



## Referee Quarterly Newsletter

### March 2025

Welcome to the quarterly newsletter from the U.S. Soccer Refereeing Department. We have a massive edition for you, catching up on everything refereeing from the last three months, with the latest updates in the referee community, and continuing education opportunities.

If someone you know is interested in becoming a referee for the first time, click [HERE](#) for more information.

## Refereeing Spotlight

### Fernando G. Alvarez Referee Champion Award

At the U.S. Soccer Annual General Meeting Awards Banquet on Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, **Don Wilbur** was named as the recipient of the inaugural Fernando G. Alvarez Referee Champion Award, presented in partnership with Official Sports International, in recognition of his decades-long commitment to developing and mentoring referees at all levels of the game. In attendance at the event, to celebrate Dr. Wilbur's recognition, were the four children of the late Mr. Alvarez.

With a career spanning more than 50 years, Don has played a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of referees. As an educator and mentor, he has gone beyond the technical aspects of officiating, emphasizing mental resilience, ethical leadership, and personal development. His innovative approach to mental preparation in refereeing was ahead of its time, ensuring officials were not only knowledgeable but also mentally equipped to handle the pressures of the game.

Don's contributions extend far beyond the classroom. He has actively worked to provide resources to referees in underserved areas, personally collecting and delivering referee uniforms to developing regions in Central America and Africa. His unwavering commitment to fairness, integrity, and the growth of the game has made him a respected figure in the global refereeing community.

In addition to his on-field and mentorship contributions, Don has been a tireless advocate for referee development, fostering a positive and supportive environment. His encouragement and guidance have helped countless referees advance their careers, and his influence continues to shape the sport.

The Fernando G. Alvarez Referee Champion Award was created to honor past, present, and future champions of refereeing. The award is named after former FIFA Centennial Order of Merit winner, Fernando G. Alvarez, who played an influential role in bringing U.S. Soccer referees to the world stage.

Congratulations to Don Wilbur on being the inaugural recipient of the Fernando G. Alvarez Referee Champion Award!

## **Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP) Launch**

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. Soccer's updated Referee Abuse Prevention Policy (Policy 531-9) took effect. The policy update includes clearer definitions for physical and non-physical abuse – as well as stronger suspensions for reported referee abuse. The updated policy sets minimum expectations for suspensions for individuals who violate the policy.



# **RESPECT THE CALL**

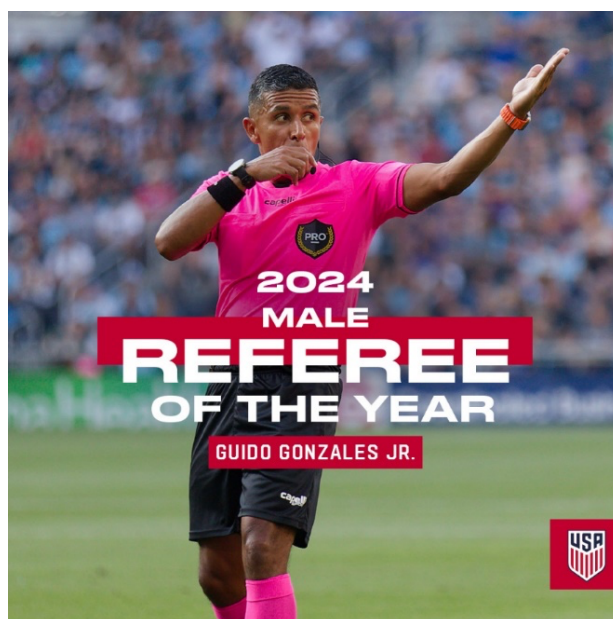
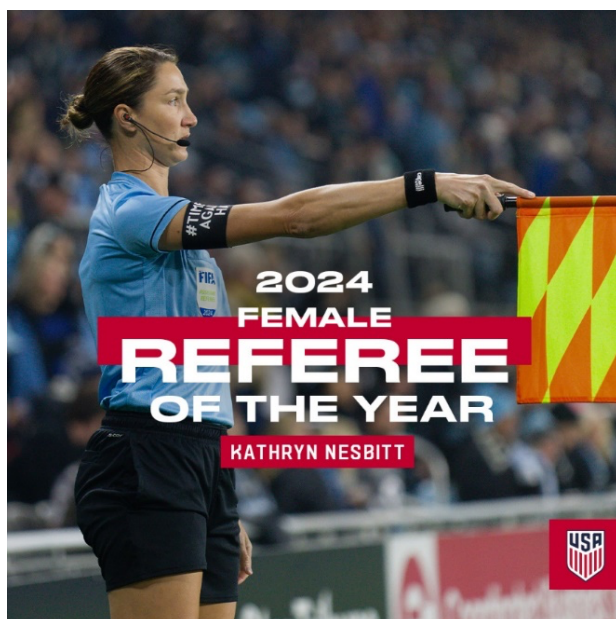
It is important for referees at all levels to keep in mind that the Laws of the Game have not changed, and not to change the way that you officiate a game as a result of this policy. What the policy does, into the increase the penalties for those who commit offences as outlined by the policy, and following disciplinary action taken by referees under the Laws of the Game.

