

ASCA NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN SWIMMING COACHES ASSOCIATION

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2015 ASCA COACHES Hall of Fame Honorees



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In This Issue:

- 4 / **THE VIEW FROM UP TOP**
Profile of Doug Ingram by Kim Seaman
- 14 / **ADVICE TO AN INCOMING FRESHMAN**
- 19 / **ASCA & ADVOCACY TODAY**
- 20 / **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**
10 HABITS OF REMARKABLY CHARISMATIC PEOPLE
- 22 / **By Jeff Hade**
- 25 / **10&U STANDARDS FOR ASCA CERTIFICATION**
- 27 / **SCARY SCIENCE**
A TALE OF TWO COMMUNITIES
- 28 / **By Michael Switalski**

The ASCA Board of Directors is proud and honored to announce the Honorees for the 2015 ASCA Coaches Hall of Fame!

Induction at the ASCA Annual Banquet at the World Clinic, September 11th, 2015 in Cleveland, Ohio.

COACH PETER BANKS – (Currently National Team Director of Ireland.) Coached Brooke Bennett to 3 Olympic Gold Medals from Brandon Blue Wave, Florida.

COACH JOE BERNAL – Bernal's Gator Swim Club, Mass. Multiple Olympic athletes including David Berkoff and Bobby Hackett.

COACH STEVE BULTMAN – Texas A&M University. Multiple Olympic Athletes! Current Coach of Olympians Camille Adams and Breeja Larson.

COACH CHRIS DAVIS – Swim Atlanta, Georgia. One of the most productive club coaches in American Swimming history!

Multiple USA Olympians!

COACH RAYMOND B. ESSICK – Former Executive Director, USA Swimming, Harvard University and Southern Illinois University and Lake Forest Swim Club. Ray took USA Swimming from an organization in a shoe box to the finest National Governing Body in all of Olympic Sport.

Congratulations to all of our new Hall of Fame Honorees for 2015! ■

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The View From Up Top

DOUG INGRAM, PROFILED

By Kim Seaman, ASCA Fellows Project 2014

“THE ROCKIEST ROADS Lead to the Highest Peaks.”

On the morning of January 14th, 2014, Doug Ingram sent out an email to hundreds of athletes, coaches, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances with the above quote. This quote by an unknown author is just one of many inspiring thoughts that Doug, current Senior Director of International Games for the United States Olympic Committee, has passed along in his “Thought for the Day” email blasts.

What began for Doug as simply a practice of reading and learning for the betterment of himself and his athletes has grown into a daily source of inspiration for hundreds in a mass mailing. Quotes like this one above and the many others Doug has shared serve as small reminders to get outside the all-consuming details and stresses of one’s own life to gain higher ground; upon which a wider perspective is attained. This specific quote reflects the many inevitable obstacles and challenges one will face when on the journey to summit the highest peaks in life. Summiting to such heights may or may not be required, but only those willing to climb and endure the rockiest of roads will be able to cherish the extraordinary view from the top of the greatest peaks. This is a truth evidenced both figuratively and literally in the life and leadership of Doug Ingram.

Where Every Climb Begins: THE BOTTOM

Doug Ingram, born on August 15, 1948, grew up in the rural ranch and farming land of Ellis County, Texas. Like most boys who grow up in Texas, Doug began his athletic career on the football field. In addition to playing football, Doug also enjoyed many other activities and was accustomed to participating in whatever sports were offered at his school. Sports became more than just an activity to Doug who, as a teenager, longed to go to college but knew he would need a scholarship in order to help pay for it. As such, Doug sought to find the sport that might be the best opportunity for him to earn an athletic scholarship when the time came.

It was during this time, at his local YMCA, that Doug found what would prove to be far more than a financial support for college. This sport, which was not offered in the high schools at that time, became the gateway to a life filled with so much passion and enjoyment that allows Doug, almost 50 years later, to peacefully claim he has never worked a “job” a day in his life. This sport would get him off the track of becoming a doctor and onto a path that led to coaching athletes of all ages and levels for over 20 years. This sport would bring him into positions of the highest leadership within that sport itself as well as on the International level at the peak of all athletic competition: The Olympic Games. This sport, the sport of competitive swimming, changed Doug Ingram’s life forever.

At that YMCA in the flat lands of Texas, Doug Ingram unknowingly had discovered the base of a mountain he would climb to the highest peaks in his professional and personal life in the many years to follow. However, when Doug started out swimming competitively before his freshman year in high school, the impact that the sport would grow to have upon his life was still unknown and yet to be seen. Doug said the following while reflecting back on his first introduction to the sport: “With Swimming, more than any other sport I had tried, I found that hard work had a more direct correlation with success.” While loving his newfound sport aided in his dedication to it, the primary reason he began to focus all of his attention on swimming in his junior and senior years was because he recognized his strengths

in swimming would be most likely to contribute to funding his collegiate aspirations through an athletic scholarship.

As time would prove, Doug had accurately assessed his strengths in the sport as he did, in fact, go on to receive a partial athletic scholarship for swimming to the University of Texas at Arlington. This process of analyzing his abilities to identify his greatest strengths reflects a keen self-awareness that was evident within Doug even while only a teenager. Becoming aware of his strengths was just the first step. Doug did not stop at acknowledging that awareness, but he decided to act on his strengths by putting them to work at the highest level in order to achieve his goals. This decision-making process using the recognition of strengths for their most optimal contribution was applied throughout his career and in his future leadership positions. Because of the direction this inspiring self-awareness led Doug Ingram in his late teen years, the outline of a mountain Doug did not know he would later summit was just coming into view.

The View from Below: AN UNASSUMING VISION

Along with his athletic scholarship for school, Doug received an academic scholarship as well. He also worked part-time in order to make his college dream a reality. His many responsibilities as a student, athlete, and employee during his college years reflects his willingness to do whatever was needed in order to accomplish his goals. Such a hard work ethic and

dedication to working long hours was partly a natural result of growing up on his family's farm, and it benefited Doug greatly throughout his college years and beyond.

Doug would continue to tirelessly dedicate his waking hours to the productive advancement toward his goals throughout his life and career. When his colleagues would be eating breakfast, Doug would be eating lunch. Because he already had hours of work under his belt by mid-morning, Doug's workday was almost twice as long as the average. Many attribute this level of commitment to being one of the greatest contributors to Doug's success as a leader. George Block, a colleague of Doug's, says this:

"Doug got twice as much done as the rest of us, because he worked twice as long. He wasn't any better or smarter than the rest of us. He just completely outworked us. That became his lesson and legacy to the coaching community."

Not one to fear hard work, Doug focused on having success in his swimming at UT Arlington while his childhood plan to become a doctor fueled his efforts on the academic front. Because of this career goal, Doug began college in 1966 as a pre-med major. However, during an elective class on teaching and coaching methods taught by the head coach of his college swim team, Don Easterling, Doug got a surprise comment from his teacher and coach that proved to be prophetic. Don, who Doug attributes as one of the most influential people in his life, pulled Doug aside one day after class and said to him "Doug, you're going to be a head collegiate swim coach one day. You've really got talent in this."

Not only did this comment shock Doug at the time because he was conclusively a declared pre-med major but also because Don was a coach accustomed to being somewhat harsh in nature. However, the ability of Coach Easterling to cater to the personal motivators of each of his individual athletes allowed him the wisdom to say such a powerful, yet surprising, statement to Doug. Though merely provoking curiosity in the moment, that visionary proclamation from Coach Easterling planted a small seed of unassuming consciousness within Doug

Ingram about a potential career in coaching.

Doug, who would indeed later become a head collegiate swim coach, had just been exposed to the first words of support toward his future career. Those unexpected words served as illumination to his spirit like that of the first beams of sunlight rising behind a mountain in the early morning. Coaching was now an idea on the horizon, and, during the summers after his freshman and sophomore years in college, Doug returned to his local YMCA with the light of curiosity. Doug walked onto the pool deck this time as swimmer and a coach. While in his first coaching position to the novice swimmers on this team, Doug got fully immersed in the team itself, the competitive program, and the coaching environment. He absolutely loved his time coaching at the YMCA those two summers, and with that enjoyment, the light shining on the idea of a career in coaching shone a great bit brighter.

