

**Written Testimony and Exhibits of Rhonda Faehn for the Senate Subcommittee on  
Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security**

**Introduction.**

My name is Rhonda Faehn. I was the Senior Vice President of USA Gymnastics (“USAG”) for only 37 days when I received a phone call from a coach about the concerns of a gymnast she was coaching. The gymnast had experienced what the coach described as “uncomfortable encounters of therapy” with Dr. Larry Nassar (“Nassar”), a member of the USAG national team medical staff. After my further inquiry, this coach also disclosed that she had heard that two other gymnasts (that she did not coach) may have been uncomfortable with Nassar. I immediately phoned and reported the concerns to the President of USAG, Steve Penny (“Penny”), who assured me that he would contact the coach, the parents of the gymnasts and the proper authorities.

Within one month from receiving that initial call, I received two additional reports of gymnasts expressing concern about Nassar’s therapy. I again followed the same protocol and immediately notified Penny each time, who again assured me that he was contacting the parents of the gymnasts involved and the proper authorities.

Each time I immediately reported these incidents, I was told by Penny not to say anything to anyone for fear of possibly impeding any investigation of Nassar. I was not aware of any delay in contacting authorities or of any efforts to misinform anyone of the reasons for Nassar’s departure from USAG. I tried to protect the gymnasts involved by making sure I immediately reported what I had learned from those who contacted me.

There is no question that better systems of reporting and addressing abuse need to be in place, and I truly hope this occurs going forward, and that I can still find a place to make a positive contribution towards it, but my goal in immediately reporting complaints to my superior at USAG was and always has been to protect and care for the athletes I served.

After being summarily fired from my dream job, without warning or explanation, I am left surprised, hurt, confused and feel I am being falsely blamed for the alleged deficiencies of USAG. But much more importantly, I feel a deep sense of loss, sympathy, sadness and compassion for the victims of Nassar, on whom my most sincere loyalties have always been focused, and whose concerns should have been reported to law enforcement authorities at the earliest possible moment, as I assumed was being done at the time, and as I would have done, had I known then what I know now.

## **My Background.**

Gymnastics has been my life's passion since I was eight years old. That is the age when I started gymnastics at a small club in Minnetonka, Minnesota. At age 14, I moved away from my family to Texas to train with Bela Karolyi. I progressed rapidly through the ranks—becoming a world-class, elite gymnast for Team USA, competing for our country at international competitions, including the Pan American Games, World Championships and as an alternate for the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea.

After my years on the U.S. national team, I earned a gymnastics scholarship to UCLA. It was there, under the guidance of coach Valorie Kondos-Field, I began to realize I wanted to make a positive impact on the lives of athletes. After competing for UCLA, I worked as a student-assistant coach for UCLA two years--and that's when my "lightbulb" moment occurred. My purpose came into focus--I wanted to help young women achieve their goals and dreams.

I spent 19 years coaching NCAA Division I gymnastics. Thirteen of those years were spent as the head coach of the University of Florida, where I led teams to three back-to-back NCAA Championship titles.

When I was coaching at the collegiate level, I was fortunate enough to work with Olympians, World and Pan Am champions, elite national team members and Junior Olympic champions. I believed with honesty, integrity, hard work and encouragement, the amazing athletes will shine, and they did. During this time, I also realized the greatest gift I could give any athlete was compassion and understanding. I was able to relate to and understand what the athletes were going through, because I had lived it.

The primary reason I decided to accept a position with USAG was to recommit my heart, energy and passion to elite gymnastics. I felt the time was right to take everything I had learned and experienced during my gymnastics life to help guide and care for our U.S. athletes. I determined that my life had come full circle and I was being called to USA Gymnastics to be an advocate-- a compassionate voice to make an impact and help bring positivity to what is often times a very tense and stressful environment. Many throughout the gymnastics community, including those who have written character and reference letters to the Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security, which letters are attached to this Written Testimony as Appendix 1, strongly believe I was successful in my endeavors.

## **Statement of Events and Circumstances.**

I was hired by USAG as Senior Vice President of the Women's Program on May 11, 2015. My duties were to focus on the elite program consisting of gymnasts attempting to make the United States national team as well as representing the USA in international competitions, and also to develop young and junior Olympic athletes. I was to report directly to Penny. I was provided with the assistance of a women's programs coordinator, a junior Olympic program director, and a director of athlete and coaches programs, but I was not provided assistance with

communications, which I had to do myself while traveling extensively and focusing heavily on the competitions and training camps I attended.

I had never met Nassar, although because he was known for being very knowledgeable of the treatment of gymnastics injuries, I had reached out to him to provide consultation on the treatment of one of the athletes I coached at the University of Florida. Shortly after I arrived at USAG, Nassar contacted me to explain his role as a member of the medical staff of the national team.

Within two weeks of accepting employment with USAG, I attended the American Classic competition and my first national team training camp at the Karolyi Ranch in Texas from May 28, 2015 to June 7, 2015. I returned to Indianapolis, where, on June 17, 2015, I received a text message from Sarah Jantzi (“Jantzi”). It should be noted that I no longer have the phone I used in 2015, and I currently do not have access to or copies of the texts or phone logs from that phone; however, I still have copies of some of the written notes I made contemporaneously during certain events described herein, and I still have some of the emails I reference in this Written Testimony, and when pertinent, I make reference to and attach to this Written Testimony copies of such notes and emails.

Jantzi texted me that she had a concern and wanted me to call her, which I did right away on June 17, 2015. Jantzi told me during the call that the gymnast she coaches had told her of three uncomfortable encounters of therapy with Nassar. Those encounters involved the gymnast being massaged in her groin area and too close to her vagina for the knee injury treatment she was supposed to be receiving. According to Jantzi, the encounters took place at the 2013 World selection camp and the 2015 Italy selection camp. Additionally, the gymnast had reported that Nassar sent her a private message through a social media application that said the gymnast looked beautiful in her prom dress, which made the gymnast uncomfortable.

I asked Jantzi during this call if she had heard of any other gymnasts with similar experiences, and although she was initially reluctant to tell me of any others, I pressed her for additional information and she ultimately told me that two other gymnasts may have felt uncomfortable. As reflected in the notes I took at the time of our conversation, which are attached as Exhibit A, Jantzi described the feelings of the gymnasts as “the uncomfortable factor.”

I told Jantzi I would report these concerns to Penny. I immediately called Penny and told him in detail about the concerns Jantzi shared with me. Penny told me he would call Jantzi and the parents of the gymnasts right away. He told me not to say anything or do anything because he was going to handle everything going forward and he told me he was going to report the concerns to the proper authorities, which I assumed included law enforcement.

I followed up the same night, June 17, 2015, with Jantzi to make sure that Penny had called her. She confirmed he had, and that he had told her that he would handle everything and

would report the concerns to the authorities, as she indicates in her statement of her recollection, attached hereto as Exhibit B.

I was in Gainesville, Florida from June 21, 2015 through June 28, 2015. On June 24, 2015, Taylor Rathke (the former USGA Women's Program Coordinator) and I received an email from Nassar concerning his travel arrangements to the World Championship selection camp. I forwarded the email to Penny and asked him how to respond. Penny responded that I should let Nassar know that I would get back to him after the Pan Am Games. I assumed this was because he had been reported to authorities or may not be traveling based on the concerns that I had raised with Penny.

I traveled to the National team camp at the Karolyi Ranch in Texas on June 29, 2015. I was approached by Jantzi, who said she believed from her conversation with Penny that she was not to talk about Nassar, but that Jantzi had heard about another gymnast that had been massaged oddly by Nassar. I immediately emailed Penny to tell him of this additional report from Jantzi (Exhibit B-1, which has been redacted only to hide the name of the gymnast who wished to remain anonymous). Penny called me after training was over for the day and said he would make contact with the gymnast or her parents and would handle everything. Penny said I was not to discuss this and instructed me to focus only on the Pan Am selection camp and the upcoming competition.

I next traveled to the Pan Am Games in Toronto, Canada, where I stayed from July 5, 2015 through July 16, 2015. Unknown to me at the time, on July 11, 2015, a private investigator hired by USAG interviewed the gymnast coached by Jantzi. According to statements later revealed by USAG, the investigator did not determine sexual abuse could be definitively established.

On July 13, 2015, while still at the Pan Am Games, I received an email from Penny informing me that an interviewer was interviewing three athletes about Nassar, whom he described in the email as Athletes A, B and C. He did not identify the athletes, but I knew who they were because he indicated the cities where they were being interviewed, and I recognized those as the cities where the athletes lived. Penny wanted me to reach out to Athletes B and C to line up interviews without involving their parents or coaches because they were "adults." He told me in the email, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit C, "if they had to involve someone, the preference would be parents." He instructed me not to tell them the subject of the interviews and to exclude parents and coaches. At the time, I was still under the impression that there was a law enforcement investigation.

I was upset and confused by the email. I did not want to ask the Athletes to be interviewed while excluding their parents and coaches. I therefore refused to contact the Athletes as instructed by Penny. I later made a note at the bottom of the email from Penny

(Exhibit C) that summarizes what I said to Penny at the time we discussed the email on July 14, 2015.

