has participated in over 80 different competitions and camps (provincial, national, and international), achieving notable results for both Ontario and Canada. Vitaliy is certified by the International Judo Federation (IJF) and the IJF Academy as an international coach.

Vitaliy also introduced a program for individuals with physical and mental disabilities called Adaptive Judo, with participants competing in both Kata tournaments and Shiai, achieving impressive results. With his diverse experience, Vitaliy aims to promote competitive judo, adaptive judo, and increase overall activity in the regions.