In addition to this discovery of a new love for the profession of coaching, it was also around this time on his summer breaks from college that Doug discovered what would become another great love of his life: the sport of mountain climbing. While on a cross-country road trip in a VW micro-bus with friends, Doug saw an advertisement at Mount Rainier National Park for a three-day mountain climbing instructional course that finished with a climb of Mount Rainier. Being someone who lives in the moment for the moment, Doug decided to take that course even though he had never mountain climbed before.

After the three days of learning and preparation, Doug Ingram climbed his first mountain and felt the first thrills of summiting a high peak. He loved it! He loved it so much that when he and his friends continued on their road trip back home through Idaho and Wyoming, Doug completed a similar three-day course and climb of the Grand Teton. This acclaimed Glen Exum climbing course resulted in another mountain peak summited by Doug. Additionally, this second summit served to solidify his new passion into a lifelong hobby and love.

From that moment on, Doug would take

every opportunity he could to further develop his love for climbing. He would take trips on every break he had to climb to new heights and summit new peaks. Doug believes having a hobby that one loves is critical for having success in other areas of life such as coaching and leadership. Personal hobbies and passions outside of one's job give an outlet for escape as well as an avenue for the development of new skills. Such skills developed through beloved hobbies can be translated and transferred into all areas of one's life. Because of the enrichment available through having genuine hobbies, Doug recommends all coaches and leaders to find an activity outside of their career that they are passionate about. By doing so, the likelihood of reaching the heights within all areas of life, including one's career, is far more promising.

It was in these summer months between his college years that Doug not only discovered his love for coaching, but he also discovered his love for mountaineering. These two passions would come to greatly shape the overall scenery of Doug's life. Not only would Doug climb figurative mountains in terms of his career and leadership positions, but he would also go on to successfully summit some of the world's most famous mountains, such as Mount Kilimanjaro, Aconcagua, and the most acclaimed of all, Mount Everest. Before Doug could make these many mountains a focus of his efforts, he first had to discover the excitement of them for himself. Through this exploration of coaching and climbing during these college breaks in the summers, Doug Ingram found his life's future playground, climbing gym, and world.

The First Step: A DECISION TO CLIMB

Doug returned to college his junior year torn between two now conflicting roads for his professional future: becoming a doctor, as was always his plan, or the potential new direction towards coaching which now proved to hold unexpected promise for a passionate and joyful career. While he thought he would like being a doctor, he knew he would love being a coach. Weighing his options of ten more years of schooling for a job he potentially might like compared to only two more years of schooling for a job

he was guaranteed to love made the decision clear. Doug's flexibility to change direction and re-focus, which was a practice that would continue on in his many leadership roles down the road, allowed him to go from future doctor to future coach. With that decision, the sun was now fully shining a spotlight on Doug Ingram's future peaks of life: Coach, Leader, Mountain Climber.

This decision to go with his coaching passion required Doug to change directions in his schooling. As such, he altered his major from pre-med to one that would be a better fit for his choice to coach. However, exercise physiology degrees were not common at that time so Doug went to the Physical Education Department at North Texas University to create a major specifically for his goal to become a coach. In essence, Doug, with the help of his professors, created his own degree program that would best prepare him for the climb up this chosen path toward coaching. This ability to alter his course as well as his ability to create opportunity for what is needed but lacking is a habit that continued on throughout Doug's leadership roles for many years to come. Such flexibility and ingenuity are leadership qualities that would contribute to Doug's success during many of his life's journeys, both personal and professional. Doug's decision to coach and pave his own way to do so marked just the beginning of such conquests.

Following his graduation from North Texas University in 1970 with his personally crafted degree, Doug continued his coaching career at Carter High School in Dallas, Texas. After 2 years, Doug took a leap of faith to volunteer coach at the Dallas Swim Club as well. Because paid opportunities are not always available, volunteering seemed like an excellent way to gain more experience. Such an eagerness to take on what others might not be willing to do without compensation proved to be quite fruitful for Doug. Not only did this provide valuable coaching experience, but it also provided him access to one of the greatest swim coaching mentors available: Coach Richard Quick.

Doug first met swim coaching legend, Richard Quick, while attending a swim clinic at the Dad's Club YMCA in Houston during college. A relationship towards leadership grew between Doug and Richard

both on and off the pool deck as Doug, alongside Coach Pat Hogan, served as Richard's assistant coaches at the Dallas Swim Club. The on-deck coaching skills that Doug developed while working under Richard were invaluable. However, the off-deck coaching leadership experience in which Doug became involved as a result of Richard's encouragement, served as a launching pad for Doug's future leadership and governance roles within the sport of swimming and eventually, with all Olympic sports at the US Olympic Committee.

After seeing their own athletes at the Dallas Swim Club suffer from a somewhat antiquated way of thinking by the Local Swim Committee, Richard rallied his troops (aka Doug and Pat) to get involved. Richard, Doug, and Pat saw a need for change. As leaders of the up and coming swim club, they knew that change could only happen from within the LSC. Given their strong desire to see transformation made for the best of the athletes, they were willing to take a step outside of their own swim club walls in order to contribute to the overall betterment of the sport. Even though coaches can easily be consumed by the day in and day out agendas for the success of their own team, this coaching staff saw a greater need to assist their swimmers' progress by taking responsibility for some of the governance of the sport at the local level. Not only did they have perception enough to see the need, but they were also willing to personally make the sacrifices required to strive towards fulfilling that need. Despite the time commitment and potential resistance with which they knew their fresh ideas might present, Richard, Doug, and Pat spent time off the pool deck in order to make a change for the betterment of their athletes and the sport as a whole.

Oftentimes, leaders are leaders because they are willing to think differently and pursue new ways of doing things, should those ways provide potential promise for a better future. Along with visualizing outside of the current "box" of that present day thinking, leaders like Doug make an impact by sharing new ideas with others and by working to adopt of the beneficial qualities of those ideas. Such thought processes were the catalyst that brought Doug into his first

roles of leadership off the pool deck. Little did he know at the time, but this new step of leadership away from the pool was forging a new direction for his future career, and that direction was: Up.

Bouldering Starts the Climb: With Experience & Preparation

In Mountain Climbing, many ascents begin with hiking and climbing small boulders and hills that surround the base of the mountain. These first steps are minimal in terms of what greater steps will follow along in the climb; however, they are critical as they set the first sights of scenery of the mountain to be summited. They also serve as a preparation for what the forthcoming ascent to the peak might hold. Such vision development and preparation in small steps that will lead to big steps are what goal setting is all about. Doug Ingram is quite skilled at the art of goal setting, as can be evidenced in summary by a dear friend and colleague of Doug's, Rick Walker, who said the following about one of Doug's great leadership achievements:

"I remember after Doug became ASCA President, on the way back home, he pulled out from his pocket a handwritten list on a piece of paper and covered all but one sentence: Become ASCA President by —. I was floored!"

Doug had a vision of his goal long before the achievement of his goal. He wrote that goal down and carried it with him every step of his way until he could take it out to cross it off. What starts through a vision, continues with small steps that lead to big steps. Those small to big steps lead to accomplishing the goals one desires to see become a reality in his or her life. This correlates with the path an athlete must take as well – from beginner to novice to junior to senior, etc. Bouldering at the base of a mountain is also an apt metaphor for the beginning steps of one's career and leadership journey. Doug Ingram knows this goal setting and achieving experience of visionary emergence and preparation at the base of many mountains: both literally and figuratively.

Doug's off deck leadership goals became a source of great height for his personal achievements to come. He started his first positions within the LSC in a number of

different roles; however, the position in which he felt he had the most impact was with the Time Standards Committee. Not only did Doug join this committee at the local level, he would also eventually see his ability to contribute in it at the national level as well. In the midst of continuing to coach at the Dallas Swim Club, substitute teach at a local school, and begin his Master's degree in Biomechanics at Southern Methodist University, Doug Ingram was making an impact in the governance of swimming at the local and national levels.

