



UMAS Cheer Team Handbook June 2017- May 2018

UMAS – Upper Merion All Stars

umas@umdgc.com

396 East Church Rd, King of Prussia, PA 19406

New location hopefully coming during the 2017-18 season!

UMDGC – Upper Merion Dance & Gymnastics Center, LLC.

umdgc LLC@gmail.com

530 Hertzog Blvd., King of Prussia, PA 19406

Key Contacts

www.umdgc.com; Phone: 610-731-0022; Fax: 610-731-0034

Alexandria D'Aulerio, UMAS Team Director – a_daulerio@umdgc.com

Dave Evasew, Owner – devasew@gmail.com

Kelly Collins, General Manager – klabs80@gmail.com

Michelle Elbin, Owner – umdgcMichelle@gmail.com

- INTRODUCTION 1**
 - UMAS/UMDGC’s Mission Statement and Goals 1
 - Handbook Policies..... 1
 - Usage of UMDGC & UMAS Names, Logos, Likenesses 1
- EXPECTATIONS..... 2**
 - Team Members 2
 - Staff 2
 - Parents/Guardians and Guests 3
 - Parent Liaisons & Parent Liaison committee 3
- COMMUNICATION 4**
 - Chain of Command 4
 - Emails 4
 - Website - www.umdgc.com..... 4
 - Facebook 4
- ATTENDANCE..... 5**
 - Absences 5
 - Competition-Prep Practice..... 5
 - Emergency Practices 5
 - Attendance Incentives 6
 - Breaks and Holidays 6
 - April Practices 6
- FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS..... 6**
 - Tuition 6
 - Uniform 6
 - Competition-Related Fees 7
 - Fundraising & Boosters Clubs 8
- EVALUATIONS & PLACEMENTS 8**
 - Evaluation Process & Placements 8
 - Injuries 9
 - Loss of Skills 9
 - Crossovers 9
 - Alternates..... 9
 - Postseason 9
- COMPETITIONS..... 10**
 - Swimming and Hot Tubs 11
 - Travel 11
- HEALTH..... 11**
 - Bullying 11
 - Concussions..... 11
 - Injuries 12
 - Nutrition..... 12
- OTHER INFORMATION 13**
 - Practices 13
 - Special Events 13
 - Classes & Clinics 14

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to UMAS! We want to personally welcome all newcomers to our program, as well as extend our gratitude to all returning athletes for their dedication and loyalty. UMAS is in its fourth season, and we have been able to continue our yearly growth due to our great successes at competitions, the knowledgeable staff, and fun atmosphere at practices. In the 2016-17 season, we offered competitive cheer teams in USASF levels 1 through 5, for ages 3-18. We strive to teach the athletes the value of commitment, hard work, integrity, leadership, self-confidence, positive attitudes, team work, and a love for the sport. We understand the commitment of all-star cheer, and we will never take your support for granted. Our goal at UMAS is to develop the best teams possible, as well as instill qualities and values that last a lifetime! The following handbook contains the rules, policies, and procedures for the upcoming competitive season. If you have any questions, please, do not hesitate to contact the UMAS team director.

UMAS/UMDGC'S MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

“Provide a safe, fun-filled, educational, and healthy experience in dance, gymnastics, and cheerleading to participants of all ages and abilities.”

The UMDGC staff is delighted to have the opportunity to be part of your lives and will do everything possible to make your experience memorable and exciting. Our staff will strive to:

- promote fitness through movement and progressive instruction.
- foster emotional development through a caring staff using timely motivation and discipline.
- respect the family through convenient policies and schedules.
- encourage balance in the individual by allowing the participation in multiple activities.
- have the participant perform at or above expectations based upon ability and time commitment.

HANDBOOK POLICIES

Compliance

The participant, parent/guardians, and all guests agree to comply with the rules, policies, and procedures of UMAS/UMDGC as listed in this Team Handbook, program guide, website, posted in the facility, and as communicated by UMAS/UMDGC staff. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary actions including, but not limited to: timeouts, being sent home from practice, suspension, being scratched from an upcoming competition without refund, and expulsion without refund.

Changes to the Handbook

For the remainder of the competitive season, UMAS/UMDGC will make changes to the rules, policies, and procedures only when required by a governing body of the activity, if the current policies endanger the participants, or when policies adversely affect scores at competitions. If anything must be changed, a notification will be distributed by email and the online handbook will be updated.

Resolution of Conflicts

The head coaches and/or team director may provide limited exemptions to these rules at their discretion. However, the owners have final authority and decision-making power in all matters concerning UMDGC and UMAS. If a conflict is unable to be resolved by the team staff, there is a request to clarify the contents of the handbook, or the operations of the team program conflict with the operation or philosophy of UMAS/UMDGC, the owners will use the handbook, latest program guide, and their vision for UMAS/UMDGC to resolve the problem, irrespective of prior arrangements and exemptions.