A nationwide reporting structure is currently in development as the next phase of the process, but until this becomes available, referees should ensure that they continue reporting offences and disciplinary sanctions through the reporting process as determined by your local and/or state associations. If you have any concerns around the current reporting processes in your region, then you should contact your State Referee Committee for further information.

All the information about the policy update, including the materials for download, can be found at [www.ussoccer.com/rap](http://www.ussoccer.com/rap). Thank you to all our match officials for their continued efforts, and for doing your part to ensure that abuse and unwanted behaviors have no place in our game.

## **Referees of the Year**

U.S. Soccer Referees Kathryn (Katy) Nesbitt and Guido Gonzales Jr. have been voted the 2024 U.S. Soccer Female and Male Referees of the Year after outstanding campaigns officiating at the highest levels of American soccer. The inaugural awards were launched in 2024 as part of U.S. Soccer's continued mission to foster the best playing environments and grow the number of referees nationally.



Katy became the first person to work both a Men's World Cup Final (Qatar 2022) and Women's World Cup Final (Australia/New Zealand 2023), Nesbitt has been a member of the FIFA Panel since 2016 and was an AR in 18 MLS matches, including three MLS Cup Playoffs matches in 2024.

Katy's other high profile assignments during 2024 include officiating a quarterfinal match at the Women's Olympic Football Tournament, Second Round Concacaf World Cup Qualifiers, Copa América Group Stage matches, 2024-25 Concacaf Nations League Group Stage and Play-In matches, the 2023 Concacaf Nations League Third-Place Match, Concacaf W Gold Cup Quarterfinal and Semifinal, Concacaf Champions Cup First Round and Quarterfinal and Concacaf Central American Cup Semifinal.

An MLS Referee since 2018, Gonzales officiated 24 matches in 2024, including the MLS Cup Final between the LA Galaxy and New York Red Bulls, as well as the MLS All-Star Game in which the league selection took on the top players from Liga MX. Gonzales has served as the Referee in over 100 MLS matches and is now eligible for international assignments after being appointed to the FIFA Panel for 2025.

More information about the Referee of the Year awards can be found on the U.S. Soccer website by clicking [HERE](#).



### Vale Toros Kibritjian

U.S. Soccer acknowledges the recent passing of Toros Kibritjian, a highly respected former FIFA, NASL, and MISL referee from Southern California, whose contributions to the game left a lasting impact on officiating in the United States. Known for his firm but fair approach, he officiated at the highest levels, earning recognition for his ability to manage matches with authority and composure. Beyond the field, Toros dedicated himself to mentoring and developing referees, helping shape generations of officials through his insightful guidance and deep passion for the game.

Toros' influence extended far beyond his own career, as he played a pivotal role in the growth of refereeing across the country, which he was honored for in 2011 with the Eddie Pearson Award for distinguished contributions to the U.S. Soccer Referee Program. His wisdom, wit, and commitment to the craft were evident in every conversation, making him not only a respected official but also a beloved mentor and friend to many. His passing is a tremendous loss to the refereeing community, but his legacy will live on in those he inspired and the standards of excellence he upheld.