Time management was a very important skill that Doug mastered in order to balance such an array of responsibility and achievement. He advises young coaches of the need to better manage their time, and he learned many ways of such management for himself during these first years of leadership off the deck while still growing his coaching career on the deck and in the classroom. One of the time management techniques he utilized was simply the prioritization of his commitments. In order to take on more national level governing positions, he had to give up all but one of his local swim committee positions. He felt it was important to purposefully stay connected locally by retaining that one position, but he knew he needed to make room for his national level positions in order to succeed at each.

Additionally, Doug learned how to achieve the most critical goals in the order of their need at that time. A flexibility to change those plans as needed also helped with his management of these tasks. No matter how busy he was, Doug always created forward and upward momentum because of his ability to plan ahead and do what was needed when it was needed. Steve Eckelkamp, Doug's colleague and friend from his time coaching at Indian River Community College in Florida, was inspired and influenced by Doug's goal prioritization method and describes it like this:

“Doug’s ability to maintain his perspective and eye on his goal is amazing and motivating to the people he worked with. To this day I make a daily memo. I rank the items either A, B or C priority. Then, I make all the B items either an A or C and go to work on the A’s.”

Such a consistent ability to prioritize

tasks, to dedicate his time towards them as needed, and to be flexible in the midst of ever-changing demands, provided Doug the character DNA to reach the highest peaks of success in all areas of his life. These first of many off-deck leadership positions at the local and national levels gave Doug the fertile ground to develop those critical skills. Furthermore, as Doug volunteered his time, he made a positive difference for the sport. At the same time, that volunteering made a positive difference within him and his personal leadership development as well. With that personal growth, Doug was able to better lead his athletes toward their own successes as well. It was a give and take and give back situation. The ever-increasing beauty of the view along the way toward influence and purpose enabled each new step forward.

One specific example from Doug's early leadership experiences that required a great deal of his time, energy, and attention while also proceeding to give him forward momentum was assisting Coach Richard Quick, along with Coach Pat Hogan, on work for the National Time Standards Committee. Richard, Pat, and Doug had recognized an area of need for a greater scientific process when creating the time standards for participation in various local and national level meets. They realized that doing so would better insure a more even distribution and quantity of swimmers within each event at those meets. Prior to this time, the time standards were chosen more randomly based on a somewhat superficial analysis. Through much time-consuming data collection and a great deal of preparation, Doug helped prepare a presentation of their findings and a suggested proposal as a result of those findings.

The plan was to have Richard present at the National Time Standards Committee during the annual USA Swimming meeting in 1974; however, the day before the presentation, Richard got very sick and was unable to attend the meeting. Because Doug had assisted with the legwork for the project and presentation preparation, Richard told Doug to make the presentation in his place at the meeting. Doug was very nervous, but Richard reassured him that he could do this. Sometimes, such support and

faith from someone more experienced and wise is exactly what is needed in order to give a future leader the courage to step up and lead in a new way. Even today, Doug works to give back to the next generation because he knows the value of such faith and support from times like this with Richard telling him “you can do it.”

At the committee meeting that next day, Doug spoke up when Richard's name was called in the attendance roll call to notify the group of Richard's absence and his representation as Richard's proxy. This news was not as well received as Doug would have hoped. George Haines, one of the committee members at that time and also a legendary coach within USA Swimming, questioned Doug and his right to serve as Richard's proxy. In addition to already being nervous about presenting to this group of great leaders and coaches, all of whom were Doug's personal heroes, he was then shaking at the knees with this questioning of his role there. In that moment, Coach Jim Montrella, spoke up in support of Doug's presence at the meeting and his value in giving the presentation to the committee. Jim said “he's here, and it won't hurt to at least listen to what he has to say.” Coach Jack Nelson, along with others in the room, supported that statement. Sometimes, greatness can be made possible by the boldness of already established leaders to encourage and support an up and coming leader in the beginning stages of their yet-to-be-seen climb to the top. With those words of backing, Doug was permitted to proceed with the presentation.

Fortunately, despite the nerves this entire process produced, Doug was growing in his ability to take on challenges one step at a time. Setbacks may threaten an overall effort, but taking the very next step is sometimes all one can do. With that introduction, Doug stepped in front of some of swimming's greatest legends and proved to them why the presentation was worth their time. He succeeded in doing so as the National Time Standards Committee accepted the proposal following his presentation of it.

Not only had all of their hard work succeeded with the change being achieved, but Doug had also now grown in confidence. That experience in front of some of swimming's all-time leaders would go on to open many

doors for further leadership in Doug's future. While that effort required much from Doug, it also gave much back to him in return. The awareness of a new type of leadership strength in administrative work was just coming into sight for Doug. The horizon of this experience was revealing the rest of the peak, and it was a beautiful sight.

Onward & Upward: ONE STEP AT A TIME

From his experiences, successes, and connections made through meetings such as this National Time Standards Committee presentation, Doug took on other off-deck leadership roles where he felt he could best contribute. This included his roles as: USA Swimming Regional Representative to the Board of Directors of the newly formed National Governing Body for USA Swimming, member and Chair of the USA Swimming Olympic International Committee, Assistant Team Manager for the alternative meet created during the boycotted Olympic Games of 1980, Head Team Leader for the 1984 Olympic Games, President of the American Swimming Coaches Association, and many other such leadership positions.

Doug held these positions in addition to his on-deck coaching jobs at those times which included being: Head Coach at Midland Swim Club in Midland, Texas, Head Coach at Indian River Community College in Fort Pierce, Florida, and Head Coach at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. Such a repertoire of responsibility required great amounts of time, dedication, discipline, and creativity. With these qualities along each step of the way, Doug climbed upward toward success on and off the pool deck.

While each of Doug's leadership positions in governance and in coaching held unique experiences and accomplishments of their own, the complete journey over the many years provides great direction for future leaders. Reflection on Doug's leadership style, habits, and dedicated commitment to excellence throughout all his roles reflect what made him one of the best leaders within USA Swimming and the US Olympic Committee. Doug not only managed his time well through prioritization of the important tasks while being flexible in his decisions

along the way, but his ability to stay in the moment and compartmentalize also greatly contributed to his success as a coach, leader, father, husband, and individual.

As a coach, he devised his season plan and practices with the end goal in mind; however, he was constantly re-assessing the team on a daily basis in case a different route than originally planned was needed in order to achieve that goal. While always working within his personal and team core values, he would be flexible with his plans if doing so would serve the ultimate goal. Off the deck, in leadership for Swimming and for the Olympics, Doug made detailed plans that balanced the many moving parts involved for success. However, he fully recognized that big events are a dynamic environment, and 50 percent or more of the initial plans would likely get tossed out down the road anyways. With that, adjustments would have to be made at those times. Even with that understanding, Doug did not sway away from his initial planning that was necessary as well. Doug realized that the ability to be nimble and react in the moment is only possible if a detailed plan is in place to act as the cornerstone.

In 22 years with the USOC, encompassing 11 Olympics, 9 Paralympics and 5 Pan American Games, Doug has been a primary architect for making the environments at each of them performance enhancing for our country's athletes. Needing to make countless small details fit seamlessly together (oftentimes in countries that do not operate as smoothly as would be desired) is a task many would find overwhelming and perhaps, for some, even paralyzing; however, Doug's ability to do exactly that is in a large part due to his capacity to take things one step at a time. Similarly, as a mountaineer who has summited some of the world's highest mountaintops, Doug succeeded through extreme physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion by literally focusing on taking one more step in each moment. Even with the looming presence of thousands more steps to follow, Doug fully concentrates on the very next, one step. While respecting the importance of the many steps to follow and the endurance needed for the journey, Doug flawlessly balances the long-term vision and the short-term needs for reaching

the ultimate goal. In every position and role in life, Doug went forward one step at a time.

