

UNL Strategic Plan

Board of Directors (at Sept. 2015):

President – Suzy Stever
Vice President – Sheila Delaney
Treasurer – Sarah Hoddinott
Secretary – Isabel Costa
Member at Large – Youth – Callista Coldwell
Member at Large – Volunteers – Mark Kavanagh
Member at Large – Communications – Aaron Goulding
Member at Large – Clinics – Nick Harris
Member at Large – Melissa Wheeler
MAUL Representative – Keith Krieger
SWURL Representative – Sophie Blais
MZU Representative – Jeff Lush

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths:

- Currently 876 UNL members in Newfoundland and Labrador. Numbers remain stable year to year.
- UNL acts as organizing body for a number of different leagues including SWURL, MAUL, MZU, and SOUL. The different offerings of these leagues (female only, male only, youth, coed) cater to a number of different audiences. There are a number of opportunities (for players in St. John's metro area) to play ultimate Frisbee at any time of the year.
- UNL activities are offered a number of times a year, i.e. tournaments and clinics, and are typically well attended.
- Board of Directors is diverse and creative and dedicated to growing the sport and opportunities for players in the province.
- UNL has the ability to provide funding for traveling teams from NL as well as monies for the promotion and growth of ultimate with youth players.

Weaknesses:

- There seems to be a lack of understanding amongst members regarding the purpose of UNL, i.e. what are the membership fees for.
- Volunteers are not clear on the mandate or goals of UNL.
- Currently not recognized as a Provincial Sport Organization (PSO).
- Currently receiving no funding, grants, or subsidies.
- There is a lack of trained coaches and mentors in the province, thus creating a challenge for growing the sport in NL.

- UNL's activities almost exclusively take place in St. John's – there is no pan-provincial focus for the organization.
- Board of Directors are required to take care of all of the planning for activities, clinics, and tournaments. There are no employees working for UNL and everything is driven by volunteers.
- UNL has a reliance upon other organizations (such as the City of St. John's and the Techniplex) in terms of space rental and field agreements, i.e. it has no space of its own.

Opportunities:

- Growing interest with youth will likely sustain the sport's growth.
- UNL holds the designation of being the only (potential) PSO for ultimate in NL.

Threats:

- Official PSO status has not yet been obtained

Goals:

- Become recognized as a PSO
- Create Sport Development Committee
- Increase UNL presence/ activities off the Avalon
- Hire employee/ SWASP
- Overall awareness of UNL

1. Become recognized as a Provincial Sport Organization (PSO)

Background: Provincial Sport Organizations are autonomous, not-for-profit societies responsible for the regulation of all areas and levels of their sport's activities in their home province. PSOs are also responsible for the governance of province-wide development of the sport. PSOs act as a link between local clubs/ leagues and the National Sport Organization (NSO), which, in this case, is Ultimate Canada.

Current Situation: Currently, Ultimate Newfoundland and Labrador is not officially recognized by Sport NL as the governing body for ultimate frisbee activities taking place in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The UNL President, Suzy Stever, has been diligently taking action to make this goal a reality; however, there have been some road blocks along the way. Ultimate Frisbee is classified as a new sport in Canada, and as such, it is difficult to obtain status and funding over other sports organizations that have an established presence and reputation, such as football (Football NL).

Timeline: There are a number of factors determining whether or not this goal will be accomplished in the short term vs. the long term, but ultimately, the goal is to become a PSO within one year (by September 2016).

Responsibilities: UNL President

Budget: Fees associated with becoming a PSO (perhaps an annual fee to Sport NL?)

Key Activities:

- Continue checking in with Sport NL contact
- Obtain PSO designation

2. Create a Sport Development Committee

Background: The youth proponent of UNL has been rapidly growing and expanding over the past few years, and has been a great success for the development of ultimate Frisbee in the province. With the growing numbers of youth players and the ever increasing costs and planning associated with the growth activities (i.e. tournaments, clinics, etc.), ideally, the youth/sport development section of UNL would have its own subcommittee to create a growth and strategic plan.

Current Situation: To date, the majority of the youth effort is dedicated to the St. John's Youth Ultimate League, and has been navigated mostly by Member at Large Youth Coordinator, Callista Coldwell.

Timeline: Considering the school year lasts from September to June, with the ultimate season running from December to April, this subcommittee should be established as soon as possible. The creation of the strategic plan will require some time to be prepared, so the goal should be to implement the new strategic plan at the start of the 2016-17 school year.

