

Wednesday, September 26, 2018

Dear triathlete member of IUTA,

I am running for the IUTA board committee in response to a call for women to step up and join the board, for I believe a female voice adds great value and vitality to board room dynamics and discussions. However, please don't vote for me because I am a female, a friend or an acquaintance, vote for my agenda, if and only if, you are convinced it can serve you well.

I have befriended and chatted with some of you on Facebook and I thank you for giving me the chance to get to know you and understand how I can potentially serve you if elected. Most of what I propose on the micro operational level is in line with what other candidates have in mind, but where I tend to differ is on the macro scope of things, envisioning growth in the immediate future and setting up solid foundations to accommodate for change as of now.

You'll find my credentials and certifications on this page: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/myrnafouadsaliba/> and you can learn more about me <https://www.instagram.com/myrnasaliba/> myrnasaliba.tumblr.com and <https://www.facebook.com/myrna.saliba> . But what I can tell you about me the "person" is this: I am known to always finish what I start, and I relentlessly pursue my goals. They say I am a quick learner, smart, sharp, strong, logical and fair, but what I pride myself for most is my honesty in everything I say and I do, and for always standing up for what I believe in, what is right and what is just. I am a compassionate human being and I value humanity. I love nature and the environment. I am perfectly trilingual (French, Arabic and English), though I can understand Spanish and communicate in 3 more languages (Italian, Bulgarian and very minor Russian). I am a team-player with good communication skills and lateral thinking, ready to provide service to all association members.

If I am elected, I promise to always be true to myself, to listen to all suggestions and ideas, to let your voice be heard, and to enhance good communication between the board members themselves and between the board and all Ultra triathletes.

Here is what I hope to bring to the table, it's an updated version of what was in my letter of application, for since then, I had more time to reflect:

1. **Getting things done** with an athlete's passion, a coach's wisdom, and a race director's vision.
2. **A strong technical background**, supported by official credentials and certifications.
3. **Amending the election rules, extending the number of seats, including an Honorary Chairman and multiple subcommittees to serve us better and help achieve a well-balanced board.** We need more than a female and an equitable gender representation. A board representing one slice of the athletic population and a couple of geographic locations is misrepresentative of the full athletic demographics. We need member-reps from all continents including countries with minorities, since every democratic election system in the world accounts for minorities. We need people from different walks of life, different educational and cultural backgrounds, we need the young, the senior, the male, the female as this diversity of thought helps us achieve a robust, intelligent, focus debate and is a catalyst for an effective decision-making process.
4. **Bridging the past and the future: Preserving IUTA's legacy / history all while adopting a visionary forward looking approach.** We have some wonderful senior athletes who have served the sport for years, recruiting them and having them on the committee is a must because they possess a wealth of knowledge and deep wisdom with a lot to learn from. We also have new comer countries from Asia who are newbies with different needs and aspirations; these must also be represented on the board. They need our guidance to succeed and we need their thoughts to enrich discussions and foster effective communications when promoting IUTA races to other countries in their region.
5. **Raising the bar at the organization level.** Today, and to many endurance athletes, Ultra races are what Ironman represented 30 years ago, our demographics are fast changing, and we need to capitalize on this opportunity, step up to expectations, do more and offer more:
  - A. **Extending an improved support, at all levels, to race organizing committees** in the world cup series and especially the world championships.
  - B. **Offering registered athletes benefits matching that of other major endurance races** (nice gadgets including backpacks with the commemorative logos at the world championship races, etc..). Yes, it all needs financing and we will work to get the right funding.

6. **Hosting a Double Ultra and a Triple Ultra championship every year**, because a world championship in any endurance sport occurs yearly and not every other year. I pledge if elected to help iron out all limitations preventing the double and the triple world championships from being held annually. The immediate goal is to initially and ideally host both world championships at the same venue in an effort to minimize the cost and the logistics involved (the setup and the manning of such races, etc...) Things may change with participation growth. Quintuple and Deca championships would be decided based on expansion.
7. **Crafting a fair and equitable ranking and race point system**. There is a lot of room for improvement at this level.
8. **Reinforcing to the world the credibility of our sport**. A clean sport! We need to remove the cast of doubt of any possible doping by our triathletes, something often linked to long endurance sport.
9. **Working on a strong media visibility, and a strategic PR agenda to enhance IUTA branding**. Many triathletes are starting to notice us and show interest in our sport, for that we need to boost our public image. Along with marketing, publicity, and a good relationship with media organizations, we need an extensive presence on social media. A website overhaul, an app for results and live race tracking, as well as broadcasting parts of the world championships to the world, is few of what can be done.
10. **Bringing the sport to new places**, and conquering new grounds. Holding multiple nationalities and speaking a number of languages, as well as traveling the world allows me to be a good IUTA ambassador at the service of our goals.
11. **Working together and inviting other long endurance races to join IUTA**, because we share the same spirit, the same struggles, albeit packaged in different ways. Unifying our image gives us strength and is beneficial to all.
12. **Marketing our sport and encouraging people to participate in our races**. Tapping into a larger athlete demographics, especially female and older athletes, because endurance sport does not relate to sex or age, it relates to a MIND, a determination and an inner drive which is within each one of us at every age.
13. **Preventing the commercialization of our sport**, never allowing it to turn into a money making machine at the expense of IUTA triathletes.
14. **Preserving the IUTA SPIRIT and legacy**, always cherishing the family and camaraderie ambiance which distinguishes IUTA races from other endurance events. This is our Trade mark, what makes us unique and different and we should never lose sight of that, no matter what future marketing strategies require.

Finally, I wish to say that each one of us 8 candidates has an agenda and is armed with goodwill to help the association. I hope whichever four get elected consolidate all good points and propositions into one well-defined agenda to be put forth for study and evaluation. After all, being elected "member of a board committee" is not an award or a reward to an individual; it is not even about electing an individual, but rather electing a 'group' of people who believe in collectivism and placing the group before the individual, all while carrying out a robust agenda and a clear road map to keep the ship smoothly sailing forward.

Please vote for this agenda if you believe it can make a positive change in the future of IUTA. Let's move forward not inward, let's take IUTA to new levels and new heights.

Yours in wellness,



Myrna Fouad Saliba