



Princeton National Rowing Association 2020 Annual Report



Mission Statement

The mission of Princeton National Rowing Association (PNRA) is to provide a venue where athletes of all ages, talents and backgrounds have the opportunity to develop their rowing abilities to their highest potential.

Core Implementation Principles

- 1) Maintaining and constantly seeking to improve one of the nation's premier rowing venues.
- 2) Providing a world class training facility for all PNRA constituents including Olympic and elite team members, local students and Masters rowers.
- 3) Promoting opportunities for area youth to excel in the sport of rowing.
- 4) Conducting top level regattas and events.
- 5) Supporting community development across greater Mercer County through targeted rowing programs.

A participant in PNRA's community wide Learn To Row Day - although scaled down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, over 50 people of all ages participated in activities ranging from trying out a rowing machine to taking their first strokes in a single.

PNRA is a 501(c)3 tax exempt
non-profit organization

To our Supporters . . .

2020 has been a challenging year for all of us, PNRA included. As rowers, we are accustomed to facing adversity and challenges. Rowing has taught us that by reaching deep inside ourselves and working as a team we can overcome challenges, those of COVID-19 pandemic included. The athletes, families and coaches of our programs have been truly inspirational as they have faced each of the challenges and found a way to row and grow as individuals and as a team.

The pandemic forced us to cancel the regattas that provide important support for our organization. We have focused on maintaining our programs including developing new formats, such as virtual workouts and small boat programs. As we have concentrated on making sure that we can continue to have an impact on our rowing community, we have taken a pause in the Caspersen Rowing Center expansion project. In 2021, we look forward hosting regattas again, restarting our boathouse expansion campaign, and making an impact on our community through programs and outreach efforts.

All of this would not possible without you being a member of our team. Your support makes this possible and for that we truly thankful!

PNRA Board of Directors

Ronald Chen

Jennifer Closser

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Michael McKitish

James Millar

William Quirk

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Michael Zimmer

www.rowpnra.org

A student athlete from Trenton participating in the Swim To Row Program developed jointly by PNRA, the Capital Area and Hamilton YMCA's and the Mercer County Park Commission. Students begin by learning to swim and then to row.

Photo credit: Kris Grudt



The 2019-2020 season started off strong with the Mercer Program bringing home medals from the Head of the Charles and Head of Schuylkill races. The crews trained hard during the winter for the 2020 spring season.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit home . . . in Mid-March all the programs went virtual. Dreams of National Championships were dashed. As the restrictions relaxed, the National Team returned to in-person training in May. In June, as New Jersey allowed, PNRA created a small boat program for rowers of all ages from all programs: Juniors, U23 and Masters. This was expanded to larger boats later in the summer and fall.

By the Numbers in a time of COVID-19

- 2,859 individual rowing sessions were held during the summer of 2020 under COVID guidelines
- 198 athletes from 44 different schools participated in the Mercer Junior Program
- 188 athletes were introduced to rowing in PNRA's Learn to Row Summer Camps
- 41 Masters rowers participated in both virtual and on water workouts
- Our graduating seniors were admitted to Boston Univ., Cornell, Duke, Georgetown, Jacksonville Miami, MIT, Monmouth, Northeastern, Princeton, Purdue, Rutgers, Stanford, Syracuse, Univ of Washington, Washington College, Wisconsin, Virginia, Virginia Tech and Yale

The Mercer Junior Men cross the finish line ahead of CBA and Row NJ in an informal fall scrimmage



In March 2020, the COVID pandemic forced the Hun, Lawrenceville and Peddie schools to send their students home and go virtual. Their rowing programs also finished the spring in a virtual mode. As the students returned to campus for the 2020-2021 school year, students' activities were confined to their respective campuses (i.e. no trips to Mercer Lake). While Hun eventually returned to the water late in the fall, Lawrenceville and Peddie got creative to maintain contact with oars beyond just ergs. Here Peddie students use an "oar box" to take strokes on the Concept2 ergometer.