Throughout his 23 years of coaching swimming, leading in the sport off the deck, and 22 years with the USOC, Doug learned balance in each step toward success through mastering his own personal organizational style. Not only does a leader's organization involve the actual orderliness of the office desk and email inbox, but it also involves the mental organization available to contribute to a healthy, productive, and successful climb of all mountains in one's life. Doug considers this need for each individual to determine and develop an organizational style that works for them personally as a priority step in leadership. His strides to insure such organization for his own path have contributed to his ability to scale many mountains both figuratively and literally.

Doug's personal organizational style involves setting a strategic direction firmly in place followed by an action plan of dealing with needs immediately as much as is possible. For example, in this day and age, emails and technology can consume a coach's life if not addressed with purposeful determination to conquer its plea for attention. As such, Doug deals with this constant demand from his own email inbox immediately upon receipt of each email. Doug will address every email he opens at the time of opening it. He will reply to it, forward it on for delegation to someone else, file it away for later reference and action, or delete it if unnecessary. Before each day is done, Doug has a virtually clean email inbox. Doug recommends that each coach and leader find an organizational style that works for him or herself, because it is a crucial step in climbing to success in all areas of life.

In addition to the practical organizational needs for reaching success in one's life, there is a mental organization skill needed as well. Over the years, Doug developed such a skill himself that contributed to his abilities to balance the many demands made of him. Just as a notebook binder has dividers to separate varying topics within that notebook, Doug has been able to mentally divide his many roles and positions in life into compartments for his own optimal effectiveness. Whether on the pool deck coaching, off the pool deck

leading, in the home being a husband and father, or on a mountain scaling to the highest peaks, Doug found success by focusing his mental energy within each moment at that moment. Consistently being fully present in the task at hand allowed Doug to become the efficient, effective, and high-achieving leader that he is known as today.

Along the Journey: Strength is Found & Peaks are Summited

Journeying to success step by step led Doug through strides of strength and strides of weakness. Each of these steps were valuable and contributed to who Doug was, would become, and is today as a great leader. Because of Doug's positive attitude towards life and his ability to pause and reflect before proceeding forward, Doug made the most of his strengths. He also learned from his weaknesses and failures in such a way that would make him stronger than before. Even to this day, Doug continues this practice of capitalizing on his strengths and learning from his weaknesses. No matter what the situation, Doug Ingram finds a way to benefit from the journey and make his experiences pay forward towards an ever-brightening future. Even when clouds roll in on the scenery of life, Doug finds a way to the sunshine.

While anyone can smile with joy when his or her strengths are being recognized through success, the truest leaders are the ones who can learn with hope from moments of failure. Such a moment occurred for Doug in the early 1970s while he was coaching one of his first seasons with the YMCA in Texas. From suggestions collected while reading numerous swim training and science books as an eager young coach, Doug drilled his new team through very intense training. He was completely impressed with how much his swimmers were able to handle; however, at that stage in his coaching, Doug did not realize what the appropriate recovery time was in order for the swimmers to peak at their end-of-season Championship meet.

At the Championship meet that year, his swimmers were not ready due to this lack of needed rest, and their performances reflected this absence of recovery. Doug completely recognized his primary role in the less-than-desirable results for his

team and athletes, and he humbly accepted responsibility both to himself and his swimmers. He formally apologized to the team, honoring their hard work all season long, while also confessing his self-proclaimed lack of wisdom to know the appropriate rest needed for them to succeed. Such humility to admit his own failure in front of his swimmers allowed for them to trust him more as their coach because of his honesty. Randy Julian, a former swimmer of Doug's at the YMCA, said this:

“Doug was very good with our strokes and very quiet and demanding on our efforts within the set. I had no idea what the end result would be but it was a very trusting time swimming for him with the results being consistently strong improvement.”

Despite what one might call a coaching failure in that season, Doug learned from it to transform disappointment into future success. He turned that setback into an opportunity for growth to become a stronger coach. The very next year, at the YMCA Nationals, his team was more than ready for the competition because of the lesson Doug was willing to learn the year prior. All but one swimmer on the team achieved personal best times in their events that next year. Doug turned one year of a failure into many future years of successes. His self-awareness, humility, and willingness to grow allowed him to approach weaknesses and setbacks as launching pads to new strengths. Doug restored a step backward on his journey into two steps forward.

In addition to finding opportunity to gain strength from failure and weakness, Doug capitalized on his innate and natural strengths as well. Through a humble recognition and a practical application of his personal abilities and gifts, Doug sought to always commit his time to tasks where his strengths would be of greatest service overall. With countless opportunities for engagement in the world of swimming and at the US Olympic Committee (where Doug currently works), being able to recognize his strengths in order to best direct his steps along the way was a crucial necessity in order to achieve maximum results.

For example, as Doug became involved in his various off the deck leadership positions

for the sport of swimming, he began to recognize his strength on the administrative side to sport. Despite numerous on-deck coaching successes such as 7 NJCAA Championships teams, 6 Coach of the Year honors, 173 high school and collegiate All Americans, and many more such feats, Doug humbly identified that his most promising area for contribution to the world of sport was administrative.

With that appreciation and after more than 20 years of coaching, Doug Ingram began to contemplate a life beyond the pool deck as a coach. While the step off the deck would not come right away, Doug's eyes were thoughtfully scanning the path for a potential new route to climb given this diagnosis of his strengths. From his analysis of where he might best be of service and his sincere desire to contribute to American sport in the greatest way possible, Doug would eventually leave the world of swimming to become an integral part of the planning for USA Olympic Teams in all sports. His position in Colorado Springs, Colorado came to fruition because of his willingness to always strive towards the greatest use of his strengths.

Whether his service was to his teams as their coach, to the governing organizations of swimming as an influential agent for positive change, or to the country's Olympic teams as a primary planner of all the behind-the-scenes details, Doug Ingram has a servant heart that is admired by all who know him. In fact, after his step off the pool deck had occurred, Doug's pursuit for contribution and service was recognized as he received the USA Swimming Award in 1993. This award is “the highest honor in the sport of swimming that is given to the individual or organization with the most outstanding contribution to the sport.” Such a supreme award and honor reflects Doug's successful mission to serve towards positive influence.

Not only did Doug gain strength for his journey from growing through failures and using his natural gifts for optimal service, but he also gleaned strength from those around him. Being a man with an unmatched humility, Doug allowed himself to be empowered by others along his climbs to the top in all areas of his life. This quality of humility is perhaps one of the most notable

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characteristics spoken of about Doug as an individual. John Leonard, current ASCA Executive Director, said of Doug:

“Doug Ingram is the man many of us would most associate with the phrase “There is no limit to what we can accomplish if no one cares who gets the credit.”

Doug constantly defers praise away from himself. As a Head Swim Coach, Doug credited the ability for his team's success to his talented, hard-working athletes and his tremendous assistant coaching staffs. As the father of two, Doug credits the positive outcome of his children to his wife. As a mountain climber on Mount Everest, Doug clung to the wisdom of his Sherpa and gives him much accolade for it. While keeping true to himself and his personality, Doug Ingram has made a habit of gaining strength and wisdom from others as well as giving their influence the credit for his reaching the heights. His journey is marked by a truly humble appreciation of the strengths of others, and he does not shy away from making that known.

Most especially appreciated by Doug is his wife of 36 years, Susie. In order for any leader to succeed, Doug says, “you first have to be married to a SAINT.” That statement alone reflects the high regard that Doug has for Susie. Along the many career changes Doug pursued in his coaching, leadership roles, and ultimately towards his position with the USOC, Susie had to make adjustments in her own career ambitions and their family's home base. In 1980, when their first child, Jeff, was only a few weeks old, Doug was selected to join the management squad for The US Olympic Swimming Team which was to compete in an alternative international competition because of the United States' boycott of the Olympic Games that year. Despite the very recent birth of their first child, Susie insisted that Doug go on the trip because it was too good of an opportunity for him to pass up. The magnitude of having their first baby did not deter Susie's support of her husband's professional dreams.