Clarification of terms

Superiors and supervisors include any of the following positions that are filled at the time in question: director, general manager, and/or owner. Parents include the biological parents, adoptive parents, and all legal guardians.

USAGE OF UMDGC & UMAS NAMES, LOGOS, LIKENESSES

The names, logos, and team names of UMDGC and UMAS's various parts, and the likenesses of any of these, are the sole property of the owners of UMDGC/UMAS. Anyone else wishing to use the names, logos, team names, etc. must have the prior, written approval of the UMAS/UMDGC owners. Anything created without an owner's prior, written approval will not be acceptable, cannot be worn or sold independently, and may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal from UMDGC/UMAS programming without refund.

EXPECTATIONS

TEAM MEMBERS

- Follow all policies and procedures.
- Represent UMAS in a positive manner.
- Immediately inform coaches of any injuries, problems, or conflicts on the team.
- Maintain acceptable grades. Each participant will be judged individually based upon past grade performances. Failure to maintain good grades will lead to suspension from the team.
- Maintain healthy eating and hygiene habits.
- Attend practices regularly and promptly.
- Be prepared and dressed properly for practices and competitions.
- Listen carefully to all staff and ask questions if unclear.
- Work hard and wisely during every practice.
- Always be respectful and supportive to coaches, teammates, and competitors.
- Display good sportsmanship.
- Trust your coaches.
- Be open and truthful with your coaches and parents.
- Believe in yourself. Always try!
- Read "Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports" which is on the team website.

STAFF

- Ensure that participants are safe and supervised at all times.
- Address all parent's and participant's concerns and questions in a timely and professional manner.
- Ensure cheerleaders are attending the correct practices.
- Use practice time wisely and keep participants working.
- Provide up-to-date information.
- Be prepared and on time to all practices and competitions.
- Provide age-appropriate motivation and discipline.
- Provide a healthy environment for the physical, emotional, and social development of the participant.
- Follow, support, and enforce USASF and UMAS/UMDGC policies at practices and competitions.
- Update all necessary clearances and certifications no later than October 1 of each competitive season. These include, but are not limited to:
 - USASF professional membership and all its requirements
 - Concussion training as mandated by the state and all governing bodies
 - PA clearances and background checks
- Meet required attendance and commitment.
 - Attend all competitions for one's level/squad.
 - Schedule a suitable sub for all non-emergency absences and ensure the sub has all necessary information to hold a productive practice.
- Make sure that the gymnasts know their routines and are properly prepared for competitions.

- Head coaches are responsible for providing all information to the directors or owners in a timely fashion. Failure to provide this information will result in teams not competing or disruptions to the scheduled practices.
- Provide copies of score sheets, judges remarks, and rankings to owners no later than Tuesday after each competition.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND GUESTS

- At no time and/or for any reason is anyone but an owner or UMAS director, or their designated representative, permitted to communicate with a competition official or host organization.
- At no time and/or for any reason is any spectator permitted in the competition or practice area. In cases of injury, the parent/guardian must wait until a competition official or coach permits the parent/guardian onto the floor.
- Do not coach or interact with the participant from the sidelines during practice or competitions.
- Be supportive of, acknowledge the fear of, and focus solely on one's own cheerleader.
- Direct all concerns and questions to the head coach. Email for a time to discuss, or please save questions for before or after practice time.
- Follow, support, and enforce all policies in this handbook.
- Parents/guardians are solely responsible for the participant's lodging, food, and travel expenses to all competitions.
- Flash photography and bright lights are prohibited at practice.
- Make certain that the participants are on time and properly prepared for every practice and competition.
- Be positive at competitions. Do not criticize or make negative comments about judges, competition hosts, other teams, or UMAS teammates.
- Stay informed. Check your email and the UMAS webpage regularly.
- Withholding a cheerleader from practice cannot be used as a form of discipline or as a threat. This is unfair to the rest of the team.

PARENT LIAISONS & PARENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Team Parent Liaison (TPL)

- There will be one TPL per team.
- TPLs will be the sole communication point between the UMAS coaching staff and parents on the days of competitions.
- All TPL's must meet all PA state law requirements for volunteers. UMAS/UMDGC requires annual submission of all necessary background checks and clearances no later than October 1 of each competitive season. The necessary documents must be emailed to a_daulerio@umdgc.com and devasew@gmail.com.
- The TPL will set up a GroupMe chat for all team parents/guardians. The teams' head coaches, Alexandria D'Aulerio, and Dave Evasew must be included in these group chats.
- The TPL will plan team bonding experiences. The TPL must receive prior, written approval from Dave and Alexandria before distributing the information to the rest of the team.

Parent Liaison Committee Member (PLC)

- The PLC will be composed of 3 parents of current or former UMAS cheerleaders that will be selected annually by the team director.
- All information that is discussed within the PLC is confidential.
- PLC will select and order the gifts for all teams.
 - Keep records of all fees that are collected and from whom it was received. The PLC fund is not mandatory, and small alternative gifts will be provided if the fee is not paid. The PLC fee will range between \$50 and \$120 depending on level.
 - Submit these records to the owner at the completion of the season. Copies of receipts must be sent to devasew@gmail.com.