Toros was 90.

For more tributes to Toros Kibritjian and his remarkable career and contributions, please see the articles linked below:

<https://calsouth.com/cs-remembers-toros-kibritjian/>

<https://www.frontrowsoccer.com/2025/01/21/rip-toros-former-fifa-nasl-misl-referee-kibritjian-passes-away>

<https://refereeingworld.blogspot.com/2025/01/toros-kibritjian-sparkling-dialogue.html>



### **Vale David Socha**

U.S. Soccer acknowledges the passing of David Socha, who refereed at two FIFA World Cups, Spain 1982 and Mexico 1986, as well as the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Born in Springfield, MA, Socha played in the semi-professional leagues of the United States, as well as two seasons for Portsmouth in England during the 1950's. He began officiating in 1970, and was the pre-eminent American referee of his era.

Socha was added to the FIFA referee list in 1979, and was only the second American referee to whistle a World Cup Finals match when he oversaw Scotland v New Zealand in 1982. He was also given the honor of whistling the opening game of the 1984 Olympics, which was played in Cambridge, MA, only two hours down the road from his home. Socha worked in the NASL from 1978-84, refereeing two Soccer Bowl championships matches in 1982 and 1984, as well as the FIFA World Stars Charity Matches for UNICEF in 1982 and 1986.

David was 86.

For further tributes to David Socha, please see the articles linked below:

<https://www.frontrowsoccer.com/2025/02/12/rip-david-socha-who-officiated-in-two-world-cups-passes-away/>

<https://refereeingworld.blogspot.com/2025/02/first-american-two-time-world-cup.html>





### **Vale Ken Baldeosingh**

U.S. Soccer acknowledges the passing of Ohio South State Referee Administrator, Chanka “Ken” Baldeosingh. A Trinidad-born pioneer of soccer in Ohio, Ken dedicated 42 years to the sport as a referee, mentor, and administrator. Founder of the Huber Soccer League in 1973, he played a vital role in expanding the game throughout Dayton. Off the field, Ken tirelessly served as an assessor, assignor, instructor, and coach, shaping the future of soccer at youth, high school, collegiate, and adult levels.

A respected leader, Ken served on the USSF and USASA Referee Committees, mentoring countless referees to national and FIFA ranks. His contributions extended to the Ohio Collegiate Soccer Association, Miami Valley Youth Soccer Association, and Southern Ohio Adult Soccer Association, where his efforts helped double participation and improve officiating standards.

Honored with inductions into the Ohio Soccer Hall of Fame (2010) and USASA Hall of Fame (2011), as well as the Patrick Smith Award (2006), Ken’s legacy is one of passion, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the growth of soccer. His influence on the game in Ohio and beyond will be felt for generations to come.

Ken was 77.

## **Sharpen Your Skills: Education & Development**

### **CELL Webinar Spring Series**

The Continuing Education - Lifelong Learning (CELL) Webinar Series aims to help referees and referee mentors / coaches increase their knowledge and improve their officiating and mentoring skills, respectively. The 2025 CELL Spring Series will offer four sessions each for Referees and Referee Coaches of all experience and license levels.

The topics covered are four new presentations that will introduce the new *U.S. Refereeing Way* to our community. The content is intended to “standardize” important refereeing concepts throughout U.S. Soccer and provide a framework for key refereeing initiatives. The first four educational materials, having been debuted at the 2025 National Camps, cover Teamwork and AR Involvement, Handling, Managing Dissent, and Positioning & Movement Around the Penalty Area.

We recognize that there were many people who were unable to enter the webinars last year due to capacity limits, so we have been working hard to ensure that those limits are increased to maximize attendance and participation. Registration links for the March webinars have already been sent to all officials, and are also located below:

[Referee Coaches – March 13<sup>th</sup>](#)

[Referees – March 20<sup>th</sup>](#)

Registration links for future webinars will be sent to all officials 2-3 weeks prior to each session, so we encourage you to register early once the links are sent out.