Even in the face of potential injury or death while climbing Mount Everest in 2013, Susie graciously supported her husband's dreams. She told anyone who asked whether or not she was worried about him pursuing

such a climb at the age of 64 that she would rather he die following his passion than to hold him back. Given Doug's lifelong love of mountaineering and goal to climb Everest, Susie valued the depth of importance that this endeavor held for her husband. She would not dream of getting in the way of his dreams. Doug rightfully considers his wife an angel in his life. Along with his many summits to the top, Doug claims his wife's love and support to be a primary and ever-present source of strength for him along the way.

In addition to his wife being a beacon of strength, Doug gains further vigor and insight from many other leaders in the world today as well as those from the past. On a daily basis, Doug gains strength from his appreciation for quotes made by leaders he has found inspiring in some way. His dedication to this appreciation for the wisdom of others is not only kept to himself now as he shares them with hundreds in his “Thought for the Day” email blasts. For example, one of Doug's favorite quotes came from Winston Churchill during a speech in the midst of World War II at the Harrow School in Britain. Churchill drove home his point with his booming voice saying:

“Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never – in nothing, great or small, large or petty – never give in.”

This quote is just one of many from great leaders like Churchill that Doug has sought out to add wisdom and strength into his own journey as a leader.

Not only did Doug find encouragement for his climb to the top from his family and from great leaders of the past and present, but Doug has also always had a sincere appreciation for those in his life whose strengths added to the fullness of his own. Along his climb to the heights within USA Swimming and at the USOC, Doug came in contact with many such people who inspired further greatness within him as a leader. Don Easterling, Doug's college coach who believed in his future as a Head Coach, and Richard Quick, Doug's great mentor at the Dallas Swim Club, were two such examples. Another was Jeff Goforth who made such an impact on Doug's life that he and his wife, Susie, named their first child, Jeff, after him.

Jeff Goforth, a motivational speaker, had been invited to speak at a few ASCA Clinics and was highly involved in working with some National teams. Doug invited Jeff to work with his teams and the result was great success. Jeff's focus was on guiding others to first learn how to motivate themselves and then, from there, motivate others. Doug found Jeff's life and message to be of such value that he began to read, study, and learn as much as he could about the art of motivation and leadership. Goforth, Easterling, and Quick were just a few of the many people whom Doug attributes to having had a major impact on his climb to the top. Lacking a prideful spirit allowed Doug to accept the wisdom of these great influences in his life and gain strength of his own to further fuel his goals to reach the highest levels of success in all areas of his life.

Another example of how Doug has been empowered by the strengths of others along his path is reflected in his willingness to rely upon the knowledge and expertise of others who know more than him. Doug's decision to climb Mount Everest was made with the input of an experienced Mount Everest climber, Jake Norton. At a Colorado College alumni event Doug attended in 2004, Norton spoke about his many climbs of the world's great mountains. While listening to Norton, Doug's curiosity from many years of studying the summiteers of Mount Everest collided with his heart's excitement inspired over the many stories Norton had to tell from his own climbs.

After the talk was over, Doug could hardly contain his exhilaration and asked Norton for his honest opinion about whether an amateur mountaineer like himself, at the age of 56, could ever expect to climb Mount Everest. Doug gave Norton a summary of his mountain climbing accomplishments over the years, and Norton gave his assessment based on his wisdom and experience. Norton told Doug that he could absolutely make climbing Mount Everest a goal for his future. He not only provided Doug that spark of confidence, but he also outlined what Doug would need to do in order to prepare himself for his climb to the peak of Mount Everest.

Doug took Norton's wise advice for

preparation and began to follow his instructions immediately. Doug's willingness to listen, respect, and follow Norton's expertise and guidance allowed him to prepare for his dream. Despite his ambitious excitement to reach his goal of climbing Everest, Doug did not rush his own plans and was dedicated to his commitment to follow through with the entire preparation process that Norton outlined for him. Doug's humility allowed him to recognize and value Norton's words of advice in such a way that dictated his actions. Doug knew Norton's shared experience and knowledge was now added strength for himself. In 2013, with that strength and completed preparation, Doug Ingram was trekking to Everest Base Camp at the altitude of 18,000 feet. Because of Doug's keenness to rely on Jake Norton's guidance and expertise, Doug was strong enough to attempt what many could never imagine possible.

While his decision and preparation to climb Mount Everest was greatly influenced by Jake Norton, Doug's strength during his actual climb to the top primarily relied upon the gentle might, wisdom, and faith from his Sherpa, Phinjo. In considering the three main options for how he would climb Everest, Doug chose the "Classic" option that only involved himself and a Sherpa. Doug wanted to climb Everest the way in which his heroes had made the climb themselves in the past. With no one other than Phinjo to guide and support him while scaling the world's most notorious mountain, Doug's ability to utilize and trust the expertise of others was greatly needed. In order to safely and successfully ascend and descend Mount Everest, Doug relied upon the strength, advice, and calm expertise of Phinjo at many moments along the way. Doug knew his own strength was not enough.

Phinjo had a leadership ability just like a wise coach and instilled within Doug a faith of his abilities at just the right times. During the 30 days of climbing and shuttling loads to higher camps on Everest, Phinjo would lead the way through the ice fall since it was quite dangerous and required a great deal of skill to cross the ladders spanning the gaping crevasses. However, after that first month of leading, Phinjo told Doug that he should go first the next time. Such a comment reflected

Phinjo's belief in Doug's ability and with that, Doug led the way with strength and relative ease! The confidence that Phinjo had in Doug not only gave him strength in that moment but also in the moments leading toward the summit.

The night before they would attempt to summit Everest, while resting at the South Col at 26,200 feet, Phinjo proclaimed, "Doug, you get better every day. Tomorrow, we summit!" In that moment, Doug was in awe of the pending accomplishment, and Phinjo's faithful proclamation in Doug during this summit rotation was exactly what Doug needed to hear. Like a great coach, Phinjo gave Doug strength by saving his words until they were most needed. This was a coachable moment if there ever was one! That next day on May 21, 2013, Doug and Phinjo summited Mount Everest, and a life-long dream had come true.

While Doug has achieved many great accomplishments over the course of his career and personal life, his journey on Mount Everest best highlights how inspiring and empowering Doug truly finds the presence and strengths of others within his life. There are unimaginable obstacles one faces when climbing Mount Everest, and strength is required for survival. A few such obstacles that Doug had to overcome when scaling Mount Everest included: adapting to the ever-increasing altitude, making it safely through the dangerous ice fall area, and climbing up long rock and ice faces where safety equipment was the only source of back up. Along with these challenges, Doug experienced greater physical and mental exhaustion while climbing Everest than he had ever dealt with in his life. Taking one literal step at a time with the inner strength of presence he held from the love of his family and friends back home got Doug through the toughest moments on the mountain. He also carried the ashes and spirit of his long time climbing partner, Coach Jimi Flowers, who had tragically died during the descent from Capitol Peak in Colorado with Doug in 2009. Doug not only relied on his own years of preparation and Phinjo's expertise for his strength, but he was also carried through the many challenges he faced by the influence of countless others he held in high regard within his heart. Because of Doug's

ability to optimally use his own strength and the strengths of others, Doug summited the highest mountain peak in the world.

With Peaks Summited: Celebration & Reflection Follow

Not only has Doug climbed to the highest heights of leadership and service in his professional and personal life, but he has also now summited the tallest peak in the world. The view from on top of these many peaks in Doug's life is a sight few people are dedicated enough to reach. The beauty of such visions however, has been worth the effort of getting there for Doug Ingram.

The view from underneath Doug's leadership and service at the top is also a far brighter one than before his influence and contributions. The light upon USA Swimming and all American sport shines brighter today because of leaders like Doug. His commitment to service and willingness to sacrifice what was needed to make a positive impact as a coach and leader has left a permanent mark towards excellence that was not there before. Doug's disciplined planning of details balanced with a flexibility to change focus when needed contributed to his abilities to scale to the heights. His ability to remain positive in all situations and harness his own strengths, while also humbly gleaned energy from others, gave him the fuel for his climbs.