- PLCs will oversee any team parties for wins and bid celebrations. Funds will be taken from the annual PLC fund. Team members are permitted to voluntarily donate additional items.

COMMUNICATION

If you have questions or concerns, you must send an email to set up an appropriate time to discuss the issue or see the coaching staff at the beginning or end of practice. There will be no distracting UMAS staff during practice times or at competitions. It is the parent's responsibility to stay informed. Check your email and the UMAS webpage regularly. Cheerleaders, parents, and their guests are not permitted to post videos of UMAS routines on any social media unless approved by the UMAS staff.

CHAIN OF COMMAND & MEETINGS

The official chain of communication for team members and parents to follow is: Head coaches -> UMAS Director -> General Managers and Owners. When at competitions, the following chain of command will be followed: TPL -> Team Coaches -> UMAS Director.

MEETINGS

Meetings and phone conversations may be scheduled during the head coach's office hours or other select times that the coach has available. For safety reasons and to ensure the coaches are not distracted during the conversation, please do not discuss information while the coach is instructing. Only after multiple meetings with the head coaches should the general managers and/or owners be included in the discussions.

EMAILS

All official communications will be done through email so that all information is documented and can be used for future reference. UMAS's and UMDGC staff will respond to all emails in a timely manner. Key email addresses are listed on the cover of this handbook and on the UMAS webpage.

WEBSITE - WWW.UMDGC.COM

All official information, including the concussion information required by PA state law, will be posted to the UMAS page of www.umdgc.com. Emails will be sent out as the UMAS webpage is updated. Payments for tuition and team fees can also be processed through www.umdgc.com.

FACEBOOK

UMAS and UMDGC's Facebook pages and groups are a way to get notifications, updates, and information. Make sure to like and become members of the following:

- UMAS – Upper Merion All Stars: This includes weather closures, tryouts, classes, and other special events that are open to the general public.
- UMAS Parent Group: This is a private group for the cheerleaders' parents that is administered by UMAS and UMDGC staff. Information that is posted to this Facebook group by non-staff members is not guaranteed to be accurate or true. All members will be removed at the completion of the season or when they leave UMAS.

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCES

Because all-star cheerleading is a team sport, missing practice negatively affects the whole team – stunt groups can't practice, choreography is thrown off, and the cheerleaders may be put in dangerous situations. At the discretion of the UMAS/UMDGC staff, failure to follow the attendance policy may result in being moved to a lower level team with less commitment, moved to an alternate position, removed as a crossover, or complete removal from UMAS's teams.

- Absence from a competition or repeated tardiness to competitions will result in immediate dismissal from UMAS.
- Excessive tardiness to practices could result in dismissal from UMAS.
- In non-emergency situations, please contact a coach a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the start of practice if you will be late or absent. You may email, text, or call the coach.
- Cheerleaders may not attend any other practice unless approved by the UMAS director.
- Cheerleaders may not enter the workout area or use any equipment in the workout area before the start of their practice or after the end of practice without UMAS staff approval.
- Cheerleaders are permitted to come late to or leave early from practices if they are attending another UMDGC activity. The cheerleader should notify the instructors of both programs in writing of the conflict. Once notified, the directors of both programs will work to handle all conflicts.
- Withholding a cheerleader from practice cannot be used as a form of discipline or as a threat. This is unfair to the rest of the team.

Excused Practices

We allow one **excused** absence from June to August and 4 **excused** absences from September to April. The following are the only acceptable reasons for an excused absence. All other reasons are considered unexcused. Even when excused from practice, the coach retains the right to use a replacement at a competition when within two-weeks of an approaching competition.

- School related function that will result in a grade.
- Contagious illness with a doctor's note.
- Death of a family member or similar family emergency.
- Family vacation occurring between June to August if approved at time of team acceptance. We ask that you schedule additional vacations during the breaks listed below.

COMPETITION-PREP PRACTICE

UMAS will hold a mandatory extra practice immediately before most competitions. Teams that receive bids to Summit, D2 Summit, or Worlds will have a limited number of extra practices scheduled in March, April and/or May. These prep practices will be scheduled in advance so that families can make appropriate arrangements.

- by late-September and early January for regular season competitions
- a few weeks following a team receiving postseason bids

EMERGENCY PRACTICES

Coaches may call additional mandatory practices for the following reasons during the two weeks prior to a competition:

- Cancellation due to inclement weather
- Injuries
- Attendance problems

ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

From September to April, cheerleaders will receive UMDGC credits totaling 10% of the paid tuition for each team that they have perfect attendance and no lateness at all practices and competitions during the previous month. These credits will be issued no later than the 20th of the following month.