## REFEREE COACH LICENSE HOLDERS ALL LEVELS

### Sessions

#### TEAMWORK

- March 13 at 7:30pm ET

#### HANDLING

- April 3 at 7:30pm ET

#### DISSENT

- May 15 at 7:30pm ET

#### POSITIONING & MOVEMENT

- May 29 at 7:30pm ET

## REFEREE LICENSE HOLDERS ALL LEVELS

### Sessions

#### TEAMWORK

- March 20 at 7:30pm ET

#### HANDLING

- April 24 at 7:30pm ET

#### DISSENT

- May 22 at 7:30pm ET

#### POSITIONING & MOVEMENT

- June 5 at 7:30pm ET

### 2025 National Match Officials Camp

The 2025 National Match Official (NMO) Camp was held from December 4-15 at the Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Centre in California. 111 Referees and 105 Assistant Referees were invited, and a total of 212 candidates participated in the camp with representation from 44 different SRCs. 176 returners and 76 first-time candidates attended with the goal of successfully completing the fitness test to meet their 2025 licensing requirements.

The event was an amazing success; a total of 161 officials received their badge at the end of the three camps, and the refereeing department extends sincere congratulations to each of them. Supplementary fitness testing is still to take place to allow the remainder of the candidates to achieve the national badge for 2025. The full list of current National Match Officials is available within the Learning Center Resources by clicking [here](#), with the list to be updated following the supplementary fitness testing.

#### Quotes from camp attendees:

*"I could really feel the palpable changes and I think we are postured for an excellent future. This program really needed this jolt."*

*"The current way that the National program is improving is amazing! I can't wait to see how the future unfolds."*

*"This national camp was very informative and pushed me to think about the game on a deeper level."*

Over the course of each camp, candidates attended classroom sessions such as teamwork, positioning and movement, dissent, handball, and more. Each session was hosted by a Lead Coach, the same team who led our presentations at National Referee Coach Camp in November. Thanks to our Lead Coaches Ian and Frank Anderson, Esfandiar Baharmast, Mark Geiger, Amanda Ross, Sandra Serafini, and Erich Simmons for presenting.

One of the successes of the camps was the rejuvenated collaboration with the Professional Referee Organization (PRO) which provided candidates insight into the important role the U.S. Soccer Refereeing Department plays in the pathway to the PRO level. The Lead Coaches also helped run the fitness tests at each camp as well as the practical field sessions. Special thanks to Chula Vista FC for providing players at the field sessions, and to the Cal-South SRC for sending volunteers.



*NMO Camp 1 candidates, USSF Staff and Lead Coaches in Chula Vista, CA.*

### **Talent Identification Group**

U.S. Soccer has now taken on an expanded role in identifying and developing referees to prepare them for the professional game, in collaboration with the Professional Referee Organization (PRO). As part of this process, webinars are being held for National match officials (referees and assistant referees), and selected invited referees identified as having potential to reach higher levels. National Referee Coaches have also been invited to attend the webinars as observers.

The first meeting of the Talent ID group was held on March 6<sup>th</sup>, with 246 participants in attendance. Presentations were delivered by PRO staff on penalty area incident control (Erich Simmons), offside interfering with an opponent (Ian Anderson), and protocols around 'Only the Captain', timed substitutions, and off-field treatment (Michelle Pye).



### **U.S. Soccer Referee Academy at Dallas Cup**

The Refereeing Department is excited to announce an expanded Referee Academy at the Dallas Cup (April 13-20, 2025). Thanks to our partners at Dallas Cup, we will be increasing the number of match officials involved in this year's academy from 12 to 24, with the inclusion of 12 officials appointed as part of the Women's Initiative. The Referee Academy focuses on building community as well as providing the framework for elite coaching and games. The selected coaches and officials are listed below.