Responsibilities: UNL President, UNL Vice-President, UNL Youth Coordinator may wish to work together to appoint the committee.

Budget: Prorating from the budget of 2015-16, the costs allocated to the youth are approximately \$14,000.

Key Activities:

- Establish Youth League subcommittee
- Subcommittee creates a strategic plan (preferably within a one-two year timeline)
- Strategic plan implemented

3. Increase UNL's presence outside of St. John's, NL

Background: More than half of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador is located in the St. John's metro area. Because of this, it has been convenient and easy for UNL to focus on this geographic region for the majority of its activities. However, as mentioned in goal #1, in order to be recognized as a PSO, UNL needs to create and maintain a pan-provincial focus.

Current Situation: There are a number of leagues taking place in St. John's at present date: MZU (Mile Zero Ultimate – coed league), SWURL (St. John's Women's Ultimate Recreational League), MAUL (Men's Avalon Ultimate League), and SOUL (St. John's Youth Ultimate League). There has been discussion of expanding clinics/ tournaments/ leagues outside of the Avalon Peninsula, but the main obstacle is planning events without UNL members on the ground or established groups of players in other areas such as Clarenville, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook, Deer Lake, Goose Bay and Labrador City.

Timeline: This goal will take time to plan and implement. Ideally by 2017, UNL will have a presence in three regions across Newfoundland and Labrador. (Regions in NL include Avalon, Eastern, Central, Western, and Labrador.) The initial goal is to hold introductory events to ultimate Frisbee in a number of communities, with the end goal being interest/ player retention for establishing new ultimate communities across the province.

Responsibilities: A sub-committee would work best in this situation. The subcommittee may include UNL President, UNL Vice-President, other UNL Board members, and non-Board members as deemed fit by UNL President.

Budget: Until there are established UNL members in the regions across the province, this goal will require a budget for the following costs: transportation, per diems, accommodations, promotion of events, facility rentals, purchasing of equipment/ new supplies per event, UNL swag, etc. Each preliminary event may cost roughly \$1,000-\$2,000. Assuming UNL will put off 4-6 events between September 2015 and September 2017: \$4,000-\$12,000.

Key Activities:

- Determine locations of choice for expansion (see Appendix A below).
- Establish subcommittee for expansion plans.
- Subcommittee creates strategic plan and a budget for expansion.
- Subcommittee begins traveling.
- Subcommittee creates retention plan for keeping interest across the province.

Additional Notes: It is important to determine the target audience for the expansion across NL. In the recommendations (see below), there are listings of schools (K-12) as well as College of the North Atlantic campuses (post-secondary). This gives an idea of the potential for youth activities as well as adult activities/ leagues. It is advantageous to attract youth players, but

there may also be an opportunity to establish 19+ leagues similar to MZU across the province as well.

4. Hire employee/ SWASP student

Background: Typically, PSOs manage to have at least one employee working full-time to help manage day-to-day organizational operations. Since UNL is still working towards the PSO designation, there are currently no employees working for the organization, and instead, the responsibilities remain entirely on the Board of Directors.

Current Situation: The UNL Board of Directors has considered the possibility of a SWASP (Student Work and Service Program) student for the past few summers, but ultimately has not followed through on the application.

Timeline: From previous SWASP timelines, applications are typically due at the beginning or end of May. Successful candidates are notified in mid-June. For 2016, UNL must act diligently to ensure it has a completed application to submit by the deadline. The application may take up to a month to properly complete, therefore, accounting for any delays to the process, it should be completed by April 2016.

Responsibilities: The UNL Board must designate this responsibility to one or multiple people who will carry out this goal in a timely manner. The UNL President may wish to keep this duty for herself, or she may appoint designated board members to complete the task.

Budget: SWASP students receive a \$1470 payment (2015 figure) in addition to a \$1400 tuition voucher. The payment is likely to be required for UNL to pay.

Key Activities:

- Designate responsibility for application completion.
- Ensure adequate supervision for SWASP student (pending application approval).
- Submit application.
- If unsuccessful, revisit plans for 2017 summer.

*NOTE: One of the criteria for successful SWASP applications is that the student must receive adequate supervision. From previous UNL meeting minutes (February 2015), it was determined that Sport NL could offer a cubicle to a student should UNL be successful in its application for the student. This will need to be reconfirmed with the Sport NL representative before the application is completed and submitted.

