

I'm honored to have been nominated for Initiation Director of SAHA and have gladly accepted to work on behalf of the wonderful people of this association.

Following the exceptional job that Pete Johnston has done and Bill Kohn before him, makes it an easy transition into this role. They have set us on a path of success for many years to come and turned SAHA into one of the premier Mite/U8 programs in the state. Because of that, I get to come in and keep steering the ship in the right direction, while continuing to seek improvements to the program. I will use my hockey experience, knowledge, hockey connections and peers within SAHA to keep us at the top of the class for Mite/U8 hockey thus setting the foundation of success for years to come.

I have a wife, Sarah, of 12 years and two children, Tyson (9) and Mila (7). Sarah has volunteered in SAHA as a team manager and many other functions in the Mite/U8 program over the last 5 years. She is an awesome life partner and is very invested in making SAHA the best program possible. Tyson just completed his final year of mites and loves all the friends he's made along the way. He has a heart for the game, looks forward to working hard and being a great teammate for years to come. Mila has two years of U8s left. She has come such a long way on the ice and, more importantly, with her maturity from being involved in hockey over the last 2 years. She's also excited to continue her hockey path in SAHA.

Growing up, I played youth hockey in No. St. Paul, MN and rink-rated at Northwood Park! I played high school at No. St. Paul and went on to play collegiately at the University of St. Thomas. Since college, I've coached at the peewee and mite/U8 levels. Most recently, as a mite/U8 coach in SAHA for the last five years. Being involved in hockey for 30+ years and now our family has been a proud member SAHA for five years, has been an absolute joy. Some of the best friends throughout my life have come from being around the sport of hockey. It's such a privilege being part of the program and the many great families we're blessed to have in it!

I've been employed in the consumer goods industry for 12+ years and have recently started a small business selling outdoor rink products for a fun side gig.

As the new Initiation Director, my goals are to make the beginning hockey years an enjoyable, affordable and accessible experience for both the kids and parents of SAHA, while focusing on the fundamentals of the game for all who want to play.

To achieve these goals, we will direct our coaches to the best way of teaching the kids hockey fundamentals and the lifelong lessons associated with being a class act athlete. We will advise our coaches to teach the kids to respect and listen to coaches, be kind to their peers, and give exceptional effort. When that cycle of behavior takes place, it creates a positive path to success and enjoyment for the kids.

As I know there are many willing people in the organization, and some great friends of mine have already volunteered, I will be seeking you out to help successfully run the Mite/U8 program. It really does take a village and we need to continue that as we build our program.

Hockey is a winding, and somewhat unpredictable journey that is different for everyone who's ever picked up a stick. For many reasons, some kids may play for a year, some may play three years, and some may be fortunate enough to play in high school, college or even pros. It is my firm belief that as parents, volunteers and coaches, it should be our primary focus to make sure that journey is enjoyable

for the kids. We are their main role models, so they look to us for how to act as hockey players, fans and as people outside of hockey. As the director, I'll expect all SAHA members to respect the sport and all the stakeholders involved in it. It will be my mission to help guide the families of SAHA to achieve that enjoyable journey for as long as possible.

If we can continue making the initiation years an awesome experience, it will create community bonds and set our program up successfully for the long-term future. It's very exciting to see Pony Nation becoming a destination for hockey families and I'll do all I can to keep it that way.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you at the rink!

Dan Pavel