BREAKS AND HOLIDAYS

There are no reductions in tuition during the months of breaks or holidays. To minimize disruptions to your teammates, it is recommended that you schedule vacations and special events during the times listed below.

*Fourth of July Break	Mon, Jul 3, to Fri, Jul 7
*Late Summer Break 2	Mon, Aug 21, to Sun, Aug 27
Labor Day Weekend	Fri, Sep 1, to Mon, Sep 4
Halloween	Tue, Oct 31
Thanksgiving Eve/Day	Wed, Nov 22, to Thu, Nov 23
Winter Break	Fri, Dec 22, to Tue, Dec 26
New Year's Eve/Day	Sun, Dec 31, to Mon, Jan 1
Spring Break	Fri, Mar 30, to Tue, Apr 3

APRIL PRACTICES

After the final scheduled competition of the season, any team that will not be competing at Worlds, Summit, or other similar competition may have a modified schedule until the end of the school year schedule. The number of hours offered will be approximately the same, but the new practice schedule will be organized by levels, several teams may practice at the same time, and practices may not be held at the same days and times as during the rest of the school year. The emphasis of these practices will be working on tumbling, jumps, and stunting skills and techniques for tryouts and next season. These practices are non-mandatory, and fees are not prorated if you do not attend.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

All participants must be willing and able to make the following financial commitments prior to joining UMAS. If at any time there are financial difficulties, please, let the owners know immediately as they will do their best to work out a payment plan, move the cheerleader to an alternate position, set-up a work arrangement, or an alternative plan.

TUITION

Tuition is a set fee that all cheerleaders must pay from June to April. Tuition covers the cheerleader's liability insurance, payroll for the coaches during practices, rent, utilities, and other overhead expenses. Tuition does not include any fees associated with competitions, gifts, apparel, team bonding, uniforms, choreographer fees, music, etc.

Tuition will not be prorated for holidays, missed practices, injuries, or any other reason. Failure to attend due to injury or other reasons does not waive any tuition obligations. Long-term injuries that occurred at UMDGC or UMAS related programs will be handled on a case-by-case basis with a medical note.

All monthly tuition must be paid no later than the 1st of each month or you will be charged a 10% late fee. If tuition is more than 7 days late, the cheerleader will not be permitted to participate in any UMDGC or UMAS program until the tuition is brought current or a payment plan has been arranged with the owners. Monthly tuition is non-refundable and is not prorated for any reason if the participant attends a single practice during the calendar month.

Discounts available to team members

The person making payment must notify the front desk at the time of the transaction to receive the following discounts.

- The same participant on multiple UMDGC/UMAS teams: 10%

- The same participant on team and attending classes: 10% off all classes, no discount on the team tuition.
- Members of the same household on multiple UMDGC/UMAS teams: 10% (classes not included)
- Employee discount: 20-25%
- Military discount: 10% with military ID of someone living at the same address as the cheerleader.
- UMDGC/UMAS may occasionally offer special discounts for any tuition paid during a specified time.

UNIFORM

Please see the UMAS Payment Chart for prices.

Uniform Orders

Sizing will take place during the team meetings in early June and select additional times during the summer. All sizing must be finished no later than August 17, 2017. Uniforms are non-refundable, non-returnable, and not eligible for credits after noon on August 18, 2017.

Orders with the manufacturer will not be made until the cheerleader is sized and the items are paid in full. Orders will be placed only during these times: late August/early September, Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, and early February.

Items that are purchased after noon on August 18, 2017, are subject to a 50% late fee. This includes items that are both new orders and reorders for any reason (lost, stolen, misplaced, ruined, stained, wrong size, etc.).

Selling Used Uniforms

A post will be pinned to the top of the UMAS Parent Page from June to August. Parents are welcome to post the items they are selling and the sizes within that post. It is recommended that you note in the replies to your comment when the item has been sold. These are transactions between the two families; do not leave money or items with the front desk or with UMDGC staff.

Borrowed Uniforms

When an item must be borrowed, it is the responsibility of the two parties to handle all exchanges. However, the UMAS staff will assist, if needed, in finding an individual with the correct size. UMAS is not responsible for any damage, misplaced, or lost items.

COMPETITION-RELATED FEES

Please see the UMAS Payment Chart for more details and exact prices.

The following fees will be totaled together and broken into 6 monthly installments. These installments will be due no later than June 15, July 15, September 15, October 15, November 15, and January 15. Because failure to make payment by the deadlines adversely affects the entire team, a late fee of 10% of the original amount due will be assessed for every period of 10 days that it is not paid in full (e.g. 10% of original total for 1-10 days, 20% of original total for 11-20 days). Fees paid in installments are non-refundable for any reason after the due date.

If joining late, the participant will have 30 days to catch up on all past due competition fees. Practice attire is not able to be ordered after October 1.