I flew back to Indianapolis on July 16, 2015, and then flew to Orlando, Florida to visit my family from July 17, 2015 through July 20, 2015.

On or about July 18, 2015, I received a call from Aly Raisman (“Raisman”). Raisman told me she had been interviewed by an investigator. She said she was rattled by the interview and forgot to tell the investigator about McKayla Maroney (“Maroney”). I asked Raisman what she knew about Maroney. Raisman said that Maroney had been penetrated by Nassar’s fingers during a therapy while she was at World Championships in Japan in 2011. Raisman told me that Nassar would text Maroney to come to his hotel room for private treatments. Raisman also told me that she felt bad that she didn’t speak about this earlier, but Maroney didn’t want anyone to know. Raisman wanted to share the additional information with an investigator, but only told me about Maroney’s experience with Nassar—she did not tell me of any experience she herself had with Nassar, other than that he was “creepy” or made her feel uncomfortable. I told Raisman I would report Maroney’s experience to Penny right away, which I immediately did. I told her Maroney’s experience would be added to the investigation.

Penny asked me to text Raisman to ask if Maroney would talk to an investigator. I texted Raisman, and Raisman indicated Maroney would be willing to talk to an investigator. Penny indicated he would talk to Maroney and handle all communications to coordinate the interview.

Raisman has recently said that she told me in detail about her own experiences with Nassar, but that is not accurate. Based on my own clear memory and the notes I took contemporaneously with our conversation, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit D, Raisman only mentioned Maroney’s experience with Nassar, not Raisman’s.

I was invited in an email from Penny dated July 19, 2015 to attend a July 20, 2015 meeting at Baker and Daniels [sic] law firm in Indianapolis (attached as Exhibit E). I flew to Indianapolis from Orlando and went straight to the meeting from the airport. Scott Himsel, an attorney from Faegre Baker and Daniels was present. There may have been another attorney there, but I don’t know for sure. I know Penny was there. It was determined that Nassar should not attend the upcoming Classic meet.

The next day, July 21, 2015, Penny and I called Martha Karolyi and Penny told her that Nassar was not going to be at the Classic Meet on July 23, 2015. Penny also told Karolyi that Larry won’t be there because he is being investigated for his treatment techniques. Penny told Karolyi that we are not telling anyone why Nassar will not be attending. Martha responded with shock and wanted assurance that there would be a doctor on site for the meet.

Later on July 21, 2015, I received an email from Penny addressed to Peter Vidmar, Jay Binder, Paul Parilla, Ron Galimore, Renee Jamison and me, with copies to Scott Himsel and

Daniel Connolly, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit F. In the email, Penny instructs us that we are not to have any further communication or discussion about Nassar until further notice. The email summarized the points that Faegre Baker and Daniels would have with Nassar, and it contained a directive to be delivered to Nassar not to attend the Classic meet. The email indicated the attorneys would be handling everything.

I have no idea what was actually said to Nassar. I had no involvement in the contact with him.

On July 22, 2015, Penny forwarded me an email (attached as Exhibit G) that Nassar had sent to Himsel. The email contained a link to a Dropbox account that contained a video demonstration of a technique used by Nassar to treat gymnasts. My impression is that Nassar was sending the video to show that Nassar's techniques were not improper and were helpful and accepted. I was shocked that Nassar would present an "educational video" of a partially naked gymnast being touched in very intimate areas. I did not, however, witness any penetration or obvious sexual acts.

I attended the US Classic meet from July 23, 2015 through July 26, 2015. Penny was not there. Gina Nichols approached me in the hotel after the competition was over and asked me to please not let Karolyi know that it was Gina's daughter who reported concerns over Nassar's treatment. In order to respect Gina's request of anonymity, I didn't disclose such information to Karolyi.

Unknown to me at the time, an investigator met with Maroney on July 23, 2015. The investigator reported to Penny (unknown to me at the time) that Maroney presented a clear sexual assault claim. As a result of this report to Penny (and again, unknown to me at the time), Penny reported Nassar to the FBI on July 27, 2015. It is now my understanding that the FBI took over from there, relieved Nassar of his duties and handled all aspects of the investigation from that point forward.

I was not privy to anything concerning the FBI investigation. Lynn Raisman, Raisman's mother, emailed Penny and me on August 20, 2015, seeking an update on the investigation. Her email is attached as Exhibit H. Lynn mentions that Nassar sent a congratulatory text to Raisman and that Raisman had responded, "thanks." Penny said that he would respond to Lynn. I do not know how he responded since I was not copied on any response.

On August 27, 2015, Lynn Raisman again emailed Penny and me seeking an update. She mentioned that her daughter would be willing to speak to the FBI but suggested that the meeting take place in Massachusetts so it wouldn't affect her daughter's training schedule. A copy of the email is attached as Exhibit I. Penny responded to Lynn, saying he was reconnecting with the FBI and would keep her posted.

Lynn emailed again on September 4, 2015, requesting an update (email is attached as Exhibit J). I don't know if Penny responded to her, but I was instructed by Penny not to have any contact or to discuss Nassar, even internally among USAG staff. I would often ask Penny what was going on with the Nassar investigation, but he would tell me he couldn't talk about it.

On September 28, 2015, Penny emailed me (copy attached as Exhibit K) and told me to monitor Nassar's Facebook page. He gave no explanation for this request. I did this only on September 28, 2015, saw nothing remarkable, and advised Penny of such.

On February 28, 2016, I was told by Karolyi that Nassar was requested by USAG to be a guest lecturer at a gymnastics Congress. I immediately inquired with Cheryl Jarrett, Vice President of USAG Member Services, who confirmed this was true via email (copy attached as Exhibit L). I told Jarrett that Nassar had been dismissed and to call Penny. I assume that Penny was contacted and handled it.

On November 21, 2016, I received text messages from Gina Nichols, questioning me about not reporting her daughter's incidents with Nassar. I replied via text that I had notified Penny immediately. I then texted Penny and he replied to me that he notified the FBI and put them in touch with Gina. I have attached screenshots of the referenced texts as Exhibit M, but they are not all chronological and are hard to read.

### **My Firing.**

Kerry Perry ("Perry"), current President of USAG, having replaced Penny in December, 2017, called me on May 17, 2018, while I was attending a national team training camp in Tennessee. During an otherwise uneventful call, I told Perry that I was invited to speak to members of the US Senate about USAG and safety issues for gymnasts. I advised Perry that Chris Tebo (the newly appointed chief legal officer of USAG) had suggested I decline the invitation. Perry acted like she was surprised to hear that if I declined the invitation, I would be subpoenaed. She put me on hold, then came back to the phone and told me to immediately return to Indianapolis. I told her I was in the middle of a national team training camp and could not abandon the gymnasts. Tebo then got on the phone and told me I was being asked to resign. I refused to resign.

On May 18, 2018, USAG published a public statement that I was no longer employed with USAG. Their publication said only that it was a personnel issue they wouldn't discuss. I received no warning and no explanation for my firing.

Up to the last minute of my job at USAG, I was doing everything in my power to provide guidance, care and concern for the gymnasts and coaches that comprise USAG. Every action I did take was intended to benefit the athletes and coaches and was done in reliance on the representations that were made to me that the incidents I immediately reported to my superior were being properly acted on and were being promptly passed along to the proper authorities.

### **Where Do We go From Here?**

Not only would I like to be a part of a solution that prevents the tragic harm that has occurred, but I was in the process of implementing new policies intended to protect our gymnasts at the time of my firing. For example, in late 2016 or early 2017, I implemented a chaperone program at USAG that required young female gymnasts who travel abroad to be accompanied by a chaperone vetted and hired by USAG. I also suggested that USAG pay for the parents of minor female gymnasts to accompany them abroad, when under prior policies, credentials and access was not even permitted for chaperones at the Olympics or World Championships and gymnasts may have only been accompanied by their coach. It surprised me to have received resistance to these common sense ideas from USAG, but eventually I did see some success with this plan. I would strongly suggest going forward that a chaperone program be developed and regulated, including the development of written materials and guidelines for the chaperones.

Additionally, I would strongly recommend that parents of the gymnasts be provided more direct involvement and a presence at gymnastic meets and functions. This would not only help assure protection to the gymnasts, but also help to develop a stronger support network for them.

I also began the implementation and even began site planning for a facility that could safely serve the gymnasts as an alternative to the Karolyi Training Ranch. Obviously, there was going to be a high cost and other factors to consider, but I strongly believed and continue to strongly believe that it is essential to plan a national training facility that can integrate safety and security, proper health and medical care and nutritional and wellness development.

I would very much appreciate the opportunity to discuss these and other ideas I have to help promote the safety and security of our gymnasts.

Thank you very much for your attention, and for working toward finding solutions to prevent similar tragedies from ever arising again and for helping the innocent survivors to heal.

***[Exhibits and Character and Reference Letters to Follow]***



# EXHIBIT "A"

## Document

6/17 - Sarah Gantzer called me  
@ 5:48pm (I called her after she  
texted me to speak)

- She notified me of her athlete  
having 3 uncomfortable encounters  
of therapy w/ trainer Larry  
Nassar.