With such strength of character colliding with great needs for a leader to step up, Doug Ingram stepped up and up and up. He ascended one step at a time and is still doing so to this day at the US Olympic Committee where he just finished a successful planning for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games. There are more peaks for Doug to summit, and there are still more magnificent views to be seen from his impact. The flame of Doug's inner determination to contribute and serve continues to burn forcefully and is reflected through his choice to highlight a quote by Richard Bach in his April 1st, 2014 "Thought for the Day" email that said:

"Here is the test to find out if your mission on earth is finished: If you're alive, it isn't."

Doug Ingram will keep climbing, and the view of his leadership is continuing to illuminate. Oh, what a view it is. ■

FLOURISHING WITHIN A University Swimming Program:

Advice to an Incoming Freshman

Editors Note: The following was written by a recent college graduate and swimmer to a potential incoming freshman. It's priceless advice. Warning, IT'S HONEST and DIRECT (not for the faint of heart). Thanks to our author, whom we wish to have be anonymous. Our intent is that coaches who have athletes soon to enter the collegiate ranks, may want to provide this to those athletes to read, to help them "get prepared." - JL

SCHOOL ISSUES:

- 1. Get to know your academic advisors** and use them for ALL their services. Use them constantly, develop a rapport – but DON'T BE DEPENDENT. They're great resources, but don't become "another piece of furniture" in their office. Advisors will know which General Education classes (needed to graduate) are best, which ones have hard or easy professors; etc.
- 2. Track your OWN classes** each semester. Don't depend on advisors to know what classes to put you in, Do your own research, find classes you WANT to take (even in subjects you don't want to take). If you know you will learn better by physically going to a class instead of taking an online class, find a real class that works for your schedule and ask advisors for that one. ***They will try to put you in online ones.*** If you hate science, but need to take four credits of physical science to graduate, find a science class you can tolerate - for example, Age of the Dinosaurs. (Yes, there's a whole college subject devoted to dinosaurs.)

As opposed to the boring one your advisor will undoubtedly pick for you, take that! It's easier to go to a class in a subject you don't like if you are at least *marginally* interested.
- 3. Get everything done as early as possible.** If a professor offers a sign-up sheet for presentations, sign up for an early one. "Find the hardest route possible." Everyone loses steam at the end of the semester, so don't put things off. Do them early when you have energy and want to work. It will also save you when you have to travel for meets.
- 4. Going to meets/having an "in town" meet DOES NOT** mean you are excused from doing school work outside of class – even if advisors excuse you from class. Turn in online class assignments on due dates, no matter where you are in the country. Turn in papers due in class while you are gone before you leave. Professors will remember the athletes who take care of business, and are more likely to write a letter of recommendation for you later in life. (Your swimming friends will skip assignments and tell you to have the advisors write you a note to excuse you and postpone exams and due dates. This is flat-out **wrong**. Don't fall behind; be ahead. Even if you are the only one, and have to work harder to do it.)
- 5. GO TO CLASS.** Aside from the moral obligation you have for being gifted enough to attend ANY college – aside from your parents paying for you to receive an education – you owe it to yourself to learn as much as possible while you can. **DO NOT SKIP CLASSES.** You will need to miss enough for swimming. Skipping never helps; you're never that tired. Get up and go. It is the single greatest indicator of who will do well academically each semester.
- 6. Sit up front** in every, single, class. Professors notice. You'll be less tempted to leave early. You'll learn more.
- 7. Introduce yourself** as a swimmer to your professor **in person** the first real class of each semester. Don't leave it up to your advisors to email them. Tell them who you are, what you do, and,



when it's pertinent, when you'll be gone. They'll appreciate it and it will get you off on a good foot with them.

8. Be organized.

9. Get a *great* computer and take care of it.

10. Be early to class and GO TO OFFICE HOURS if you need help. The coaches will understand if you are late if you tell them you were speaking with a professor. Office hours are never used by students, unfortunately, but it is one on one time with your professor. It is a great time to ask about anything you have concern with.

11. Athletes often get free tutors from the Office of Student Life. If you even *think* you might *possibly* have trouble in a class, sign up for a tutor and see him or her regularly. Do not wait until you are in trouble in a class to go see one. Get ahead of your courses and know what's going on.

12. School always comes first. Your degree will get you a job in the future, your 400 IM time will not. If you have to drop a

class at the end of a semester because you worked your butt off but didn't understand "Kinetic Physiology" and are going to fail, that's okay. Drop the class, you won't have a failing grade on your transcript, you'll be ineligible for a week or two, and can lead club practices until you can practice with your team again. Taking too many failing grades just to stay eligible will bring down the team GPA, bring down your own GPA, and make it nearly impossible for you to graduate with honors or get into graduate school (should you want that).

Miscellaneous Items

(These Get Harder by the Number):

1. If you get a scooter, or ride a bike, **wear a helmet.** This is non-negotiable. I have watched 10+ swimmers have their careers interrupted or *terminated* because of scooter and bike accidents. Helmets actually saved the lives of two people who hit their heads when they fell. If you don't use either a bike or scooter, learn the bus system. They are easy, free, and come by stops every seven minutes. I made it through college

without a bike or scooter; they are not necessary facets of life.

2. Your Director of Operations: If he or she asks you for something, or asks the team for something, be the *first* to get it done. He or she will remember, will never forget, and then will take care of you. Do not get on their bad side. Take care of anything they ask for.

3. Equipment: You get \$500+ worth of gear (fins, paddles, snorkels, caps, goggles, suits, bags, warm-ups; etc.). You get it for *free*. Take care of your things, put your name on things. Have **pride** in the possessions you earn.

4. Health and Trainers: You've made it years with one of the toughest coaches in the world. You haven't needed daily ice bags, fancy muscle tape, suction cups, or fancy compression booties. If you are in pain, go see the team athletic trainer. See the athletic trainer if you want to do preventative activities, but don't be a baby. Don't be dependent on them every day to feel good. The coaches judge those dependent on attention in the

training room. That being said, if you are ill or sick, that's what the trainers are for. Go get the medicine, go see the doctor (it's free). Don't suffer if you are legitimately ill.

5. Food: Eating is the easiest thing for you to *control* when you start as a freshman. Your daily schedule, where or when you swim/lift/workout, your class schedule; etc., will all be determined for you and beyond your control. Many boys and girls then turn to food as something they can control. Some eat little to nothing because then they feel in control. Some overeat as a reaction because, "By damn, I'm going to eat a dozen Krispy Kreme donuts tonight because I want to and Mom and Dad never let me have treats at home and this week's been hard." NO! Be healthy, see the nutritionist often and before the coaches ask you to. Think of it as a free system to make yourself the best physical specimen you've ever been – and do not ever miss an appointment with a nutritionist if they, or the coaches make one for you. Same goes for blood tests, lactic acid tests, drug tests; etc.
6. Roommates: College girls are no better than high school girls. You are going to share a suite (two bedrooms, four beds, one bathroom) with three other swimming girls. You may like them all; you may like two, you may like one, you may like none. You may be best friends with one of them, or you may hate them all. Your feelings might change throughout the year. But, there is no doubt, they will gossip. They will slander everyone; they will judge. Worry about yourself. Do what's right on a daily basis, make sure you can look yourself in the mirror each morning and ignore the gossip. Gossip on a team as tight as a university team is deadly. It will create animosity and enemies. Be a friend, but don't be a crutch for others to lean on. Protect yourself.

College guys are even more testosterone driven once away from parents and around other likewise testosterone driven males. Partying all night and engaging in wild activities with other guys on the team may seem like the

bonding activity, but it may be exactly what keeps you from being the top athlete in the group.

7. Dating: You will do what you want, but my advice is to not worry about anyone of the opposite sex at all. Your life will become hectic enough with five college classes, eleven swim practices a week, three lift sessions, four dryland sessions, homework, and the rest... adding in dating trouble is asking for **exactly** that, trouble. Combine with #6, deadly. If you are involved with your roommate's crush, you suddenly become not only their enemy, but also their *friends'* enemy. (Most coaches respect the swimmers and athletes who get by without being dependent on others' attention as well.)
8. Drinking: Whether or not you are a drinker or partier, you have to be ready for it. Even if you are just a designated driver (DD) every weekend, you will still get stuck in bad situations. You will be asked to drive every other night, you will be a crutch for the drunkards. You will be made fun of if you go out, you will be pressured by your "friends," older girls and older boys. Team activities may revolve around drinking. Be adamant you do not want to participate. No scientific studies show that alcohol boosts athletic performance, why hurt yourself then? Your teammates will treat "going out" and drinking as a reward system. (I.e. "I worked hard all week, I deserve a good time. So-and-so is rumored to like me and he's going downtown tonight, so I'm gonna go drink a little and talk to him.") Suddenly you are sick all day Sunday and hurting Monday morning.