Registration Fees for Competitions

All paperwork (e.g. waiver forms) and payments must be returned to UMDGC by the deadline for the registration to be considered complete. The fees that are paid include the coaches' travel expenses and additional payroll expenses related to competing. Please remember that these fees do not include the cheerleader's or their guests' fees associated with traveling to and from the competition, and staying at the competition.

The installment competition fees do not include UCA, Summit, and Worlds fees. Fees for coaches' travel expenses and additional payroll will be added to any registration fees for these competitions. When possible, payments will be spread out to make them easier for families to afford. Teams that will compete at UCA will be determined after evaluations. Summit and Worlds fees will depend on the type of bid received, if any (At-large, Partial, Full Paid).

Competition Bow

The unique bow that is designed annually for each team is included in the competition fees. Only females will receive a bow.

USASF Membership

There is an annual, non-refundable, and non-transferable membership fee for all athletes, instructors, and administrators that wish to participate in an All-Star competition. Membership runs August 1 to July 31 and fees are not prorated for registering late. Cheerleaders will be informed of their username and password after it is created by the UMAS staff.

Practice Wear

Cheerleaders are required to wear practice attire to all practices. The only time practice wear is not needed is during "theme nights" or at the coaches' discretion. If joining after October 1, please, contact your head coach as to what to wear to practice.

Skills Camp

Most teams will participate in an in-house mandatory skills camp. Dates for this will be determined after try-outs, but all attempts will be made to coordinate with UMDGC's summer camps. Tiny team members do not attend skills camps.

Choreography/Music Fee

All teams receive custom-made music along with routine choreography. Dates for choreography will be determined after try-outs. Choreography typically takes place between mid-August to early-September.

FUNDRAISING & BOOSTERS CLUBS

UMAS does not offer fundraising opportunities and does not have a boosters club, parents' organization, etc. Parents are welcome to assist the UMAS staff and the PLCs/TPLs in working and organizing fundraising opportunities with the limited number of non-profit organizations that UMDGC supports, including Unite For Her and Cheer 4 Charity. Parents are also encouraged to assist the TPLs with setting-up team bonding experiences or purchasing of team-oriented apparel with the prior, written approval of the owners of UMDGC.

EVALUATIONS & PLACEMENTS

All cheerleaders who are in good standing with UMDGC and UMAS will be placed on a UMAS cheer team. At the discretion of the UMAS staff, any cheerleader who does not have the necessary skills to make a team will be assigned to a team as an alternate until the UMAS staff feels that sufficient progression has been made.

EVALUATION PROCESS & PLACEMENTS

A two-step evaluation process will be held in May. The first day of evaluations covers tumbling and jumps; callbacks will include stunting evaluations. All evaluations are closed; only approved UMAS/UMDGC staff and the cheerleaders will be permitted in the building.

The UMAS staff is solely responsible for selecting teams. Tumbling can play a large factor in team placement, but a variety of skills, abilities, and body types are necessary to make each team a strong contender. The staff will do its best in selecting the correct cheerleaders for each team so that it will have the highest potential for success.

INJURIES

When a team member suffers an injury, the UMAS staff will select a replacement. If having a replacement is not an option, the team will re-work the routine. Additional practices may be called with minimal notification. Upon receiving a doctor's note medically clearing the cheerleader to full activity, the UMAS staff will decide when and in what role the injured athlete will return to the routine and be permitted to compete.

LOSS OF SKILLS

The UMAS staff retains the sole right to remove a cheerleader from any team or move the cheerleader to an alternate position if the cheerleader cannot perform the skills they performed at evaluations, does not show sufficient progress in technique and form during the season, or who repeatedly cause deductions at competition.

CROSSOVERS

All cheerleaders will be asked during evaluations if they would be interested in being a crossover. Crossovers are limited to no more than two teams total and no more than 15% of the total number of cheerleaders will be permitted to be crossovers. The UMAS staff will be solely responsible for deciding which athletes will be selected as crossovers. The staff will be looking for individuals that show great skill potential, and the ability to learn choreography and new skills quickly.

- Competition Fee: The cheerleader will pay the higher of the two competition fees, but there will be no other expense for non-bid events. If the crossover's team receives a bid or is selected to attend UCA, the family of the cheerleader will be responsible for all competition related expenses. If both teams receive a bid, they will pay the full competition fee to UMDGC once, plus any crossover fee for the second team.
- Tuition: One-time fee of \$300.
- Uniform: Depending on the teams, the cheerleader may need 2 uniforms. Separate competition bows are required, at \$25 each.
- Practice Attire: The cheerleader is required to buy practice attire for each team.

ALTERNATES

Alternates are cheerleaders who attend team practices and competitions to function as reserves when full members are unable to compete or practice due to illness, injury, absence, or disciplinary action. Cheerleaders may be selected by the UMAS staff to be alternates because they do not have all the necessary skills to become a full member, individuals in cheer classes or other UMAS teams that show great potential, financial reasons, demotion due to disciplinary reason, or any other reason that the UMAS staff may decide. Alternates will not be included in the choreography unless they become full members.