She stated he massaged her  
on ~~the~~ the groin area and <sup>too</sup> close to  
the vagina for her knee.

2013 Worlds Selection Camp

2015 Italy selection camp

3 x's

- Also stated that he private  
FB messaged her that she  
looked beautiful in her prom  
dress.

She just felt uncomfortable.

2 other athletes agreed about

the uncomfortable factor  
Simone Biles  
Aly Raisman

Ask Cathy Darp off  
Personal days  
etc

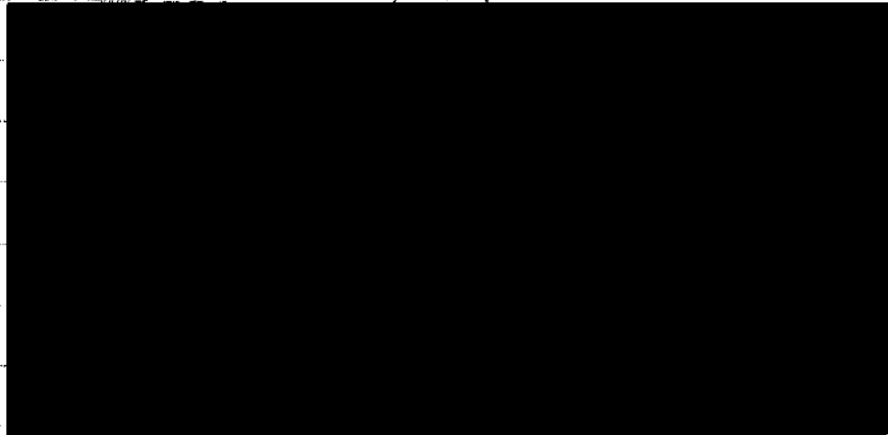
8/1000

July 21, 2015

Steve and I called Martha  
tissues about Larry

water  
apkin

Mirror M-F



@PNH 1413LP

Enterprise # SXCB74G

# EXHIBIT "B"

Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security  
Attn: The Hon. John Thune, Chairman

Regarding USAG's handling of the Dr. Larry Nassar Investigation.

Here is my recollection of the order of events in question:

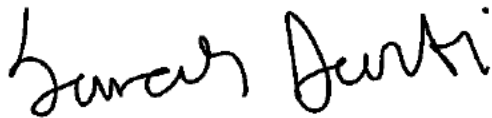
-After learning of the sexual abuse/sexually inappropriate treatment of my athlete I reported it to Rhonda Faehn via a phone conversation around the week of June 17<sup>th</sup> 2015. Rhonda informed me she was going to call her superior Steve Penny.

-Rhonda then called Steve Penny to inform him of the situation.

-Shortly after my phone conversation with Rhonda, Steve Penny called me to discuss the report I made to Rhonda Faehn on the sexual abuse of my athlete by Dr. Larry Nassar. During our discussion I asked Steve Penny if I needed to report this to any other authorities and he reassured me no that he would handle it. This was already being investigated and that he would take care of it from here.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me. My phone number is [REDACTED]

Sincerely,



Sarah Jantzi

# EXHIBIT "B-1"

**Subject:** Re: Larry  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 1, 2015 at 8:23:54 PM Eastern Daylight Time  
**From:** Steve Penny  
**To:** Rhonda Faehn  
**Attachments:** 6A8553B0-1A41-4B89-BCB7-F7974AF7C95F[83].png, 6A8553B0-1A41-4B89-BCB7-F7974AF7C95F[83].png

Will call you at 9:00

Have a great day!

Regards,

Steve

Sent from my AT&T iPhone from somewhere in this wonderful world!

On Jul 1, 2015, at 7:53 PM, Rhonda Faehn <[rfaehn@usagym.org](mailto:rfaehn@usagym.org)> wrote:

I have to wait until I am alone...can I call you from my room at about 7:20?

**Rhonda Faehn**  
USA Gymnastics  
Sr. Vice President Women's Program  
132 E. Washington Street,  
Suite 700  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
p: 317.829.5643  
f: 317.237.5069  
[Rfaehn@usagym.org](mailto:Rfaehn@usagym.org) | [usagym.org](http://usagym.org)

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**From:** Steve Penny  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 1, 2015 at 6:21 PM  
**To:** Rhonda Faehn  
**Subject:** Re: Larry

Call me

Have a great day!

Regards,

Steve

Sent from my AT&T iPhone from somewhere in this wonderful world!

On Jul 1, 2015, at 6:06 PM, Rhonda Faehn <[rfaehn@usagym.org](mailto:rfaehn@usagym.org)> wrote:

Sarah Jantzi came to me yesterday and said she knew she wasn't supposed to talk about Larry but Maggie brought it up to her...that now [REDACTED] came forward apparently when the girls started talking in their rooms to say that Larry massaged her oddly as well

**Rhonda Faehn**

USA Gymnastics  
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<6A8553B0-1A41-4B89-

BCB7-

F7974AF7C95F[82].png>



# EXHIBIT "C"

**Subject:** Next steps

**Date:** Monday, July 13, 2015 at 7:30:42 PM GMT-04:00

**From:** Steve Penny

**To:** Rhonda Faehn

Rhonda,

I have spoken with our attorneys and we did have an interview with Athlete A this weekend. Based on that conversation, we believe that it will be best to interview Athlete B and Athlete C later this week. We are going to fly the interviewer to speak with each athlete and we are making the necessary arrangements. The plan is likely Houston on Thursday and Boston on Friday.

Both athletes are adults and we are going to need you to reach out to them and find out how we can arrange for them to have a conversation. Our preference is for them to meet privately with the interviewer and not involve their coach or their parents. If they had to involve someone, the preference would be parents.

We will not be disclosing the nature of the conversation, other than it is private and confidential. You will need to use your best judgement on how to build that trust. We will also not be disclosing why or who brought any of this to our attention.

The reason we are doing this is entirely to determine if this has occurred with multiple athletes and if so, it allows us to take action with a higher degree of resolve and evidence. As you can tell, the degree to which we plan to reveal athlete names is as exemplified in this email.

I wanted to send this to you so that you have a bit of a heads up and can think through how you will handle the communication. The consensus is that having you do the athlete outreach is less startling than coming from me.

I will talk to you tomorrow to further address this.

Thanks.

Regards,

Steve

This e-mail bothered me greatly and I personally told Steve that I would not reach out to the athlete "alone" and not involve their parents or coaches b/c this was a very serious matter. Myself being a parent, there is no way I would want someone to not notify me if something may have happened to my child. After telling this to Steve, he said the parents could be involved.

# EXHIBIT "D"

Spoke w/ Ally Raisman on  
Sat. July 18<sup>th</sup>

- She commented that she felt bad she never spoke up about Harry in the past b/c they were blocking it out to be able to compete.

- Mentioned MyKayla Maroney had been actually penetrated w/ Larry's fingers while they were @ Worlds in Japan.

He would text MyKayla and have her come to his room for private treatments.

- She mentioned that Harry never did these types of treatments in front of Marsha.

- She also mentioned that she wanted to be there for the younger athletes he is ~~do~~ doing this with.

# EXHIBIT "E"

**Subject:** Steve Penny invited you to "Meeting at Baker and Daniels".  
**Date:** Sunday, July 19, 2015 at 3:48:07 PM GMT-04:00  
**From:** Steve Penny  
**To:** Rhonda Faehn  
**Attachments:** iCal-20150719-124807.ics



## Steve Penny invited you to "Meeting at Baker and Daniels".

**when** Monday, July 20, 2015, 2:00 PM EDT - 4:00 PM EDT  
**location** 300 N Meridian St  
Unit 2700, Indianapolis, IN 46204-1755, United States  
**invitees** Renee Jamison, Ron Galimore, Scott Himsel and you.  
See replies...



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# EXHIBIT "F"

**Subject:** Current issue

**Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 at 10:50:51 PM GMT-04:00

**From:** Steve Penny

**To:** Peter Vidmar [REDACTED] A. Jay Binder M. D., Paul Parilla, Ron Galimore, Renee Jamison, Rhonda Faehn

**CC:** Himsel, Scott D., Connolly, Daniel J.

Greetings:

You are receiving this email because you are among those that are aware of the current issue concerning USA Gymnastics and one of our medical staff. Pertaining to this issue, you are instructed to not have any conversations with anyone concerning this issue until further notice. Below is a summary of the points that will be made tomorrow morning in a phone conversation between USA Gymnastics legal counsel and the interested party.

- Attorneys are contacting on behalf of my client USA Gymnastics and with the approval of the Chairman and Vice Chair of USA Gymnastics' board of directors
- USA Gymnastics has been made aware of concerns regarding therapy techniques, and that athletes are uncomfortable.
- These concerns are being reviewed and USA Gymnastics has decided that it is in everyone's best interests to not attend the Classic.
- At the earliest appropriate point, we wish to contact this medical professional for his perspective, and during this period we request he not communicate with USA Gymnastics personnel or athletes.

Once we have learned more about the conversation, I will advise you as quickly as possible about next steps. Please contact me at any time to discuss this issue.