Swimming & Program

1. First impressions: every coach has a tendency – whether it's a practiced art or a negative habit can be debated – either way it's a fact. They will all judge you, and you will make an impression on them within the first few weeks. If you are the first person to every single practice, if you lead a lane or push other people to be better, if you volunteer to count in dryland, if you bring in your goal sheet first, if you stay out of trouble and work

hard... the coaches will notice, and you will be known as a "hard-working, straight arrow type."

The first time you miss a practice because you oversleep, if you are the "caboose" of your lane every day, if you mess up intervals because you don't pay attention, if you miss nutrition appointments, if you show up hung-over... the coaches will notice, and you will not be able to shake off the opinion they form of you. **NO MATTER HOW WELL YOU TURN IT AROUND.** And when it comes down to making a decision of who should go to the conference meet, if you are a person they trust and respect, you will win a spot over the unreliable teammate who made a poor first impression.

I have witnessed freshman girls who got **blackout** drunk while *hosting* high school recruits and were incapable of taking them home. The recruits chose not to come to the school, and the coaches have still, to this day, not changed their opinion of those girls and still do not trust them. Do not be that kind of swimmer. Do not make that impression.

2. It is not the volume of swimming at a university that breaks swimmers. It is not the weight lifting program that makes people quit. It is not the dryland that is too hard. But it is the combination of eleven practices, three lift sessions, four or more dryland sessions, school and homework, and an **incredibly high expectation of intensity** that breaks swimmers. Take one day at a time each week and do the best you can. If you are not a strong kicker, work on it and be a **MONSTER** at pull sets to make up for it. Each practice, each week, and each meet – the coaches expect a greater caliber of intensity than any high school swimmer is used to. There are no "easy" days, but you will adapt and become *great* at handling it all.
3. Communicate with the coaches. If you are not handling things well, don't bottle it up. Talk to a coach during the day. Everyone in a program is there to



help you get better and will work with you to be in the right place. The more you communicate, the better they know you. The better they get to know you, the more they will be able to help you and the more they will trust you.

4. Follow instructions, it will keep you out of trouble in the pool. If a coach says, "Go All Out," go ALL OUT. If you cannot do another repeat ALL OUT at the same speed, that's okay. That might even be what they intended and wanted to see. If you are constantly cutting corners in order to survive practice, you are in for a whole lot of yelling. 8 x 100 @ 10 minutes, off the blocks is the simplest practice we have every year. Go all out for 8 100s. Yet, every year, one or two people are surprised to be yelled at by the Head Coach because they save up for the last one. Just follow instructions.
5. If you miss practice because of class, attend any available club practice. You want to make sure you don't fall behind

even one practice. If you have to drop a class and are ineligible for a week or two at the end of the semester, be happy to have an opportunity to work out with the club team. Most people treat swimming with a club team as a punishment because they aren't with their university team, but it is a fantastic opportunity that not every college team has. You will not get worse swimming with the club team; you will get worse sitting at home pouting.

6. Be the first at the pool, first in the water, first for dryland, first for weights, first on the bus, first downstairs on team trips for the bus. Tardiness is a serious offense. This goes back to #1.
7. Don't whine to anyone. It will make you feel worse. It will bring down others, and it might be overheard by coaches. Everyone hurts and gets sore, and no one really cares about someone else's pain. Sprinters believe they work the hardest; so does the distance group. Each is right, each is wrong. Just know

you're not the only one hurting.

8. Take every chance to rest. Nap whenever possible, and use Saturday and Sunday to recover. I'm not saying don't have fun. But it's amazing how many people complain about hurting and being unable to perform, yet take Saturday to drink and are in enormous pain on Sunday.

Each of these seem simple, but their intricacies are hard to explain. The best I can offer you are two scenarios to best exemplify all the concepts.

SCENARIO 1:

Monday morning you wake up at 4:30 AM, eat a bar, and walk to the pool. You are the first in the locker room, first changed, first on deck, waiting with your bag of gear. Since you've beat the coaches there, Coach "X" will walk in first and talk to you nicely and ask how you are. Once everyone is there, you'll separate into groups. Coach X will say the warm-up and your group-mates will stand there, asleep and unwilling to get

in yet. You hop in first and get moving. Suddenly Coach X sees you are listening and ready to go. Throughout practice you make intervals, ask few questions, and push other to work, and maybe even lead a set or two. You get out when Coach X says to and thank him on the way out. You change, go to weights, and do your job well in the weight room. You change and head to breakfast, eat fruit and some granola, and head to class. You have two classes on Monday, and participate in the class activities.

You go to PM practice, do the same as the AM, and are ready first for dryland. You offer to count for one or two of the exercises and make sure your teammates know you aren't mute and can, in fact, count to 20. You eat dinner, go home, do your homework, watch some TV or read, and go to bed. You continue to repeat this all week. Somewhere in there, a suite-mate may go out with friends and drink, and come home puking. You feel bad, let her in and get her a glass of water; but the next time she does it, you let her figure out how to get into bed herself and be a big girl.

Saturday AM after morning practice, your suite-mates say everyone is going to so-and-so's place for a "pre-game" before the football game. You agree to tag along, but insist you are not drinking. You go, hang out with friends as they drink, and all head to the game together. At the game, you have a fun time watching teammates cheer and jump on each other in the stands, while your friends bake and suffer in the sun (since they're drunk and dehydrated). You go home with everyone after and take the rest of the day to either hang out with sober friends, see a movie, or do some homework. That night, your suite-mates go downtown and drink all night, coming back at the crack of dawn. Sunday: you get to do laundry, make sure you're ready for the next week, and have some free time. Your suite-mates will sleep all day, trying to recover from their hangovers.

You repeat this every week for months.

Over that time, someone will get in serious trouble for drinking. Either from drinking and driving, being arrested for having an

open container, public intoxication, or develop a bad reputation with the opposite sex; etc. They will even put on major weight because of the drinking. Their partying and problems in school (from not doing homework, or skipping assignments) will catch up to them in the pool, and they will start to perform poorly. Meanwhile, you'll be getting even better and running them over. Coaches will notice you, and you'll be in a good groove.

SCENARIO 2:

Monday morning you wake up at 4:45 AM, drink a 5-Hour Energy to wake up. You are last in the locker room, last changed, last on deck, flailing with your bag of gear. Since you're late, Coach X won't acknowledge you as much. Once everyone is ready, you'll separate into groups. Coach X will either already have said the warm-up and your group-mates will be getting ready, or you will be getting ready instead of listening, asleep and unwilling to get in yet. You hop in last and will have Coach X barking at you to get in. Suddenly Coach X thinks you are tardy because you don't care (whether it's true or not). Throughout practice you make intervals. You ask frequently what time it is because you have an early class, and Coach X gets frustrated that you're more interested in leaving than working out. You change, go to weights, and do your job well in the weight room. You change and head to breakfast, Reese's Puffs (because they're your favorite and you've never had them at home) and three chocolate chip muffins, and head to class.

You have two classes on Monday, but sit in the back because you're nervous. In the back it's darker, so the professor can't see you as well. Your sugar rush from breakfast isn't helping, and because you woke up "early," you doze off once or twice (which the professor actually notices).

You go to PM practice, do the same as the AM, and survive your first dryland. You whine once that your legs still hurt from AM, and suddenly the Senior Olympian on the team barks at you to be quiet because everyone is hurting. You eat pizza slices for dinner, go home, watch some TV, and go to bed. You continue to repeat this all week,

feeling more sluggish as you go (since you're not eating correctly). Several nights during the week, a suite-mate calls from downtown, where she's drunk and asking for a ride. You get up at 2 AM and help her home, and get her into her bed.

