



NEWS

For immediate release:

Bruce Wigo To Step Down as CEO of ISHOF

FORT LAUDERDALE - The International Swimming Hall of Fame announced today that Bruce Wigo will be stepping down as President/CEO, effective December 31, 2017. He has led the organization for the past 12 years.

In announcing Wigo's retirement, ISHOF's Board said in a joint statement: "We have been so appreciative for the leadership that Bruce has brought to the International Swimming Hall of Fame over the past decade. Bruce has brought integrity to the daily operation of ISHOF and will continue with us on a part-time basis as a key staff contributor to the organization."

The Board of Directors is in the process of defining the job description for a new CEO and forming a search committee chaired by board member Bill Kent.

"This has been both a difficult and an easy decision," says Wigo. "I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with great people and to get to know some of the great names of aquatic history, like Alan Ford, Sammy Lee, Esther Williams, Sandor Tarics and Adolph Kiefer, to name a few of those who are no longer with us. But by stepping aside while I'm still relatively young and healthy, I look forward to spending more time with my children, grandchildren, family and friends."

One of the most knowledgeable individuals in the world about the history of aquatics, Wigo has agreed to remain as curator and be an information resource during the transitional phase of new leadership as the Hall of Fame moves forward.

"It is with great respect that I pay tribute to Bruce Wigo who has given his all to the International Swimming Hall of Fame," added Donna de Varona, Chair of the Board. "Without his passion, persistence and love of aquatics I believe the International Swimming Hall of Fame would be a distant memory. Not since it's founder Buck Dawson has our sport had such a loyal devoted professional. Buck created the hall to preserve our sports history and to honor those who have contributed. Bruce took the reins of leadership when the ISHOF was in trouble. We are now financially stable and have the opportunity to become one of the great sports museums in the world in both Fort Lauderdale and in the City of Santa Clara. It is my hope that the aquatics community, in recognizing Bruce Wigo's contributions finally steps up and supports our history which is rich in tradition, memorabilia and replete with role models."

Wigo's leadership helped steer ISHOF through difficult and challenging years of the early 2000s and oversaw governance restructuring, and recruitment of a new BOD and bylaw changes. In addition, he:

- Helped raise millions of dollars through gifts, grants, donations and the development of ISHOF branded products that returned ISHOF to financial stability.
- Completely reorganized the museum and created new exhibits leading to positive reviews in the NY Times, Washington Post and ISHOF being named "Best Sports Museum" in Florida by the Travel Channel.
- Supervised and raised funds for the preservation and digitization of many of the most significant photographs, films and videos in the ISHOF archives and revived the ISHOF annual year-book.
- Orchestrated the acquisition of historically significant memorabilia to the ISHOF collection, including original prints, books, works of art, swimwear, scrapbooks and Olympic medals."
- Created and curated major exhibitions that provided an important revenue stream and promoted the ISHOF brand at US Olympic Trials, FINA World Masters Championships, FINA World Championships and Olympic Games .
- Provided assistance and materials to researchers, writers and filmmakers for numerous documentary films, television programs and books and magazine articles.
- Made significant contributions to historical research, particularly in the areas of racial and ethnic diversity, for learn-to-swim programs and global aquatic history.
- Was actively involved in drowning prevention as President of Swim-Central and as a member of the BOD of the National Drowning Prevention Alliance.
- Was recognized as one of Aquatics International's Power 25, received the **Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award** from the World Waterpark Association and the "Lighthouse Award" from the National Drowning Prevention Alliance.
- Co-invented and brought to market the original ISHOF "SaferSwimmer™" buoy with 100% of the profits going to support ISHOF. This product has been credited with making open water swimming safer and more accessible and which has now been imitated around the world.
- Collaborated with the City of Santa Clara on plans for a new multi-million dollar Community Recreation, Aquatic Center and museum, that promises to make ISHOF one of the world's great cultural attractions and aquatic venues.
- Continues to work with the City of Fort Lauderdale to keep the museum open and operating while the city considers its options for the redevelopment of the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex, formerly known as the International Swimming Hall of Fame Aquatic Complex.

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