Regards,

Steve



# EXHIBIT "G"

**Subject:** Fwd: Confidential  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 at 3:45:24 PM GMT-04:00  
**From:** Steve Penny  
**To:** Rhonda Faehn

Have a great day!

Regards,

Steve

Sent from my AT&T iPhone from somewhere in this wonderful world!

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Himsel, Scott D." [REDACTED]  
**Date:** July 22, 2015 at 12:49:06 PM EDT  
**To:** Steve Penny [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** "Connolly, Daniel J." [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Confidential

Steve:

Here is the first of two drop box emails from Dr. Nassar.

Best wishes,

Scott

Scott D. Himsel  
*Partner*

**Faegre Baker Daniels LLP**  
300 N. Meridian Street | Suite 2700 | Indianapolis, IN 46204, USA

**From:** Larry via Dropbox [mailto:no-reply@dropbox.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 11:27 AM  
**To:** Himsel, Scott D.  
**Subject:** Larry Nassar shared "ST ligament" with you



From Larry:

"Dear Scott,

Here is the drop box link showing the techniques that I do. I make these videos for educational purposes and used them to lecture frequently.

Amanda Jetter was one of the athletes on National Team that I used to demonstrate to her trainer Jamie Broz how to do the treatment. In addition, I sent a video to the physiotherapist for the Romanian Team to help Larissa Iordache (Romanian Olympian) and have shared these techniques/videos with medical staff members from many countries.

Please let me know if you have any problems with the download.

Thank you

Larry"

[Click here to view ST ligament](#)

(Larry shared these files using Dropbox. Enjoy!)

© 2015 Dropbox

# EXHIBIT "H"

**Subject:** Update

**Date:** Thursday, August 20, 2015 at 3:07:11 PM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** Lynn Raisman

**To:** Rhonda Faehn, Steve Penny

Larry sent Aly a congratulatory text after the meet this past weekend. Aly responded with another text saying thanks. She felt if she did not respond it would seem as if she was part of the investigation. I just wanted to keep you both in the loop.

Thanks,

Lynn

# EXHIBIT "I"

**Subject:** Re: Update

**Date:** Thursday, August 27, 2015 at 6:36:45 PM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** Steve Penny

**To:** Lynn Raisman

**CC:** Rhonda Faehn

Thanks Lynn. This one has distracted us a bit. We are reconnecting with FBI and I will keep you posted.

Have a great day!

Regards,

Steve

Sent from my AT&T iPhone from somewhere in this wonderful world!

On Aug 27, 2015, at 5:43 PM, Lynn Raisman [REDACTED] wrote:

Steve and Rhonda,

We wanted to touch base with you about the investigation and find out what if anything you are able to share at this point. We also want to reiterate that if the FBI needs to speak with Aly, please have them reach out to us directly. If they need to interview her in person, we want to push for the interview to be in Massachusetts. Aly wants to cooperate fully, but also wants to maintain her training regiment.

Obviously we've read about Marvin Sharp. In a number of news articles it is alleged the sexual misconduct/abuse was during physical therapy sessions. The similarity to Larry is disturbing.

Please let us know what steps are being taken and what you need from us.

Thanks,

Lynn and Rick

**Subject:** Update

**Date:** Thursday, August 27, 2015 at 5:43:03 PM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** Lynn Raisman

**To:** Steve Penny, Rhonda Faehn

Steve and Rhonda,

We wanted to touch base with you about the investigation and find out what if anything you are able to share at this point. We also want to reiterate that if the FBI needs to speak with Aly, please have them reach out to us directly. If they need to interview her in person, we want to push for the interview to be in Massachusetts. Aly wants to cooperate fully, but also wants to maintain her training regiment.

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Please let us know what steps are being taken and what you need from us.

Thanks,

Lynn and Rick



# EXHIBIT “J”

**Subject:** Re: Update

**Date:** Friday, September 4, 2015 at 11:17:25 AM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** Lynn Raisman

**To:** Steve Penny

**CC:** Rhonda Faehn

Is there any update?

Thanks,  
Lynn

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Have a great day!

Regards,

Steve

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Obviously we've read about Marvin Sharp. In a number of news articles it is alleged the sexual misconduct/abuse was during physical therapy sessions. The similarity to Larry is disturbing.

Please let us know what steps are being taken and what you need from us.

Thanks,

Lynn and Rick

# EXHIBIT "K"

**Subject:** Nassar

**Date:** Monday, September 28, 2015 at 12:34:36 PM GMT-04:00

**From:** Steve Penny

**To:** Rhonda Faehn

Monitor his FB please.

Have a great day!

Regards,

Steve

Sent from my AT&T iPhone from somewhere in this wonderful world!

# EXHIBIT "L"

**Subject:** Re: Congress  
**Date:** Monday, February 29, 2016 at 9:44:23 AM GMT-05:00  
**From:** Rhonda Faehn  
**To:** Cheryl Jarrett  
**Attachments:** 6A8553B0-1A41-4B89-BCB7-F7974AF7C95F[52].png, 6A8553B0-1A41-4B89-BCB7-F7974AF7C95F[64].png

Oh my. You will need to talk to Steve Penny about this. I cannot speak today as we are at camp in final selections for American Cup, Stuttgart and Gymnix. He had been dismissed from USA Gymnastics.

**Rhonda Faehn**

USA Gymnastics  
Sr. Vice President Women's Program  
132 E. Washington Street,  
Suite 700  
Indianapolis, IN 46204



---

**From:** Cheryl Jarrett  
**Date:** Monday, February 29, 2016 at 8:16 AM  
**To:** Rhonda Faehn  
**Subject:** Re: Congress

Good Morning,  
Can we please discuss this? Are you in the office today?  
Short answer is yes, Region 5 only and speaking on Concussions only. We have never been communicated to about not asking him.  
Thanks,  
Cheryl

**CHERYL JARRETT**

USA Gymnastics  
Vice-President Member Services



---

**From:** Rhonda Faehn  
**Date:** Sunday, February 28, 2016 at 10:49 PM  
**To:** Cheryl Jarrett  
**Subject:** Congress

Hi Cheryl,  
I have a question regarding Congress. Martha told me that Larry Nassar contacted her and said he was just sent a letter from USA Gymnastics requesting him to be a guest lecturer at the Congress. Is that true?  
Thanks,  
Rhonda



**Rhonda Faehn**

USA Gymnastics  
Sr. Vice President Women's Program  
132 E. Washington Street,  
Suite 700  
Indianapolis, IN 46204



**EXHIBIT "M"**





NOV. 21, 2016



Maybe: Gina nichols

iMessage

Mon, Nov 21, 10:25 PM

FBI wasn't notified till after a year we reported the sexual abuse. Steve penny told me to keep it quiet and USA gymnastics was doing their own investigation. Steve penny was quoted saying they report things immediately to the police. He told me they didn't think think the police didn't need to be involved immediately. Hmmm FBI did not get contacted by USA gymnastics till this'd June. We contacted you over a year before that. Other members of Usa team feel same way. What is really going on?

Who is this?

Gina nichols



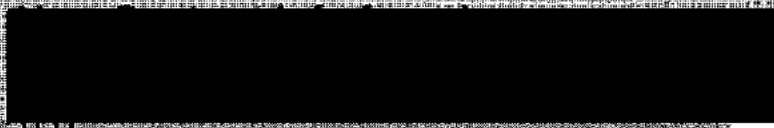
iMessage



< 124



Maybe: Gina nichols



that!

Yes they did and I reported it to Steve asap within minutes and he said he turned it into the FBI

I will call him tomorrow and ask what is going on but he always told me he handled it and that it was an active investigation and he wasn't allowed to speak about the FBI or the investigation

Nope I have talked to the FBI and do have the raismans and they were not contacted until this June!!

I wonder if he had local law enforcement on it?

Didn't a Minnesota investigator come out and speak w you all?



iMessage





Maybe: Gina nichols



enforcement on it?

Didn't a Minnesota investigator come out and speak w you all?

Sorry, I can't talk right now.

Too much to text. Call me when you can.

Do u want me to call u now or tomorrow?

Now

Tue, Nov 22, 5:32 PM

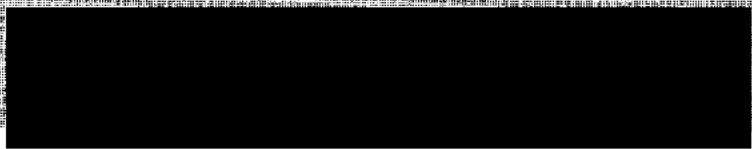
Steve Penny text me and I have nothing to say to him. I did talk to FBI and am on page with them.

OK I will tell him





Maybe: Gina nichols



Tue, Nov 22, 5:32 PM

Steve Penny text me and I have nothing to say to him. I did talk to FBI and am on page with them.

OK I will tell him

No I rather you not say anything to him.

Ok I won't

I like you Rhonda and would prefer you not be party to his.

Don't even tell him you Hurd from me again.