- Tuition: There is no tuition unless the alternate becomes a full member. Once placed as a full member, the alternate will begin paying a prorated fee for that month, and full tuition for all following months.
- USASF Fee: \$40. Alternates are required to pay this fee.
- Competition Fees: Alternates may attend competitions as injuries or illnesses can happen at any time. There will be no competition fees due unless the athlete becomes a full team member. If the cheerleader becomes a full member, they will be responsible for all additional fees that are due.
- Uniform: The uniform must be purchased by the alternate as soon as they become a full team member.

POSTSEASON

The priority for postseason competitions (e.g. Summit, D2 Summit, Worlds) is to win and/or advance as far as possible. While full members of the team that qualifies for the postseason will be given priority, the UMAS staff has the right to replace a member who is unable to perform the entire routine safely, consistently, and with minimal deductions. A UMDGC credit will be issued in June for any competition fees that were charged.

Alternates who compete at a qualifying competition are not guaranteed a spot on the postseason roster.

Crossovers are not guaranteed to compete on multiple teams at postseason competitions even if both teams qualify. After all the teams for a postseason competition have qualified, the coaching staff will decide to which team(s) the crossovers are assigned. The decision will be based upon the rules for the postseason competition, minimizing the risk injury, maximizing the productivity of practices, providing the teams with the best opportunity to win, and minimizing potential scheduling issues at practices and competitions. If selected to be a crossover, there may be additional entry fees, apparel fees, and other types of fees associated with the competition.

COMPETITIONS

UMAS will be attending 4 to 6 local competitions with the possibility of 1 or 2 long-distance competitions. The complete schedule will be finalized by the UMAS staff during the summer, once the event producers release the information. Every cheerleader is required to attend every competition for all teams they are a member of, including athletes who are injured.

- **Competition Schedules**
 - Itineraries for long-distance competitions will be sent out as far in advanced as possible.
 - A tentative schedule is typically available the Tuesday before the event. This schedule will be sent through email and posted in the UMAS Parent Page.
 - A final schedule will be released no later than the Thursday before the event. This information will be sent through the UMAS Parent Page and an email will be sent out once it is posted to the team website.
 - Any changes after Thursday will be sent by the PLC or UMAS staff via text.
- **Competition Day:**
 - Meet with the team TPL. Report times are usually 60-90 minutes before warm-ups.
 - Athletes must have all hair and make-up done by the report time.
 - Once the whole team arrives, parents should find a seat in the performance hall.
 - Teams will move to the warm-up area. Only UMAS staff are permitted in the warm-up area with the cheerleaders; parents are never allowed in the warm-up areas.
 - After the team performs, they are released until awards.
- **Competition Awards:**
 - The cheerleaders will appear for awards the same way they appeared to compete-in full uniform. No cell phones and no personal belongings.
 - All UMAS cheerleaders are expected to display a high level of sportsmanship.
- **Competition Dress Code:**
 - Only UMAS attire is to be worn: UMAS uniform, UMAS warm-ups, or UMAS team/gym shirts.
 - Full uniform must stay on. No taking off sleeves or any other piece of your uniform.
 - Senior Teams are only to be in a midriff uniform during warm-ups and performances. All other times they are to have on an appropriate UMAS shirt.
- **UMAS Performances:** All UMAS athletes, families, and fans are to support every UMAS team on both days of competition. Performance scores are a huge part of the judging, so the girls need as much support as they can have. Nothing is worse than a team performing with little to no crowd support. Sometimes this will require other competing cheerleaders to arrive early or stay late.
- **Acceptance of Bids:** It will be decided by the UMAS Staff whether to accept bids. Things such as previously scheduled events during the "bid event" will result in the denial of a bid. If the UMAS staff decides to accept the bid, the team will need 75% of its cheerleaders to attend the competition.
- **Chain of Command at Competitions:**
 - 1 - Team Parent Liaison
 - 2 - Team Coach
 - 3 - UMAS Director

SWIMMING AND HOT TUBS

Cheerleaders are not permitted to swim or use hot tubs on the day of competitions or the night before a competition that has a morning report time. Cheerleaders are welcome to swim and use the hot tubs after they are finished their scheduled competition times. Swimming and using hot tubs during other times may be permitted by the director or head coach depending on the competition schedule and special circumstances.

TRAVEL

Families are responsible for all travel arrangements and payments for the cheerleader and any guest attending the competition. It is best to make travel arrangements as soon as possible.

UMDGC owners or general managers will handle the travel arrangements for UMAS staff. The competition fees that each cheerleader pays covers the staff's lodging, food, parking fees, travel reimbursement, airfare, additional payroll, and all other expenses related to the competition.

Driving directions and other information about the competition are available on the UMAS Cheer Team webpage. For some competitions, the event producer requires a "Stay-To-Play" policy to receive special benefits from the convention center. This means that all cheerleaders and coaches must stay at an approved hotel room or they will not be permitted to compete. UMAS will block rooms at one or two of the local hotels for each of these competitions. The block of rooms is often limited in size by the book agent and will often have a deadline.