Additional Considerations: Based on information from previous UNL meeting minutes (February 2015), SSEP (Student Summer Employment Programs), run through the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, was also considered as a potential method of obtaining a summer student. The programs are offered for not-for-profit organizations and private sector

businesses. The designated individual responsible for this goal should take time to research the two options (SWASP and SSEP) and determine which is more beneficial and feasible for UNL.

5. Overall awareness of UNL

Background: UNL is the governing body for ultimate Frisbee in Newfoundland and Labrador, but most ultimate players in the province do not have an overall understanding of what UNL is, or what it provides for them as players; they are only aware of the \$30 membership fee they pay once a year.

Current Situation: Currently, UNL has just about 400 Facebook likes, 79 Twitter followers (inactive since September 2014), a membership system (under construction), a newsletter that goes out a number of times a year, and a functional (recently updated in August 2015) website.

Timeline: A marketing plan will need to be completed and instituted for UNL to follow to promote its overall awareness from September 2015 to September 2017.

Responsibilities: The UNL Director of Communications will take the lead on this goal. It may be of interest to include the whole Communications subcommittee in the process.

Budget: The marketing plan for UNL does not need to be overly expensive. There is a lot of free advertising and promotion that can be done with the proper messaging and branding. To account for some ads and branding development, UNL should account for \$1,500 a year for awareness, totaling to \$3,000 by 2017.

Key Activities:

- Communications Coordinator and Communications subcommittee determine which methods and mediums of promotion will be most advantageous and beneficial overall for UNL to achieve its goals.
- Communications committee creates marketing plan.
- Communications committee rolls out initiatives from marketing plan.

Additional Notes: It is important for the communications committee to determine tangible and objective methods for measuring the success of their marketing efforts (i.e. number of Facebook followers, number of new UNL memberships, etc.).

Work Plan:

With the creation of a strategic plan, it is important to stay on task with action items in a timely fashion in order to achieve the goals that have been identified. Given that UNL meets every

month, designated persons in charge of action items should be required to give progress reports at every meeting in an effort to keep people on task and accountable.

Working with a quarterly reporting process and the key activities that have been created for every goal, a sample work plan has been created, that may be of use to the UNL Board of Directors for keeping track of the goal progress (see Appendix B).

Evaluation:

To quantify the success and progress of completion for the strategic plan, UNL may wish to use an evaluation metric to measure results. Results are best measured through tangible factors, so it is recommended to determine the success of each goal through quantifiable items such as number of participants in a clinic taking place in Grand Falls-Windsor, or number of new members in 2016.

*It is important to note that not every goal included in this strategic plan can be quantified through numerical results. For example, goal #1 (obtaining PSO designation) will be a simple 'yes' or 'no' result.

Overall Recommendations:

As UNL works through the goals that have been identified, it is very important that the Board of Directors, volunteers, and members of UNL have a clear understanding of UNL's mission, vision, and mandate. One of the weaknesses determined in the SWOT analysis is that the members and volunteers do not have a clear understanding of what UNL stands for. Part of the marketing plan that will be covered while completing goal #4 should include a plan for promoting UNL's basic values to the membership so that members can affiliate themselves with UNL and become loyal to the mission. With affiliation and loyalty comes retention and growth, which is exactly what UNL is working towards with its Sport Development Committee (goal #2). It is recommended that going forward; UNL takes the time to create a toolkit/ marketing materials/ general introductory spiel to deliver any time it has access to or the opportunity to speak to a group of members or potential members. Starting with the Board of Directors and working its way down, it's important for the whole team to be working towards, and being on board with, the same vision.

All of the goals that UNL has listed are linked together with the ultimate goal of desire for growth. The creation of a strategic plan is a productive first step, but now the UNL Board of Directors must act diligently to stay on top of the action items that have been listed (again, referring to the work plan in Appendix B can be of use here).

The purpose of a SWOT analysis is to determine an organization's strengths and opportunities, as well as the weaknesses and threats. Threats are out of an organization's internal control, but

weaknesses are able to be mitigated through the usage of the strengths and opportunities. Revisiting the SWOT analysis from the first section of the strategic plan, it can be seen that fulfilling the five goals will allow UNL to compensate for the identified weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