I understand Gina... I won't say anything

Read 11/22/16



iMessage



Mon, Nov 21, 11:03 PM

Trying to call u.. just got long call from Gina nichols

It's urgent that we speak

I will try u tomorrow at 8am regarding multiple Ntl team member lawsuits coming

Tue, Nov 22, 6:37 AM

Call me

Tue, Nov 22, 12:41 PM

I have contacted the FBI to have them connect with both Gina and Lynn.

Great thank you!

I will keep you posted.

Trying to figure out next best



I will keep you posted.

Trying to figure out next best steps.

Tue, Nov 22, 5:38 PM

This is what Gina just texted to me... Steve Penny text me and I have nothing to say to him. I did talk to FBI and am on page with them.

But she just told me she didn't want me to say anything to u... so u can't say I told u this

She said doesn't want me to get involved and told me to say I never heard from her

Do you have one more second.

Sorry to miss you. We can talk tomorrow.



iMessage





Steve

Tue, Nov 22, 8:16 PM

I did speak with the agent who spoke with Gina today. I believe he spoke with others as well.

Ok

Thu, Dec 1, 5:58 PM

When do you arrive?

We were supposed to be there at 9pm we are now delayed until 11 pm

Is there an earlier flight. MLR is getting in around 10

She was on the same flight as us change it?

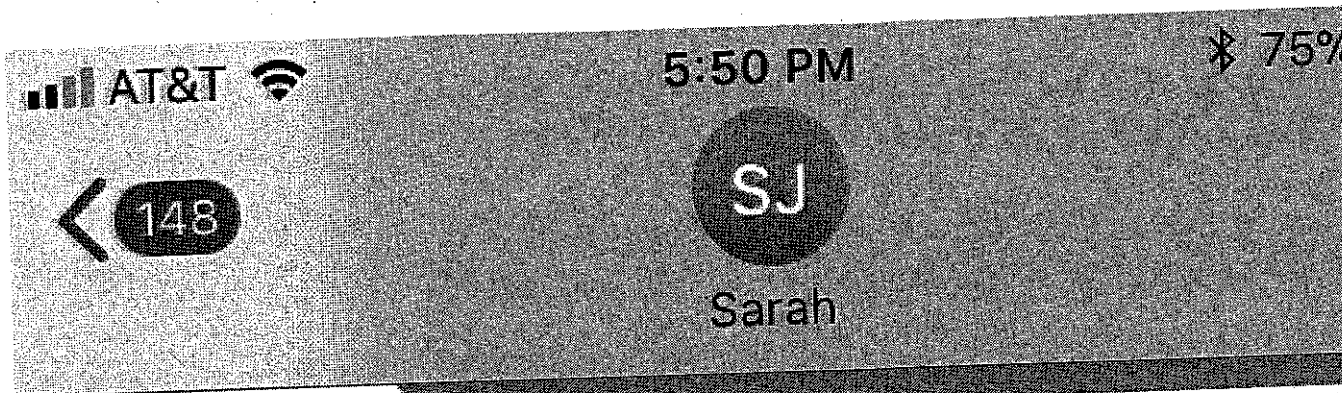
We are getting on the one that gets in now at 10:20



iMessage



Subject: (none)  
Date: Friday, February 9, 2018 at 4:54:17 PM Eastern Standard Time  
From: Rhonda Faehn  
To: Rhonda Faehn  
Attachments: IMG\_8531.PNG



It is so crazy how manipulating he was. I spent my whole flight back from Hawaii crying while watching and reading a lot of them. I know you don't get told much, but I really am thankful you were brought on as VP when you did! Who knows if anybody would have believed me like you did and acted on it!



# APPENDIX 1

Bridgette Caquatto  
May 29, 2018

Dear Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security,

Attn: The Hon. John Thune, Chairman

I competed in the sport of gymnastics for 17 years. I spent five years on the USA National team and four years competing at the University of Florida. My most memorable years of competing in the sport of gymnastics was in 2013, 2014 and 2015. During those three impactful years in the sport of gymnastics, Rhonda Faehn was my coach.

I clearly remember the day I went on my unofficial recruiting visit to the University of Florida. Everyone said there would be multiple influences that would help you decide which college you will choose. For me, Rhonda was the main reason I decided to commit to UF. From our first meeting and her first hug, I knew she would be like a mother to me when I was far away from home, that was important to me. Rhonda never failed at that role and was my role model and mentor throughout my collegiate career. She knew our goals and helped us turn them into a reality. It was clear that she was passionate about the sport and that she wanted the best for her athletes. Rhonda led and coached me to my biggest achievement yet, winning 3 consecutive National Championships in 2013, 2014 and 2015. After our third win, I was absolutely crushed to hear she would be taking a job at USA gymnastics. I cried for a week straight because I felt a positive and influential coach like Rhonda could not be replaced. In the end, I was very happy to see her follow her lifetime goals because she had helped me achieve mine.

Winning those National Championships were not easy. Along the way came a lot of injuries, luckily Rhonda was always looking out for her athletes. With her mindset like this, I always felt comfortable talking to Rhonda about my daily aches and pains. She was always willing to modify assignments for me and truly looked out for the safety of each athlete on our team. Along with endless injuries came challenging academics, minimal social life and team conflict. Rhonda was proactive about these obstacles. While having Rhonda as a coach, I mastered lifelong skills like effective communication, time management, thriving in stressful situations and being adaptable. I valued that if Rhonda did not know how to help us, she would find someone that could help us. She always went out of her way to provide the best for my teammates and I.

Outside of the gym, Rhonda is a sweet person that loves her family! While at UF, she would always have us over for fun holiday parties that were very memorable. We always looked forward to spending time at her house and interacting with her family. It was really nice to have a coach that cared for her athletes inside and outside of the gym. She made sure we had a healthy balance in our lives and pressed that gymnastics did not define us. I can not thank Rhonda enough for encouraging our team to give back to our community. I completed endless hours of community service while at UF and experienced several life changing moments. Community service is something I am very passionate about and I will continue to serve my community in the future.

Altogether, Rhonda created endless opportunity in my life and I have watched her do it for others as well. I would never question her character or integrity. I am thankful we are still friends to this day, even though she is no longer my coach. We have kept our relationship going since she left UF in 2015 and I plan on keeping it that way in the future. Thank you for all you have done for me, Rhonda. Your impact on my life has been priceless!

Best,

Bridgette Caquatto

**Cheryl Hamilton**  
**National Technical Committee Chairman**  
**USA Gymnastics**



The Honorable John Thune, Chairman  
Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection,  
Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security

May 29, 2018

Dear Senator Thune,

This letter is in support of Rhonda Faehn, former Senior Vice-President , USAG Women's Program. I am currently an International Brevet gymnastics judge and the USAG National Technical Committee Chairman. I have been involved in the sport as a competitor, gymnastics club owner, coach, and judge for over fifty years.

My knowledge of Ms. Faehn goes back to her coaching days at the University of Florida. I have always respected her as a coach who always seemed to put the health, both physical and emotional, of her gymnasts first, I was pleased to see her join the USAG Women's Program.

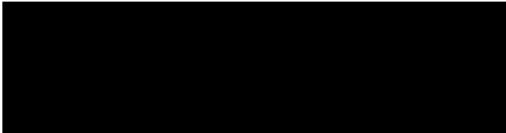
My experience with Rhonda at USAG further confirmed the respect and trust I have for her as a person to help lead our organization. While her duties did not require her to directly interact with the individual gymnasts, she always showed genuine concern for putting their safety and emotional well-being first. In a highly competitive and internationally visible sport she was never a "win at all costs" person. I feel her character and professionalism drove her to help everyone in the organization to reach their fullest potential. All of this while treating everyone with respect, dignity, and the feeling that she really cares about us as individuals.

Having worked closely with Rhonda for the past three years, I have grown to admire and respect her passion for the sport of gymnastics and her desire to represent the best the sport has to offer. I have no doubt that her primary concern was always the welfare of the gymnasts and the reputation of USA Gymnastics.

Respectfully,

Cheryl Hamilton

**Cheryl Hamilton  
National Technical Committee Chairman  
USA Gymnastics**



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Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection,  
Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security

May 29, 2018

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Respectfully,

  
Cheryl Hamilton

To: Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security

Attn: The Hon. John Thune, Chairman

My name is Gina Chiles, the mother of Jordan Chiles- current national team member. I wanted to send this information to you regarding Rhonda Faehn. Although we can't speak to the specific situation of USAG or Rhonda's involvement in the ongoing issues plaguing USA Gymnastics and the USOC, I can speak only of our experience with Rhonda regarding a very serious incident that transpired with our daughter at a training camp in March 2017.

On March 25, 2017 during a selection camp for Jesolo Italy, there was an incident that happened at the former National Team Training Center. After the evening training session that was set to announce the team for Jesolo, I received a phone call from Erika Bakacs- Jordan's (now) former coach. She was not happy, I could tell she was angry as she told me Jordan had not made the team and she went into the office and let Valerie and Rhonda know what she thought of them and the situation. She was also not making any sense- slurring her words to the point I had to stop her mid-sentence. I am familiar with that behavior, so I asked if she was drunk. She got upset as she slurred her words harshly said NO! I asked her several more times...each time telling her that she was not normal and that I could tell she was under the influence of something. I kept asking how she could be drunk because practice had just got out. While I argued with Erika I received a phone call on the other line that showed a number with "Huntsville" as the incoming caller. I told her coach I needed to take the call and that I would call her back.

