

Kristin El Idrissi - AAC Election Platform Statement

My judo journey is typical of many others- begging my father to let me on the mat at his club when 5 and by the age of 13 quitting as I was interested in the more well-known American sports. After becoming a wrestling all-American in college, I found my way back onto a judo mat and my love for the sport has flourished ever since.

Despite missing the critical teen years of competition, I found my way onto the National Roster for 10 years, placing at nationals a few times and walking away with medals from every major US event. During this time, I balanced a full-time job while training enough to qualify for international events. Though never excelling internationally, I always was seen as a great training partner- cross training before work, supportive of my partners and always willing to put in extra work.

I took a year hiatus from work to travel to 13 countries where my husband and I trained, competed and learned about how judo is taught, studied and shared internationally. The trip opened my eyes to opportunities that the US could take advantage of, pathways that athletes are guided internationally, and to the enormity that is this sport globally.

Since having a child, I have transitioned into the kata side of competition, winning Nationals twice and representing USA at the Pan-American Championships. In making the transition from shiai to kata I see opportunities for athlete support, communication, and a sharing of information.

I supported my husband as he travelled internationally extensively for judo. Once ranked top 10 in the world he changed citizenship and was trying to finish his competitive career with USA. We learned about the expenses required to support as a USA judoka and logistics required to travel for the team.

In the last 5 years he and I have opened a judo school (El Idrissi Academy), where more than anything, we try to foster a love for the sport. We try to host Olympians & seminars, stage scrimmages for beginners, bring in international players as zoom coaches, and are constantly trying to brainstorm bigger and better ways to support not only our team but the local love for judo.

When not working, playing mom, training kata, or helping run the gym – I co-run the Liberty Bell Judo Classic with Adam Moyerman. We took over the event from our fathers a few years ago. It is critical to us both that we provide an event that allows for a good competitor experience, provides prize money to athletes, supports the hard-working referees, and continually improves so that it runs better yearly.

My passion project is to grow women's judo. I have happily driven to Virginia to watch a blackbelt promotion for a teen that I have watched blossom over the years, try to hand invite as many women as possible to the Liberty Bell Classic so that they can take home more prize money, and always randori if there is a female visitor at the club (and the baby allows for it).

I would love the opportunity to participate in the AAC – as a “normal” athlete. As someone who was always better in the training room than at a tournament. As someone who understands athletes needs from a spouse perspective. As someone who sees the needs of athletes from a coach's perspective. As someone who cares about athletes' interests from a tournament directors' standpoint. As a kata player who understands more than just a shiai athletes challenges. As a full-time working athlete. As a female who sees the immense value of this sport for all women. And as a kid that quit who found love for judo again as an adult.