**Match Officials:** Lauren Aldrich (LA), Brian Alvarez (IN), Alexander Arita (CA-S), Ayo Ayeni (MS), Bill Bolsen III (TX-S), Cecilia Chavez (CA-N), Deborah Da Silveira Madeira (OK), Blanca Viviana Diaz Rodriguez (CA-S), Devon Dieckman (WA), Daniel Emeri (GA), Rae Gerking (WA), Karsten Gillwald (UT), Felix Granados (CA-S), Laadi Issaka (MS), Muhammad Kaleia (TX-N), Stephanie MacFarland (MA), Celeste Roberts (AL), Emily Rosenkranz (WA), Tyler Spiczka (MN), Kaitlyn Trowbridge (TX-S), Sarien Vasquez (FL), Mark Verso (CA-S), Race Williams (IN), Corina Willner (OK), Yoshito Nakagawa (Japan), Takuya Kobayashi (Japan)

**Coaches:** George Gansner (MO), Nami Imaizumi (VA), Brooke Mayo (CO), Kevin Morrison (CT), Tony Obas (TX), Abbey Okulaja (IL), Sandra Serafini (OR), Sorin Stoica (OH-N), Itaru Hirose (Japan)

### **Referee Coach Pathway: New Opportunities, New Coaches, More Match Official Development**

The Refereeing Department has begun the process of reimagining the Referee Coach Pathway, with the goal of increasing the number of mentors and coaches, which will lead to more development opportunities for our match officials. Current or retired match officials are encouraged to join the Mentor and/or Mentor+ team. With the introduction of the Mentor+ level, the coaching pathway will now allow our Mentors to focus on development and guidance while introducing a new level, Mentor+, which will provide the foundation for classroom instruction and assisting with field sessions.

With the restructuring of the coaching pathway, more opportunities are being provided for those wanting to join the referee coaching team. Our referees need you, and our referee community needs you, so come and join the team! The new pathway will go live in July 2025.

## **Game-Changing Initiatives**

### **USYS x Women's Initiative**

During January, U.S. Youth Soccer (USYS) hosted 32 female referees and ARs at the USYS Quarterfinals in Mesa, AZ. This partnership is a testament to USYS and their commitment to investing in the women of this community, and we are so thankful to provide these game opportunities to Referees, Regionals, and Nationals from 17 different State Referee Committees. Thanks to USYS and their support for making this happen.

Special thanks to our fantastic group of mentors for teaching and inspiring the participants of this event. The mentor group consisted of National Referee Coaches Nami Imaizumi, Maggie Short, and Lucila Venegas, FIFA Referee Alex Billeter, National Assignor Rachel Woo, and leaders from U.S. Soccer and PRO, Kari Seitz and Mark Geiger.





*Above: Match officials and coaches at the USYS Quarterfinals in January held in Mesa, AZ*

The partnership between USYS and U.S. Soccer continued into February at the USYS Semifinals in Round Rock, TX. Again, 32 female referees were invited to officiate matches at this event. The participants represented 19 SRCs and came from all license levels.

From USYS, thanks to Daniel Radford and Ryan Cigich for their support and commitment to developing the next generation of top-level female referees. Thanks to our mentor group for this event as well, with returning members Rachel Woo, Lucila Venegas, and Women's Initiative lead Nami Imaizumi. We also had support from former FIFA Referee Karen Coulson Abt, National Referee Coach Lauren Parliament, and National Referee Coach Robert Sibiga as our PRO representative. We appreciate you all for your dedication to leading and inspiring our referees!





*Above: Match officials and coaches at the USYS Semifinals in February held in Round Rock, TX*

U.S. Soccer's Women's Initiative is an important program which commenced with 35 people and has now grown to over 400 members. Webinars are held monthly for the group, and any individuals who are interested in joining the Women's Initiative are encouraged sign-up through the form linked [here](#).

### **Female Referee Experience**

At this year's SheBelieves Cup, a Female Referee Experience was arranged where six female referees from the host state at every match (TX, AZ, CA-S) had the experience of joining the FIFA match officials appointed to the first match at that venue. This included having a meet and greet session with the crew prior to the match, and participating in the pre-match pitch inspection. The assigned referee coach for the match also spent some time with the participants to discuss the upcoming match and the refereeing pathway.