It was Rhonda. She called to explain that she had some upsetting news but needed me to be aware of what transpired. She explained that Erika was under the influence of what smelled heavily of alcohol. She explained that Erika was acting irrational during and directly after practice and that several concerned coaches and other athletes came to Valeri and to her to report Erika's behavior. She explained to me in as much detail as she had what Erika had done and what the other coaches/athletes reported- this validated what her and Valeri witnessed. Rhonda apologized but explained that Erika was not safe to travel to an international competition with and that Jordan was sacrificed (didn't get named to the team) as a result. She said that Erika would be banned from National Team Camp and National Team activities for behaviors that put Jordan at risk. Not just alcohol related, but also rules that were set up to protect the athlete that Erika would not follow. She explained that she would call Jordan in to explain that at any point for the remainder of the camp (final morning 1/2-day practice) if Jordan felt uncomfortable or was left unattended by Erika, she was to come directly to Rhonda or use a hand gesture so that Rhonda could make sure Jordan was ok. The plan was to make sure Jordan was escorted (driven) to the airport with Erika and that they would not tell Erika anything regarding her being banned until after Jordan arrived safely home to make sure Erika did not retaliate or put Jordan at further risk.

This is the quoted email Rhonda sent to Erika & Erika's boss Kevin regarding the incident on 3/29/17:

*Hello Kevin and Erika,*

*I am writing this e-mail to follow up on the situation that took place at our March National team camp with Erika. We are all responsible to create an environment that protects the safety and well-being of our athletes. Concerns were reported to me by multiple coaches as well as athletes attending the camp. The complaints stated that on the last evening of camp, Friday March 25, 2017, there was suspicion of Erika in an altered state, slurring her words, while smelling heavily of alcohol. Valeri Liukin and I also suspected at the end of practice when she entered the office, that she was slurring her words. I did call*

*Gina Chiles directly after the training to notify her of what had happened. Erika was spoken to a few months ago about her conduct in regards to her suspicion of being under the influence of something as well as her continually leaving Jordan unattended during training. This directly violates our Code of conduct and is unacceptable behavior. This was documented in her USA gymnastics report a few months ago and initially, Erika said she would not be attending camps anymore with Jordan. She was told that if another such occasion occurred, she would risk suspension and/or removal from National team activities. Athlete welfare is USA Gymnastics top priority, and given the serious nature of the allegations, it is in the best interest of both parties that Erika Bakacs may not participate in any national team activities until a conclusion is reached with respect to these allegations.*

*I am currently out of the country and will not return until April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please let me know if you have any questions.*

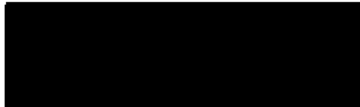
*Sincerely,  
Rhonda*

As a parent, I can only state that in my situation Rhonda acted in the best interest of Jordan. She communicated what happened immediately after the incident and it was clear to me that she was trying to protect Jordan from a dangerous situation. Jordan had been with that coach for 10 years and had we not been made aware of the situation that transpired that day, she may still be in that unhealthy and unsafe coaching relationship. It has been more than a year and we are still waiting on resolution regarding the pending investigation of the incident, but for months after Rhonda continued to give status updates when I made inquiries.

Thank you,



Gina R. Chiles



Mary A Wright  
5/29/2018

To:  
Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security.  
Attn: The Hon. John Thune, Chairman

My name is Mary Wright and I have known Rhonda Faehn, as a successful elite athlete, a nationally winning college coach, and as the Senior Vice President of USA Gymnastics.

Before USA Gymnastics formed a National Training Camp based at the Karolyi Ranch, they hired me as the National Consultant. In this position, I went to Europe, representing USA Gymnastics, to learn the compulsory routines which were changed every four years. My job was twofold and included:

1. To run training camps for coaches, judges and athletes to teach them the compulsory beam and floor routines; and
2. To go into the gyms of the national team gymnasts and coaches on a regular basis to consult with the coaches and help prepare the athletes for competency with these routines.

During these years, I was typically on the road for weeks at a time, visiting the gyms where the nationally ranked elite gymnasts trained. Additionally, we got together 2-3 times each year with the nationally ranked gymnasts to verify the proficiency level of these compulsory routines and to also verify the proficiency of the optional routines.

During this period, I was able to watch Rhonda Faehn as a gymnast. She always exemplified true sportsmanship, an incredible work ethic and an ability to make changes and perform to her very best. She always demonstrated a passion and love for gymnastics. Her leadership abilities as an athlete garnered the respect of her team mates as they took the floor at the 1988 Olympics. She lead by example and compassion as her team excelled to a bronze medal win.

I watched her grow into an incredible coach as she took a mediocre college program and developed them into a National Championship team. As their coach, you could see the mutual respect the athletes had for their coach, and the coach for the athletes. It was this embracing of their talent, spirit and drive, that set them apart and allowed the Florida team to maintain a top national ranking every year that Rhonda was their coach. This is not an easy feat. It takes courage, tenacity, perseverance, passion and above all, an honesty in the ownership of each individual on the team, both athletes and staff, in their personal daily effort, to achieve this success. It is a tribute to the leadership of this team, under Rhonda Faehn, that resulted in collegiate National Championship titles.

When Rhonda was selected as the Senior Vice President of USA Gymnastics, the gymnastics community, especially the Elite community in which she was directly involved, was ecstatic. Her leadership capabilities were evident with her past performances both as a gymnast and as a coach. The elite gymnastics program was set for golden opportunities under her leadership, as she lead the team both on and off the podium.

I had the pleasure of coaching the New Zealand Gymnastics team from 2015 until the present, and was fortunate that our team was placed in the same subdivision as the the USA team at the PacRim competition in Everett and the Olympic Games in Rio. This meant that we trained together everyday, twice daily at both of these competitions. I have been directly involved with elite level gymnastics in the USA and recently, in NZ and have personally had 11 athletes make the Olympic Teams since 1976, some winning Olympic medals. I understand what goes into



training elite level gymnasts and Rhonda Faehn consistently displayed incredible leadership and passion for her gymnasts. She was like a "little mother hen" as she kept her girls together, answered their every need, made sure that they were all on the bus, taking care of them, as they were her own children. Being an Olympian means that you have sacrificed daily and worked extremely hard for the successes you have. Rhonda understands their needs both in training and on the competition floor. She was and is "exactly" what the USA Gymnastics elite program needs. Her number one criteria has always been "athletes first" and as such has taken care of them emotionally and physically with compassion and love.

One day in training at the Rio Olympics, Rhonda displayed the most encouraging moment I have ever witnessed. The gymnast from Venezuela who was one of the top bar workers in the world, had been struggling with her training on bars. She was actually in a different group from both the USA team and the NZ team. The coach from Venezuela asked me if his athlete could train with our girls just a few days before the Olympic competition began. I asked the other countries in our rotation if this was OK with them. They all agreed. The athlete from Venezuela could barely put two skills together as she practiced with our group. I asked my athlete and the athletes from different countries in our group if they would help her, so we started cheering her on every skill. We pushed her hard to succeed, and soon she was making her skills. The USA girls and coaches noticed what we were doing and soon Rhonda had them all cheering for her and pushing her to succeed. Soon she made one routine, then she made another routine. We all cheered for her as she overcame this psychological wall that had prevented her from doing what she needed to do. She went on to make Bar Finals at the Olympics two days later. A few days after she had competed, she sought me out at the Olympic village and told me that she had completely given up on herself and could not push herself past this wall that encompassed her. She told me that when we all stood by the bars and cheered for her, girls and coaches from NZ and the USA and others, that she found that Olympic moment to conquer her demons. That is what the Olympics are all about. When Rhonda inspired the USA girls to support a struggling athlete from another country and reach past nationalistic endeavors and have the compassion and understanding of what our athletes go through to reach this point.....then you demonstrate true leadership, true love for this sport and true love for the athletes.....whoever they are, no matter what country you represent. I don't think that Rhonda even realizes the impact she had. I know I didn't, until the athlete from Venezuela told me. Rhonda was just doing what every great leader would do. Inspire each of us to be the best that we can be, even at the Olympic Games, especially at the Olympic Games. All the while knowing, that this athlete was a true contender for a medal for another country.

I have been fortunate to know Rhonda as an athlete, coach and Senior Vice President of the USA Gymnastics national team program. She has always demonstrated honesty and integrity in her dealings with everyone around her...athletes, coaches and parents. I am honored to have been a part of her journey and equally honored to stand beside her to support her. She has always demonstrated exemplary service to the gymnastics community with her honesty, passion and expertise.