At the 2019 World Rowing Championships in Linz, AUT, the USA National Team qualified 6 of the 7 women's events at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. The National Team Women, who are based at the Caspersen Rowing Center, have been on a roller coaster ride since March due to the COVID pandemic. In person training was stopped, the 2020 Olympics postponed, athletes were sent home, in May New Jersey gave the athletes training at a National Team Training Center "professional athlete" status allowing the Caspersen Rowing Center to open for business to these athletes with strict COVID protocols in place. The life of an elite National Team Rower is challenging - there are no major endorsement contracts, they put their professional careers on hold in order to represent the USA on the world stage. This year with COVID they are doing this in isolation. These women are truly an inspiration for the entire boathouse! We look forward to seeing them in action at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in July 2021.

**USA Women's 4x coached by Hilary Gehman
qualifying in Linz AUT for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games**

Photo credit: Kris Grudt

Rowing - Training for the Rest of Your Life

The COVID-19 pandemic reeked havoc on racing in 2020. The year has become the first in memory where there were no major events on the water.

Before COVID-19 caused the cancellation of the majority of 2020's in-person events, PNRA hosted the Mercer Indoor Row for the Cure at the Peddie School on March 1. Almost 200 athletes participated in the event competing for the coveted pink hammer while supporting the Susan G. Komen Foundation's fight to eliminate breast cancer.



In 2021, PNRA plans to host on Mercer Lake:

- 2020 Tokyo Olympic Team Trials (April & June),
- Mercer Lake Sprints (April),
- Mid-Atlantic Junior Regional Championship (May)
- Intercollegiate Rowing Association (IRA) National Championship (May)
- National Learn to Row Day (June)

Photo Credit: Miles Truesdell/Kris Grudt



The currents of racism and inequality in our country run deep. Our organization wants to actively break down constructs that allow that current to flow, especially in sport. Furthermore, as rowers, we know that the only way a boat can move forward against an unfair current is if we all pull together as one team. We know that we have to challenge ourselves and our teammates to do better, to be better. We have to hold ourselves and our team accountable. Only through respecting and indeed celebrating our differences can we truly come together as a team and win the fight against racism and discrimination in all its forms.



In September, PNRA hosted a community drive-in movie showing of *A Most Beautiful Thing* in Trenton, NJ. The film chronicles the first African American high school rowing team in this country (made up of young men, many of whom were in rival gangs from the West Side of Chicago), all coming together to row in the same boat. The movie was followed by a dialog between the film's author Arshay Cooper and Capital Area YMCA CEO Sam Frisby.

Working with the Capital Area and Hamilton YMCA's, the Mercer County Park Commission, Trenton schools, PNRA is committed to expanding the opportunities provided through rowing to underserved areas of Mercer County through our Swim to Row Program and Outreach activities.

We are currently partnering with the Princeton University Rowing Teams to develop a middle school STEM to Stern program which will include both STEM and rowing activities.

www.row2k.com

2020 - Financials

Income		Expenses	
\$518,620	Program Revenues	Program Expenses	\$826,645
\$198,285	Boathouse Operations	Equipment & Facilities	\$203,163
\$185,828	Contributions	General & Admin.	\$122,780
\$16,337	Event Revenue	Event Expenses	\$39,514
\$8,564	Sales	Fundraising	\$16,872
\$4,629	Other		
Total Income		Total Expenses	
\$932,263		\$1,208,974	

PNRA thanks our donors and volunteers.
You enable us to have an impact on the
lives of the rowers and our community!

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A special Thank You to Mercer County and the Mercer County Park Commission for their support.

Mercer Junior Girls participate in a Zoom Practice

PNRA is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization.

Join our supporters
 with a gift!





Princeton National Rowing Association
1 S Post Road, West Windsor, NJ 08550
www.rowpnra.org 609-799-7100

Photo credit: Kris Grudt

**Thank you to all of our athletes, volunteers,
supporters, coaches and staff!
With you on our team, anything is possible!**