*Referees from South Texas Soccer Referees with the match officials for Japan v Australia (Houston, TX).*





*Referees representing Arizona State Referee Administration with the match officials for Colombia v Japan (Glendale, AZ).*



*Referees from Cal South Referee Program with the match officials for Australia v Colombia (San Diego, CA).*

## **Japan Football Association Exchange**

U.S. Soccer is pleased to be working once again with the Japan Football Association (JFA) to coordinate an exchange of match officials for upcoming tournaments. The JFA will host four U.S. match officials to officiate in the 2025 Sanix Cup to be held in March, with the following officials selected from the Women's Initiative program: Shaye Lane (MA), Dana Hackney (IN), Jade Mallea (FL) and Jenna Whipple (CA-N). As part of the exchange, the JFA will also be sending two match officials plus coaching staff to this year's Dallas Cup tournament to be held in April.

## **United Officials Group**

In August 2021, U.S. Soccer's Referee Department started working with a group of women and minority officials, many who have not been given the same opportunities afforded to the majority of officials. The leadership of the group consists of State Referee Committee members, National Referee Coaches, Club Administrators and a PRO representative. The objective is to engage with the landscape to extend financial support, mentorship, coaching and development opportunities to marginalized groups.

Meetings for the group are held on a monthly basis, with two meetings having occurred this year. For the meeting in March, the group welcomed Dr. Turan Mullins, U.S. Soccer's Vice President for Inclusion & Engagement, as a special guest speaker.

Any individuals who are interested in joining the United Officials Group, are encouraged to sign up using the Sign-Up/Bio Collection form: <https://forms.office.com/r/dAfPiZ89Z2>

# **Whistling Around the World**

## **Concacaf Winter Seminar & First Year Seminar**

A large contingent of U.S. Soccer match officials were invited to attend the Concacaf Winter Seminar, held in San Jose, Costa Rica from 28-30 January. This seminar hosted the referees from the Concacaf Elite and First panels, as well as top assistant referees and video match officials. Additionally, a seminar was also held for first year FIFA referees, who have been added to the international list in 2025.

**Referees:** Joe Dickerson, Ismail Elfath, Katja Koroleva, Alyssa Nichols, Tori Penso, Natalie Simon, Lukasz Szpala, Rubiel Vazquez

**Assistant Referees:** Kyle Atkins, Logan Brown, Brooke Mayo, Meghan Mullen, Kathryn Nesbitt, Corey Parker, Cory Richardson

**Video Match Officials:** Edvin Jurisevic, Chris Penso

**Instructors:** Esse Baharmast, Mark Geiger, Sandro Ricci (Technical); Greg Barkey (VAR)

**First Year FIFA Referee Seminar:** Guido Gonzales Jr.

## **FIFA Elite Match Official Seminars**

U.S. Soccer had ten match officials selected to attend FIFA elite seminars during February as part of preparations for upcoming competitions, culminating in the FIFA World Cup 26™ to be held in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, and the FIFA Women's World Cup 2027™ to be held in Brazil.



### **FIFA Women's Elite Referee Seminar**

*San Jose, Costa Rica – 10 to 14 February, 2025*

Alyssa Nichols, Tori Penso, Katja Koroleva, Natalie Simon (pictured below L-R, with Bibiana Steinhaus-Webb (center), FIFA Head of Women's Refereeing)



### **FIFA Video Match Official Seminar**

*San Jose, Costa Rica – 16 to 20 February, 2025*

Joe Dickerson, Edvin Jurisevic, Katja Koroleva, Armando Villarreal, Allen Chapman (pictured below L-R)



**FIFA Men's Elite Referee Seminar**

*Buenos Aires, Argentina – 24 to 28 February, 2025*

*Joe Dickerson, Tori Penso, Ismail Elfath (pictured below L-R)*





## Behind the Whistle: Department News



### United Soccer Coaches Convention

The 2025 United Soccer Coaches Convention was held from January 8 – 12, 2025, in Chicago, Illinois, with the Refereeing Department coordinating the *Referee Experience* on January 10 – 11, 2025, in conjunction with event partners USYS, NISOA and NCAA.