Sincerely,

Mary A Wright

May 28, 2018

Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security  
Attn: The Hon. John Thune, Chairman

I, Kittia Carpenter, am writing to you on behalf of Rhonda Faehn. I have known Rhonda for over a decade both as the Head coach for the University of Florida and more recently as the VP of the Women's Program of USA Gymnastics. In all that time I have always observed her as an honest, professional, caring and effective administrator. She was responsible for managing sports programs in gymnastics and she performed that responsibility admirably. The three consecutive NCAA Championships her teams won while she was the head coach at Florida are a confirmation of that professionalism. And yet as impressive as that record is that is not what I think of when I think of Rhonda. What I think of is the care and concern that she has always shown to the people associated with those gymnastics programs.

I had the pleasure of traveling with Rhonda and the USA Team to the 2015 World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland, and to the 2016 Jesolo Cup in Jesolo, Italy because I had an athlete on both of those teams. Rhonda was the delegation leader for the USA Team and she was outstanding. Marta Karolyi coached the gymnasts and Rhonda was in charge of everything else. She tended to the coach's needs, answered any questions openly and honestly, and she looked after the gymnasts when she was able to. The trip to Jesolo, included a short visit to the beach. This should have not have been noteworthy, but was a welcome and appreciated new gesture for the gymnasts attending the competition. Rhonda believed the gymnasts should enjoy the culture and sights during their travels as well as enjoying the competition. She believed that care for the athletes was as important as the preparation for the competition.

Rhonda was also present at the USAG National Team Camps which I have also attended with my athletes. She always addressed each coach by name and with an attitude of caring and honesty to any question. Her touch on your shoulder showed her understanding and concern when a coach was feeling a little down after their gymnast performed below expectations. Her approach also included words of encouragement and a smile to show her appreciation for the effort the gymnast was making and her support to continue improving. She made you and your gymnast feel you were valued and an integral part of USA Gymnastics. These gestures, both big and small, were not required in her administrative position at USA Gymnastics. They were simply a reflection of her character and priorities and an expression of the care and concern she felt toward the gymnasts and coaches alike.

Respectfully,

Kittia Carpenter

May 29, 2018

Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security

Attn: The Hon. John Thune, Chairman

I have known Rhonda Faehn since May 2006. As an athlete seeking a scholarship, Rhonda recruited me to attend and compete for the University of Florida gymnastics team. I trained and competed under Coach Faehn's guidance from 2007 to 2011. I was a 4-year letter winner, 2-time All-American, all-SEC team selection, and a 4-year scholastic All-American.

I consider it a privilege to have been an athlete under Rhonda's guidance and leadership. She is a woman for whom I have the utmost respect and greatly admire. The way she conducted herself, worked alongside administrators, coaches, trainers, and athletes, and represented the University of Florida, is the way I strive to be as a coach.

Rhonda treated me as an adult, as an individual, and an important part of her team. She was always available to talk about life, school, and gymnastics. She always encouraged me as a student first and athlete second. This was very important in my college years as that priority helped prepare me for life after competitive gymnastics.

Rhonda's character is what I admire most about her. She is a woman of impeccable standards and her honesty is unwavering. She always told the truth even through difficult situations. She made decisions that were in the best interest of her athletes, looking beyond the sport. One personal example is when I suffered a stress fracture to my foot my freshman year. Rhonda was the first to encourage and assure me that the best option for my career was to have surgery. She promptly called my parents that evening to make certain they knew the plan for recovery. My parents always appreciated Rhonda's communication and initiative to take care of me.

Rhonda always took proper precautions in the gym to ensure the safety of her athletes. She carefully implemented training plans, rehabilitation exercises, and rotated competitive line ups in order to give athletes' bodies proper rest when needed. Rhonda stayed in close contact with our athletic trainer and adjusted practice to the needs and health of her athletes.

Rhonda is one of the most genuine, kind-hearted, caring, and intelligent women I know. To this day, she is someone to whom I reach out for honest advice and encouragement. Her character and integrity are above reproach.

Sincerely,



Alicia Goodwin

5/29/2018

Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security  
Attn: The Honorable John Thune, Chairman

Dear Chairman Thune and Members of the Committee,

I am voluntarily writing on behalf and in support of Rhonda Faehn. I have known Rhonda as a young gymnast from Minnesota whom I first saw compete as a Class 1 gymnast in Dallas, Texas in 1984. Her coach was Jonathan Tobler and his gymnastics club was named Jonathan's Living Seagulls. I have known Rhonda practically her whole life. She competed in the USGF (United States Gymnastics Federation now USAG) system just as I did. I began my own journey in 1964 as an 8 1/2 year old young boy. Please find my CV attached.

Rhonda was one of the first kids during that time to leave her family, state and club to train with Martha and Bela Karolyi in Houston, Texas. I too had 3 Elite athletes at that time. One of them was named Corinne Chee. I interacted with coaches and athletes at training camps during that era. Rhonda was a workhorse. Always quiet...always working. Under Karolyi's tutelage Rhonda went on to achieve being US Championships vault champion in 1987&1988. Additionally, Rhonda achieved qualifying to and competing on the 1987 Pan American Games Team which took the Team Gold and was a 1987 US World Championship Team Member to Rotterdam, Netherlands where she was our highest US Team placer. Names you might be familiar with at that time which Rhonda competed against were Aurelia Dobre (ROU) and her teammate Daniela Silivas who are now coaching in the United States. And one of Rhonda's USA teammates was Melissa Marlowe.

Rhonda was an alternate US Olympic Team Member in 1988 to Seoul. Although an alternate she still traveled with the team. I was there. A funny story now in retrospect but, serious at the time, Bela never knew the rules in all the years he coached. His wife Martha was the brains of all things rules. At that time athletes were not allowed on the podium unless they were competing. Only coaches could do that if they had to move equipment...which was a rule. Kelly Garrison mounted the uneven bars for her routine. The spring board in place was still sitting. Spring boards were not allowed in the field of play. So Bela sent Rhonda up on the podium to move the spring board. Ellen Berger, Chief Judge and from East Germany (she despised us) penalized our team under the rules and the Team penalty was 2.0 points. This team total deduction kept the USA out of 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Team Bronze. Later, when accosted by the media, Rhonda handled herself with grace, dignity and a smile at the debacle. Rhonda was incorrectly blamed for the debacle...and she never spoke a word to the contrary...even to this day.

After the Olympics which then ended Rhonda's club career Rhonda went on Full Athletic Scholarship to UCLA. She had a stellar career and went on to achieve NCAA All American status. Rhonda was put on a medical her senior year due to prior injuries.

In her senior year she became "student assistant coach" of her own team at UCLA under Val Kondos. It was this year that I had the pleasure of interacting with Rhonda as a young adult as UCLA was recruiting one of my athlete's...the above mentioned Corinne Chee..to attend UCLA.

Rhonda's genuine love for the sport and concern for the athletes well being really struck me. In retrospect, much of what she stated all the way back to 1992 held true for today. Corinne shared with me at that time after her recruiting trip "I really want to go to UCLA. The team is great and someone that's injured named "Rhonda" was honest about everything having to do with being a college gymnast and she gets it". Little did Corinne know and I shared that I had known Rhonda since she was a young child. Corinne went on to attend UCLA on full athletic scholarship. I kept in contact with Corinne all thru college. All she talked about was a gymnast from Canada that she became best friends with AND Rhonda said this and Rhonda said that. All the time. After college, about 1994 I recall, she went to coach club in Pennsylvania. She went back to her roots. She began learning how to be a coach and earning her chops. She worked under Slava Glazunov who currently is coaching Morgan Hurd on the USA National Team. How small our sport is...Slava came to work under Rhonda when she was still in her position with USA Gymnastics 22 years later. I didn't speak with Rhonda during this time. But the conversation coming out of that region was that Rhonda "was the real deal". Young, ambitious, trustworthy and an athlete advocate. Apparently, she had called out a handful of coaches at competitions for verbally abusing young girls. Rhonda was young and brash and was not intimidated. And she did it with a smile.

She then went on to a short stint at University of Maryland for a couple of years. Rhonda was being touted as an up and comer and was loved by the athletes for her sincerity and genuine concern for their well being...especially their grades.

Rhonda then went on to University of Nebraska where she became the assistant associate head coach with Dan Kendig. I've know Dan his entire coaching career. Again, Rhonda was recruiting one of my athletes. My interaction with her as she was now a seasoned professional was extraordinary. Her care and concern for the athletes well being was now written in stone. Her mission statement. And again...the grades. She was committed to every gymnast graduating from college. Academics before gymnastics. And then "safety first" which encompassed many components of our sport. Rhonda was committed to the safety, care and well being of her athletes.