For any competition that is not "Stay-To-Play", families are welcome to stay at the hotel of their choice based upon their interests, preference, and perks/membership programs.

HEALTH

BULLYING

UMAS and UMDGC will not tolerate any form of bullying by participants or parents. Bullying is, but not limited to, any unwanted, aggressive physical, or emotional behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. No bullying will be permitted either in-person or on social media, groups chats, or texts.

If a participant has any concerns with regards to bullying, either as a victim or as a witness, it is advised that an adult staff member of UMAS or UMDGC be contacted immediately. This concern will be passed along to a senior UMAS/UMDGC staff member. The head coach(s), director, general manager(s), and/or owner(s) will determine what actions must take place based upon the information collected, will notify a parent/guardian of the victim of bullying, and whether additional guidance is needed. Actions that may be required include, but are not limited to: apologizing to the other party, suspension, and expulsion without refund. Disciplinary actions will be at the discretion of head coach, director, and owners based upon the information collected.

CONCUSSIONS

UMDGC and UMAS will follow the general policies and intent of PA Senate Bill 200 to ensure the safety of our participants when the possibility of concussions exist. The most important aspects of this bill are:

- All participants and parents must read "Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports" that is found on the team websites. Confirmation that you have read the appropriate information is included on the team commitment form.

- UMDGC/UMAS staff members who are professional members of the governing body of their sport will be required to take an annual concussion management certification course offered by the Centers for Disease Control.
- Participants with any concussion symptoms must be removed from play.
- Participants may only return to play after they have been evaluated and cleared in writing by an appropriate medical professional.
- Coaches who do not comply will be penalized in a manner like those required by coaches of extracurricular activities:
 - For the first violation—suspension from coaching at competitions for three months.
 - For the second violation—suspension from coaching at competitions for 12 months.
 - For the third violation—permanent suspension from coaching any competitions.

INJURIES

- Cheerleaders are still expected to continue to attend regularly scheduled practices.
- Cheerleaders who are injured should plan with the head coach to come in for strength training.
- Due to the advanced skills of the higher-level cheerleading, cheerleaders with injuries must be cleared several weeks prior to competition and then the head coach will determine if the cheerleader is able to compete safely at his/her level with all requirements.
- If injured within 3-weeks of a competition, the injured individual will be responsible for the crossover fee. A UMDGC credit will be issued within one month for any remaining balance.

Only participants that have a valid medical note will be given exemptions from normal practice expectations. Unless a medical professional specifically states that the participant “is not permitted to attend practice and is not permitted to do any physical activities”, injured participants are expected to attend practices while injured to focus on flexibility, strength, and specific events or skills that do not affect the injured area, and learn any changes to the routines. The coaching staff will provide an injury plan within three practice days after the doctor’s note is received. A medical note is required to release the athlete.

If an injury occurs during a practice or a competition, the participant must notify a coach immediately. In the case of a serious injury, the staff at UMDGC will attempt to contact the parent/guardian immediately. If the UMDGC staff cannot contact a parent/guardian, the staff will use their best judgment to ensure that the participant receives the proper medical attention.

All athletes are solely responsible for taping and bracing their injuries prior to the start of practice.

NUTRITION

All team members are expected to maintain good eating habits. Due to the prevalence of eating disorders and liability issues, UMDGC does not permit any coaching staff to provide additional nutritional information to the participants unless it is formulated by a certified nutritionist or provided by the national governing body of sport.

Due to the prevalence of food allergies, food should never be shared by the staff or cheerleaders. If the cheerleader has a known food allergy, it is the responsibility of the cheerleader and their parents/guardian to continually remind the UMAS staff and provide alternative food options if needed.

Due to food allergies, it is imperative the coaching staff and all participants wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds to reduce the chance of allergic reactions.

OTHER INFORMATION

PRACTICES

Attire & Shoes

For the safety of the other cheerleaders, do not wear your cheer shoes outside. Stones, glass, or other hazards can be tracked onto the floor and cause injuries.

Make sure to check the team calendar so that you are wearing the correct attire to each practice.

Clean-Up at the End of Practices

All team participants are responsible for making sure the practice area is cleaned at the completion of every practice and all mats, equipment, and other supplies are stored correctly.

Personal Belongings

UMDGC is not responsible for damaged, stolen, lost, or misplaced property, including money. Bring it at your own risk. Any food-, drink-, or clothing-related items will be thrown away at the end of each night unless a representative of UMDGC/UMAS is notified no later than the end of office hours. Items such as cheer shoes, book bags, purses, wallets, jackets, cell phones and other electronics, and other personal effects will be held no more than 7 days before being donated to charity or thrown away.

