

USA Gymnastics has a new president. The victims of Larry Nassar don't approve.

By **Madeline Holcombe**, CNN

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(CNN) — USA Gymnastics has appointed former gymnast and NBA executive Li Li Leung as its president and chief executive officer, the embattled organization announced Tuesday.

"Li Li's unique combination of business skills, management experience and passion for gymnastics make her perfectly suited to lead our organization at this important time in our history," said Kathryn Carson, USA Gymnastics Board chair in a statement.

[Leung](#) was most recently a vice president for the National Basketball Association, according to the gymnastics organization. As a gymnast, she competed in USA Gymnastics events and was a member of a US junior national training team, the organization said.

USAG said Leung will begin work March 8.

Leung is the fourth person to lead the organization in 23 months as it struggles to recover from the Larry Nassar sex abuse scandal. Nassar, a former USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University physician, was [sentenced in January 2018](#) to 40 to 175 years in prison after more than 150 women and girls said in court that he sexually abused them over two decades.

USA Gymnastics filed for bankruptcy in December, citing claims made by survivors of Nassar's abuse.

Leung's appointment has already come under fire from some of Nassar's victims, who released a statement through an attorney on Tuesday.

"Sadly, Ms. Leung has precisely the same sports marketing background as her predecessors Steve Penny and Kerry Perry," John Manly, an attorney for some of the survivors said in the statement. "That is exactly the wrong background to implement change to protect children."

Manly accused the organization of choosing a "consummate insider" who would protect its secrets.

"She has long-standing ties to the U.S. Olympic Committee and she was clearly their choice. Further, her association with the NBA is far from encouraging. The NBA has a horrible record in dealing with sexual assault and abuse by its players and staff," Manly's said.

String of presidents

In a news release announcing her appointment, Leung said she would "make it a priority" to see that claims by Nassar survivors are resolved.

"Like everyone, I was upset and angry to learn about the abuse and the institutions that let the athletes down," Leung said. "I look forward to collaborating with the entire gymnastics community to create further change going forward, which requires that we implement important initiatives to strengthen athlete health and safety and build a clear and inclusive plan for the future. For me, this is much more than a job: it is a personal calling, for which I stand ready to answer."

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Former USA Gymnastics president arrested 00:35

Several top USA Gymnastics officials have [stepped down or were forced out](#) as the program has faced criticism over how it handled the Nassar scandal, including some who didn't start until after Nassar was arrested.

Penny resigned as CEO in 2017. He was the organization's president and CEO from 2005 to 2017, during which many of Nassar's accusers said they were molested.

Penny was [arrested](#) the next year on suspicion of removing documents related to the Nassar sexual abuse case from a gymnastics training facility in Texas.



Penny was replaced by [Perry](#), who was widely criticized for failing to take adequate action during the Nassar fallout and giving boilerplate soundbites when asked for solutions. She [resigned after nine months](#) on the job and was followed by former US Rep. [Mary Bono](#) as interim president and CEO.

But Bono [resigned after less than a week](#) on the job after a tweet surfaced of her defacing a Nike logo after Nike featured former NFL quarterback and civil rights activist Colin Kaepernick in an ad campaign. Nike is a sponsor of Olympic champion Simone Biles, the biggest star of USA Gymnastics.

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**Mary Bono**

@MaryBonoUSA

I regret the post and respect everyone's views & fundamental right to express them. This doesn't reflect how I will approach my position @USAGym I will do everything I can to help build, w/ the community, an open, safe & positive environment.

266 9:53 PM - Oct 13, 2018

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Bono's appointment had also been slammed by Olympic gold medalist Aly Raisman and others because she used to work for a law firm that helped USA Gymnastics craft false statements about Nassar, an investigation by The Indianapolis Star revealed.

CNN's Holly Yan and Pierre Meilhan contributed to this report.

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