Then came the opportunity of a lifetime for a young coach. She became the Head coach at University of Florida. Her enthusiasm was infectious. I sincerely thought that this would be the end destination in her gymnastics journey. I witnessed her in action with her athletes at competitions. A true sisterhood. Rhonda was clearly in her element. The athletes loved and respected her. You could see it. It was palpable. Then came the day we interacted yet again. Rhonda contacted me to begin to recruit two of my athletes. MacKenzie and Bridgey Caquatto. While in club MacKenzie qualified to Olympic Trials in 2008 and made a World Championship Team afterward. Bridgey was Pan American Games All Around Champion. Both were Junior and then Senior USA National Team Members. All Rhonda spoke about at that time was how much she loved her job, her team, gymnastics, her commitment to their safety and well being, that they would leave college happy and satisfied with their experience with her and become productive members of society without any scars....and again...the GRADES! Rhonda was obsessed with their grades and that family and academics came before gymnastics. So much in fact that when MacKenzie was having issues in high school Rhonda took it upon herself to advise MacKenzie and support us in that there was "life after gymnastics" and that grades mattered. Rhonda did not have to do that at all. But these kids...they were like her own family and she genuinely cared...and all the time. Her mantra was consistent every time. Family, academics and gymnastics. Under her mentorship University of Florida went on to win 3 NCAA

Women's Gymnastics Championships and become one of only six schools to do so in women's gymnastics. No wonder then that the next chapter was even better. How could it be? In 2015 Rhonda took over as Senior Vice President of the Women's Program at USA Gymnastics. Rhonda came in to the position with ease. She effused not only the USA Gymnastics Mission Statement to protect athletes' safety and welfare but also that of her own. Her enthusiasm and trust permeated the ENTIRE Women's program. Athlete safety and well being free from abuse was her mantra. The coaching staff knew it to be true. She demonstrated such on EVERY occasion that involved the athletes. Moreover, the athletes themselves were ignited by Rhonda's demeanor. I only had a short experience with her in this position as I had another Elite athlete at the beginning of her start. Payton Richards. Her Elite dreams and aspirations cut short when Doctors discovered a tumor (sheathing tumor) in the sheathing of her sciatic nerve. Rhonda was the FIRST to call me when she learned the news. She was genuinely upset at the news. As if Payton was her own child. She stated "Payton's health comes first. Forget about gymnastics. If she's able to return to the Elite level we'll discuss it then..Keep me posted and if there is anything I can do. You see, Rhonda also knew that she recruited Payton to Florida in what was one of her final recruiting efforts before departing Florida. I'm happy to report that Payton did not lose her leg. She recovered. Dropped back a Level from Elite. Has gone on to achieve being Level 10 National All Around Champion and individual event champion on several events. Rhonda has been with her every step of the way. Until two weeks ago...

What has happened in our sport over the past three years at the hands of a fake Doctor needs no explanation before you today. Rhonda never wavered in her duties as Program Director. She reported what she knew when she learned it to her superior in June of 2015. That's good enough for me as a club owner, a coach, a husband, a father of three adult children and grandfather of three. Many others feel the same way but are now afraid to speak publicly on behalf of Rhonda for fear of retaliation. I'm not. Since I've known Rhonda in a position of authority, where I quite literally watched her grow up to become the human being she is today, Rhonda has been the epitome of all that is right with gymnastics. And by all accounts she is a fabulous mother of two boys. I don't think her husband will argue. Or her own parents who I've known since Rhonda was twelve years old. In her position at USA Gymnastics she is second to no one in her own personal mission statement to protect the safety and well being of ALL athletes and free of abuse. It's in her blood. Her fabric. Her soul. Rhonda grew up in gymnastics and became an advocate for gymnastics and all of its participants...the children. I defy anyone to state anything to the contrary. And that INCLUDES all of the athletes that have been under her watchful eye and care just the past three years. Just ask their parents.

Sincerely,



Donald McPherson

# CURRICULUM VITAE

**Donald V. McPherson**



## **Education & Achievements**

- Former Junior & Senior National Team Member U.S.T.A
- Former National Competitor- trampoline, tumbling, double mini, & synchro
- Former International Competitor- trampoline, tumbling, double mini
- Numerous competitive awards & accolades between 1965-1975
- Guest Coach & Clinician at numerous clubs, camps, J.O. & Elite training camps from 1970 to present.
- Attended Southwest Missouri State on scholarship and was Assistant Women's Gymnastics Coach under Dr. Charles 'Chic' Johnson 1975-1977.
- Attended George Williams College on scholarship as 'student assistant' and was Assistant Women's Gymnastics Coach under Nora Campbell 1978-1980.
- Established Aerial Gymnastics Club in July 1977. Owner, Director, & Head Coach
- Awarded 'Coach of the Year' several times.
- Awarded 'Contributor of the Year' several times
- Awarded U.S.A.G. Service Award 1992
- Co-author & contributor to 'The Bail Swing' published in 'Technique'
- Co-author & contributor to "Twisting" & "Twisting Bar Dismounts" published in Technique
- Co-founded 'Region V Training Camps' in 1988. These camps and their concepts have been modeled throughout the US. Camp Director, Coach, & Clinician numerous times since its inception.
- Coached numerous Individual Event & All-Around Champions at the State, Regional, National & International level both boys and girls.
- Have served on the USAG Illinois State Board since 1986 as Safety Chairman
- Have represented USAG and my country as an International Coach with my National Team Members.
- Over 150 Aerial Gym Club gymnasts, both boys & girls, have been awarded full athletic scholarships at various colleges throughout the USA.
- USAG Professional Member since its inception.
- USAG National Safety Certifier and recognized by my peers as an expert coach
- USAG Congress- Clinician, Lecturer, & Volunteer
- USAG Safety/Risk Management Review Board Member
- Inducted into Illinois Lifetime Achievement Award 2008
- Had athlete qualify to 2008 Olympic Trials
- Guest Speaker Loyola Sports Medicine Update 2011 With Course Directors Neeru Jayanthi MD & Pietro Tonino MD- Stritch School of Medicine.
- USA Gymnastics Advisory Board Member

**I have owned and operated gymnastics schools for 41 years. I have coached all levels of gymnastics, both boys and girls, ranging from 3 year-olds to Elite (Olympic) athletes. I have acted as a USA National Team coach, both nationally and internationally.**

**I am a national speaker and clinician. I have given presentations on topics ranging from how to teach certain high level gymnastics elements, lawsuits in the sport of gymnastics, eating disorders, physical preparation for competitive gymnastics, emotional as well as sexual abuse in the sport of gymnastics and many other issues as they arise.**

**I am the Illinois USAG Safety Chair. I am consulted nationally as to safety practices in the sport of gymnastics, safety practices in gymnastics club facilities and advocating for and writing certification letters to city townships and their zoning committee's across the country for gymnastics club owners in pursuit of 'Certificates of Occupancy' where certain building and fire codes must be met.**

**While I am recognized as an expert by my peers and colleagues in the gymnastics profession, I have also qualified as an expert in litigation matters prosecuted in both the United States and Canada. Since 1979, I have been retained as an expert in more than four hundred cases in which I have reviewed plaintiff and defendant briefs, written expert opinions and in many of those cases I have testified before a court.**





To: Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security

Attn: The Hon. John Thune, Chairman

I am writing this letter to share my support of Rhonda Faehn while at The University of Florida and most currently her position with USA Gymnastics.

My name is Mary Lee Tracy, President of Cincinnati Gymnastics and 25 years as a USA National Team Coach. I have been involved with Rhonda for about 7 years. When she was the Head Coach at Florida I had the utmost respect for her work and her leadership with the Gators. For many years I wanted one of my athletes to get a scholarship there to be coached by Rhonda. Well it finally happened and 2 were recruited! Shortly after Rhonda was offered the position at USA Gymnastics. One of my athletes decided not to go to Florida due to Rhonda not being there. She is one of the most well respected coaches in NCAA.

Two weeks after Rhonda was named Vice President, she was on her first trip to Pan Am Games and so was I with one of my athletes. I was so impressed the way that she stepped right in took a leadership role with the coaches and athletes that was well received! Rhonda passed everyone's inspection primarily due to how much she cared about all of us as people and athletes/ coaches. For the first time in years we were allowed to go into the village, shop, and walk around for short periods after training sessions. Our USA team was successful, had a lot of fun and gained a new leader.

For the past two years Rhonda has been put in some unbelievably tough situations and she has stood tall and strong when many others would have said, "I wasn't even here when all of this happened." But instead she held us all together, she reached out when

she needed to and worked very hard to be clear, honest and transparent in her decision making. I did not always agree with some of her ideas or final decisions but I respected them due to the character she had show over the past 2 years.

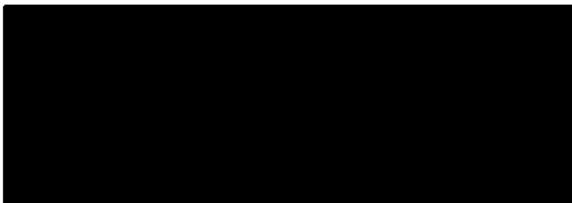
The athletes and coaches were so disappointed, upset and angry at the decision to let Rhonda go after she had been THE GLUE during this awful period in our sport. With very little support from the governing body due to their focus in other areas she maintained a very positive outlook with the USA Jr. and Sr. National Team when everything was falling apart. Rhonda kept all of us focusing forward and believing that in time we would be back together again in all aspects of our sport.

Rhonda is an amazing human being and I am a strong believer in the person she is and the ground of integrity that she stands on. This has been my experience. Thank you \_\_\_\_\_ for listening!

Respectfully,

*Mary Lee Tracy*

CINCINNATI GYMNASTICS



[www.cincinnati-gymnastics.com](http://www.cincinnati-gymnastics.com)



...where kids go to have fun!