Cell Phones

Participants are not allowed to use cell phones on the field of play at competitions and anytime during practices. Cheerleaders who use their cell phones during practice will have their phones confiscated and returned at the end of practice. All official phone calls to parents/guardians will be made from the gym phone or coach's cell phone, unless the facility loses electricity.

Observation of Practices

UMDGC/UMAS believes in transparency at most of its practices for liability reasons, to ensure honesty for all parties, so parents can see their cheerleader's progress, and to reduce the driving needs for UMAS's families. However, all guests and non-practicing cheerleaders are forbidden from distracting the coaching staff and the cheerleaders for any reason during practices, and are forbidden to enter the workout area for any reason.

If at any time an individual or group enters the workout area or is a distraction to either the coaching staff or cheerleaders, UMAS and UMDGC staff reserve the right to remove the individual or groups from the building for the remainder of the practice and future practices if needed. Similarly, the staff may close practices from observation when changes must be made to choreography, when a large number of teams will be present, and/or at other times that they feel it is important that no distractions be present.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Team Meetings

The UMAS cheer staff and key UMDGC staff will hold team meetings a week or two after final team placements. If a family is unable to attend the scheduled time for their team, they can contact the UMAS director to find another timeslot to attend. The following will be done at these meetings:

- Uniform sizing – fees will be due no later than noon on August 18.
- Meet and greet with the team's coaches, UMAS director, and other key staff.
- Review of UMAS team handbook
- Expectations for the upcoming season
- Tentative schedules will be distributed.

Showcase

The showcase is designed as a dress rehearsal for competition season. Family and friends are invited to watch the routines, or sections of the routines, that the squads have practiced during the summer and fall. Family, friends, and other UMDGC members can enjoy watching the cheerleaders perform without the stress of the competition. The showcase typically takes place mid-November.

Team Pictures & Winter Break Activities

UMDGC/UMAS hosts a day full of activities for most members of cheerleaders of the UMAS team and gymnasts on UMDGC's team. This is traditionally held the Saturday and Sunday before Christmas. The usual schedule is:

- Saturday morning - Team photos: Open to all team members. Wear your team uniform. Each time will be assigned a specific timeslot. Prices and packages will be available several weeks before; order forms will be available on the day of pictures. After pictures, team members are welcome to stay at UMDGC for an open workout.
- Saturday afternoon – Activity: Open to all team members ages 7 and older. Previous activities include indoor water parks, Marple Sports Arena, Get Air, and Ozzy's Family Fun Center.
- Saturday evening – Catered dinner & shopping trip: Open to all team members ages 7 and older. Dinner is at UMDGC and the shopping trip will be at the Plymouth Meeting Mall or similar mall near the activity.
- Saturday night & Sunday morning – The team staff will hold a night of activities including gift wrapping, scrum, gladiator fights, obstacle courses, cartwheel challenge, pillow polo, and open workout. Lights out around 3:00a and everyone must be picked up by 10:00a.

End of the Season Gathering

At the completion of the competition schedules, the UMAS Cheer and UMDGC Gymnastics teams hold a joint gathering to celebrate special accomplishments and recognize recipients of special recognition awards. In previous years, this has been a team picnic at a local park.

Banner-of-Fame

- Any teams that qualify to the postseason will be recognized.
- Any additional special performances may be nominated by the UMAS staff or families. The owners and cheer director will make the final decision.

End of Season Recognition

- Awards
 - Teammate of the Year: Supports other team members during practices and expresses team spirit at all competitions.
 - Most Improved: Has shown the greatest improvement since the beginning of the season.
 - Most Consistent: The participant who is rock-solid with minimal errors throughout the season.
 - Hardest Worker: Determination to improve themselves and dedication to the sport regardless of innate potential.
 - Best Competition Presentation: Steps up the execution and “flair” at the competitions that sets them above the rest of their teammates.
 - Coaches' Award: The participant who is a joy to coach because they continually listen and attempt to make corrections, and have a positive attitude at practices.
- Winners will be chosen by the head coaches, director, and owners.

CLASSES & CLINICS

UMDGC staff will never directly solicit cheerleaders from other teams to join UMDGC's All Star squad.

Tumbling

UMDGC offers a full range of tumbling classes for cheerleaders of all levels, year-round. UMDGC's class and clinic program is an integral part of the cheerleader's skill development for the next season. If the tumbler is not a current student in the tumbling program, it is recommended that the tumbler is evaluated by the tumbling staff so that the cheerleader can be placed at the correct level. Traditional tumbling classes focus on roundoffs, back handsprings, back tucks, fulls, and whips. Special tumbling classes and clinics cover Walkovers and Front Tumbling. During breaks, special clinics will be offered; check UMDGC and UMAS Facebook pages and the newsletters that go out periodically.

Technique

A class for UMAS cheerleaders to improve tumbling technique and strength that is used during tumbling.

Top Girl Stretch Class

A special class designed to increase flexibility and range of motion to make flying and jumping easier and more fun.