During the Convention, a booth on the exhibit floor was staffed by the department, engaging with coaches, referees, administrators, and soccer enthusiasts, raising awareness about our Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP) policy. The conversations were insightful, and the shared commitment to

the betterment of soccer was truly inspiring. We thank the many SRC members who stopped by to say hello and hear about the policy update.

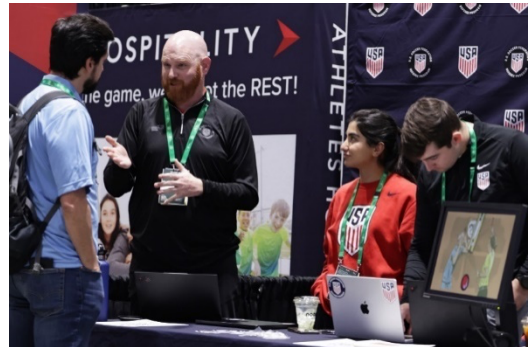
The Referee Experience was a dynamic and interactive two-day program with presentations covering the following:

- *(Friday)* Futsal Refereeing - Shane Butler (FIFA Futsal Instructor and National Referee Coach) and James Mayes (Referee Coach, NISOA Secretary)
- *(Saturday)* Building your Personal Pathway - Ryan Cigich (National Referee Coach, USYS Referee Committee Chair)
- Handball - Esse Baharmast (FIFA Instructor and National Referee Coach)
- Modern Positioning - Jeffrey Solis (FIFA Instructor from Costa Rica, representing Concacaf)
- Teamwork and Assistant Referee Involvement - Amanda Ross (National Referee Coach, NISOA Director of Assessment)
- Referee Abuse Prevention Policy - Kari Seitz (Vice President, Refereeing)

The event closed with an expert panel, moderated by Brian Hall (Director, Refereeing Education & Development), consisting of all the Saturday presenters along with John Collins (NCAA National Officials Coordinator) providing insights into the third team's role in the sport. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to the event.



*Left: Panel discussion at Referee Experience*



*Right: Department staff at refereeing booth*

## **State Referee Committee Workshop**

As part of the U.S. Soccer Annual General Meeting held in Atlanta, a workshop was held on Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, for representatives of our State Referee Committees. Each SRC was able to send two representatives to the workshop, and 104 attendees from our 55 SRC's were present.

Updates were provided on the Refereeing Department's strategy, direction, and activities, including overviews of the refereeing and coaching pathway renewals, the U.S. Refereeing Way education program, talent identification, and ongoing initiatives such as the Women's Initiative and United Officials Group. Breakout sessions were also held which saw valuable discussions amongst the attendees on the topics of inclusion, recruitment, referee abuse prevention, and assigning.

This was the first occasion that an SRC Workshop was included in the event calendar of the U.S. Soccer AGM, and attendees were also given the opportunity to attend the Awards Banquet on the Saturday night, witnessing the presenting of the inaugural Fernando G. Alvarez Award to Don Wilbur.