- There seems to be a lack of understanding amongst members regarding the purpose of UNL, i.e. what are the membership fees for. *(Will be mitigated through goal #5)*
- Volunteers are not clear on the mandate or goals of UNL. *(Will be mitigated through goal #5)*
- Currently not recognized as a Provincial Sport Organization (PSO). *(Will be mitigated through goal #1)*
- Currently receiving no funding, grants, or subsidies. *(Will be mitigated through goal #1)*
- There is a lack of trained coaches and mentors in the province, thus creating a challenge for growing the sport in NL. *(Will be mitigated through goal #3)*
- UNL's activities almost exclusively take place in St. John's – there is no pan-provincial focus for the organization. *(Will be mitigated through goal #3)*
- Board of Directors are required to take care of all of the planning for activities, clinics, and tournaments. There are no employees working for UNL and everything is driven by volunteers. *(Will be mitigated through goal #1 and goal #4)*
- UNL has a reliance upon other organizations (such as the City of St. John's and the Techniplex) in terms of space rental and field agreements, i.e. it has no space of its own. *(This is a separate long term goal that has not been discussed in this strategic plan.)*

Appendix A: Increasing UNL's Presence outside the Avalon

Population in Newfoundland and Labrador, 2011 consensus:

| Community | Population | Region |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| St. John's | 165,346 | Avalon |
| Corner Brook | 19,759 | Western |
| Grand Falls-Windsor | 12,714 | Central |
| Bay Roberts | 10,638 | Avalon |
| Gander | 10,234 | Central |
| Labrador City | 9,228 | Labrador |
| Carbonear | 7,337 | Avalon |
| Happy Valley-Goose Bay | 6,427 | Labrador |
| Stephenville | 6,416 | Western |
| Goulds | 4,525 | Avalon |
| Clarenville – Shoal Harbour | 4,406 | Eastern |

College of the North Atlantic (CNA) Campuses in Newfoundland and Labrador:

| Community/ Campus | Population | Region |
|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Baie Verte | 1,370 | Central |
| Bay St. George | 1,207 | Western |
| Bonavista | 3,319 | Eastern |
| Burin (Marystown) | 4,181 | Eastern |
| Carbonear | 7,337 | Avalon |
| Clarenville | 4,406 | Eastern |
| Corner Brook | 19,759 | Western |
| Gander | 10,234 | Central |
| Grand Falls-Windsor | 12,714 | Central |
| Happy Valley-Goose Bay | 6,427 | Labrador |
| Labrador West | 9,228 | Labrador |
| Placentia | 2,853 | Avalon |
| Port aux Basques | 3,794 | Western |
| St. John's | 165,346 | Avalon |
| Seal Cove | 315 | Eastern |
| St. Anthony | 2,351 | Western |

Schools in Highlighted Areas:

| Community | School(s) |
|------------------|--|
| Carbonear | Carbonear Academy (Elementary); Carbonear Collegiate |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Bay Roberts | Amalgamated Academy (Elementary); Ascension Collegiate (High School); Coley's Point Primary (Primary) |
| Clarenville | Riverside Elementary (Elementary); Clarenville Middle School (Junior High); Clarenville High School (High School) |
| Corner Brook | Humber Elementary; JJ Curling Elementary; CC Loughlin Elementary; Templeton Academy; Humber Elementary; Sacred Heart Elementary School; St. Gerard's Elementary School; GC Rowe Junior High; Presentation Junior High; Corner Brook Regional High School |
| Gander | Gander Academy (Elementary); St. Paul's Intermediate (Junior High); Gander Collegiate (High School) |
| Grand Falls-Windsor | Woodland Primary; Millcrest Academy; Sprucewood Academy; Exploits Valley High; Exploits Valley Intermediate |
| Happy Valley-Goose Bay | Peacock Primary School; Mealy Mountain Collegiate; Queen of Peace Middle School; |
| Labrador West | A.P. Low Primary; J.R. Smallwood Middle School; Menihek High School |
| Placentia | Laval High School; St. Anne's Academy; |

Notes:

- Boxes highlighted in yellow indicate a CNA campus as well as a top 10 population status in NL
- NL has been divided into five regions: Avalon, Eastern, Central, Western, Labrador

Recommendations:

Based on the population statistics, as well as the presence of CNA campuses (presumed young adult population) and frequency/ proximity of schools, the following locations have been selected for focus in UNL's efforts to increase their awareness outside the Avalon (i.e. specifically outside of St. John's):

| Region | Selection #1 | Selection #2 |
|---------|---------------------|--------------|
| Avalon | Bay Roberts | |
| Avalon | | Carbonear |
| Eastern | Clarenville | |
| Eastern | | Placentia |
| Central | Grand Falls-Windsor | |

| | | |
|----------|---------------|------------------------|
| Central | | Gander |
| Western | Corner Brook | |
| Western | | Stephenville |
| Labrador | Labrador City | |
| Labrador | | Happy Valley-Goose Bay |