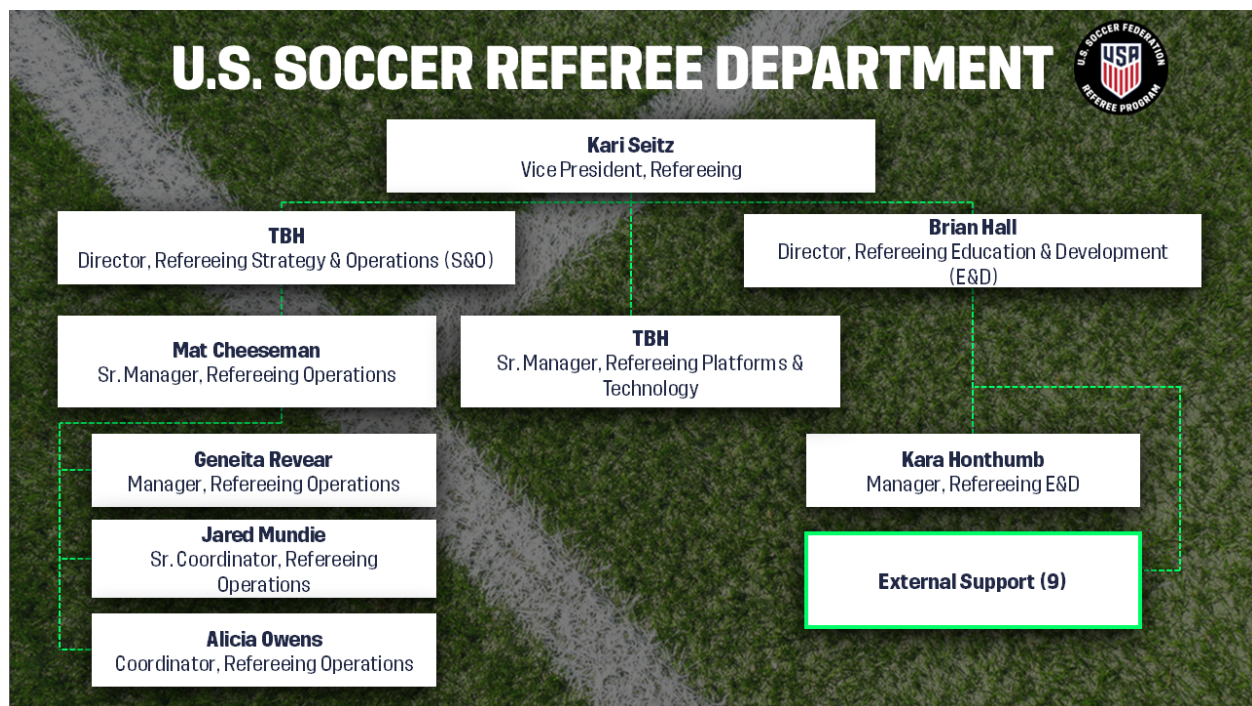
## **New Department Staff**

The U.S. Soccer Refereeing Department is proud to welcome two new staff members to our team.

**Geneita Revear** joins as Manager, Refereeing Operations, and brings a wealth of experience from previous refereeing and operational positions at the NBA and NFL, as well as dual master's degrees in Sports Law and Sports Administration.

**Kara Honthumb** joins the team as Manager, Refereeing Education & Development. A former match official in professional competitions, Kara was previously Director of Referee Development at USOfficials, as well as being the State Director of Instruction for Massachusetts, and is a current National Referee Coach.

Both Geneita and Kara will join the team based out of the Atlanta office in the coming weeks. Two positions within the department are currently open: [Director, Refereeing Strategy & Operations](#), and [Senior Manager, Refereeing Platforms & Technology](#). For more information on career opportunities at U.S. Soccer, please visit the [Careers](#) page on our website.



## Foreign Match Official Guidelines

A comprehensive review has been undertaken of the process for foreign match officials to officiate in the United States, either temporarily for amateur or youth tournaments, or relocating permanently, with new guidelines created to clearly outline processes for approval.

These guidelines are designed to protect our referees, players, and coaches, ensuring that all foreign match officials are required to complete the safeguarding requirements as domestic officials. The guidelines also assist in finding the correct solutions for referees relocating to the United States, and the right assistance to our State Referee Committees for specific situations.

Areas which are covered by the guidelines are as follows:

- Foreign match officials requesting Referee certification without having to complete a U.S. Soccer referee education course.

- Foreign match officials requesting certification above Referee level.
- Foreign match officials seeking approval to temporarily officiate in the United States (e.g. tournaments, temporary visitors).
- Referees registered with U.S. Soccer wishing to officiate abroad.

The new guidelines and application form can be downloaded and/or shared using the following direct links: [Foreign Match Official Guidelines](#)

### **Learning Center Login/Account Issues**

Following the migration to U.S. Soccer's new single-sign-on (SSO) service across all platforms, if any referee is experiencing any trouble logging into the Learning Center, or if any information appears incorrect on their Learning Center profile which cannot be edited, they can email [learningcentersupport@ussoccer.org](mailto:learningcentersupport@ussoccer.org) and should copy in their State Referee Association contact where possible. The Support team will reach out to assist as quickly as possible.