Saturday AM after morning practice, your suite-mates say everyone is going to so-and-so's place for a "pre-game" before the football game. You agree to tag along because it's what everyone's doing. You go, hang out with friends and drink when they do, and all head to the game together. At the game, you feel a little sick but don't want to admit it. You go home with everyone after and take a nap. That night, you and your suite-mates go downtown and drink all night, coming back at the crack of dawn, sick and throwing up. Sunday: you will sleep all day, trying to recover from the hangover.

You repeat this every week for months.

Over that time, you develop a reputation for taking care of drunks, and find yourself taking care of others at the cost of your own health and sleep. Someone will get in serious trouble for drinking (from drinking and driving, being arrested for having an open container, public intoxication, or develop a bad reputation with the opposite sex; etc.). They will even put on major weight because of the drinking. Partying and problems in school (from not doing homework, or skipping assignments) will catch up to them in the pool, and you will start to perform poorly. Coaches will notice, and any bad practice you have had will quickly be associated with how you act outside the pool, no matter how hard you're working.

Small things each day will add up. Do the best you can and don't be afraid to ask for some help. ■

ASCA ADVOCACY TODAY

By John Leonard



Intro By **DON HEIDARY:** Head Coach of Orinda Aquatics

Far beyond coach education and certification, the ASCA maintains a vigilant watch over the integrity and long-term viability of our sport. There are forces and trends at work today that threaten the structure, equity, and future success of USA Swimming.

Left unchecked or unchallenged, we are at risk of witnessing a vastly different swimming landscape decades from now, than the one we would all envision, or hope for. While education provides our coaches valuable resources for today, it may very well be these efforts in advocacy that provide a greater sense of security for the future, for our coaches and our athletes. And

as there a number of organizations that encompass the many swimming disciplines in the United States, the ASCA will be working for the entirety of our sport, as ultimately, they (and we) are all connected.

As such, the Board of Directors has asked the ASCA to provide regular updates on these advocacy efforts. Please know that this organization will be vigilant to these challenges, and any others that may arise, and our Executive Director, John Leonard, will be relentless in his pursuit to protect this great sport. Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to an ASCA staff or Board member.

The ASCA has been involved in the political work of advocacy for our sport and sports in the more general sense, since its inception in 1958. *Example.* USA Swimming was founded due to the insistence of the ASCA Board that swimming break away from the old AAU in the 70's.

Every month, I am going to give you some "bullet points" on the things that we have been engaged in, in the act of advocacy in the past month. Details generally will not be shared as effective political action works best when done quietly, but this way our membership will know what is "on our radar screen" each month and know that we are active in advocacy in these areas.

Anti-Doping:

- » A constant advocacy issue for the past 28 years.

College Scholarships:

- » Support for college scholarship swimming to continue in the NCAA framework.

"We Deserve Better"

- » Campaign for better governance to serve our sport from FINA and the IOC, and USOC.

Fair Representation:

- » From third world nations with their BEST swimmers, not the best swimmers who are politically connected there, competing at the world level.

Task Force:

- » Creation of a task force to address doping issues in age group swimming.

More next month. - **JL**



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Editorial by [John Leonard](#)



EDITOR'S NOTE: I sent the note below to the ASCA Board just before Christmas, 2014. Within 72 hours, more than half of the Board had strongly responded in support. I believe this is an issue that our entire ASCA membership needs to recognize. Anytime there is an attempt to “dumb down” any of our groups, we are all at risk.

At the last convention, there were some cockeyed schemes proposed to remove former USA Swimming Presidents from the Board of Directors in their current status. The completely absurd rationale that I heard was that the individuals involved were too powerful, too intimidating, and too smart to defeat in argument in the Board. (Despite the fact that the ex-Presidents are

notoriously slow to speak, preferring to let the current Board members dominate the conversation.)

So the “best” way to make the one-eyed man King was to blind everyone else. (As per the saying, *“In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is King.”*)

If you remove the best and brightest



from the room, all those with much less experience, background, and history successfully getting elected suddenly have a bigger voice. The ex-Presidents are the best informed people and represent institutional knowledge in the very best possible way. (Hence why our constitution places them there.)

Or as Winston Churchill once said: “When the eagles are silent, the parrots will jabber.”

Probably because I never got to attack this line of reasoning at the HOD, I persist in fighting with furniture about it. The idiocy overwhelms me. The HOD was too wise to ever let this nonsense grow legs. I hope that remains true forever but just in case, let us remember we need the best and brightest and most knowledgeable among us – in the room and speaking!

Today I found an advertisement (of all things) that said: “**Think** Courageously, **Engage** Deliberately, **Persuade** Compellingly.”

That’s my advice to any USA Swimming Board members who are too intimidated to argue with the great Presidents above. Along with President Truman’s “If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.” I’ve lost my share of arguments to all of them, and thank God for it. Made me better. Thanks to all you Presidents.

ASCA BOARD MEMBER Mike Lawrence responded with:

“John, I was in the aisle when debate closed on this issue last fall. After 12 years on the BOD (and a lot of time in the system) here is my experience: the BOD can be an intimidating, intimidating place, but the people less so. Any BOD requires that newbies work hard to understand the issues, politics, and personalities; you are playing catch up to get to work. Earning respect by being respectful, being prepared, and displaying an earnest interest in learning goes a loooooooooooooong way to becoming a good Board member.

When I joined the BOD, I was intimidated because I lacked experience, expertise, and familiarity with just about everyone around the table. But I took seriously the responsibilities (both mundane and extraordinary), asked questions in public, and sought advice in private from past Presidents. Why the past Presidents? Simple: it was instant, fast-tracked education.

I was never rebuffed or treated as an inferior member of the BOD by any past President, and I gained the confidence to respectfully disagree with them and hold to a position I believed in during debate. I stood for election and continued to stand once elected.

There are former BOD members who do not believe the past Presidents make the BOD stronger. I disagree. What I’ve seen in many cases is someone who whiffed on some responsibilities, or wound up on the wrong side of a voting issue, usually more than once. Welcome to the Deep End.

I’ve been on the losing side of a vote and it wasn’t because past Presidents lined up against me, or exerted too much influence; it was because the majority of the *voting* members of the BOD disagreed with me. And I do not believe for an instant that the majority of the BOD is intimidated or improperly influenced by past Presidents.

Of the 500 delegates in the HOD, perhaps only 50 have spent enough time in the boardroom to make an educated statement about the value of the past Presidents. If the ASCA position is that the past Presidents contribute and guide USA Swimming, our challenge will be to educate others and stand prepared to address specious arguments leading to the 2015 Convention.

This is an important issue that will not go gently into the night. I hope sharing my experience and thoughts contributes to our resolve. Keep it on the agenda.” - ML ■

10 HABITS OF Remarkably CHARISMATIC *People*

By **Jeff Haden**
Contributing Editor, Inc.



Charisma isn't something you have.
It's something you earn. Here's how.

Some people instantly make us feel important. Some people instantly make us feel special. Some people light up a room just by walking in. We can't always define it, but some people have it: They're naturally charismatic. Unfortunately, natural charisma quickly loses its impact. Familiarity breeds, well, familiarity.

But some people are remarkably charismatic: They build and maintain great relationships, consistently influence (in a good way) the people around them, consistently make people feel better about themselves—they're the kind of people everyone wants to be around...and wants to be.

Fortunately we can, because being remarkably charismatic isn't about our level of success or our presentation skills or how we dress or the image we project—it's about what we do. Here are the 10 habits of remarkably charismatic people:

1. They listen way more than they talk.

Ask questions. Maintain eye contact. Smile. Frown. Nod. Respond—not so much verbally, but nonverbally. That's all it takes to show the other person they're important.

Then when you do speak, don't offer advice unless you're asked. Listening shows you care a lot more than offering advice, because when you offer advice in most cases you make the conversation about you, not them.

Don't believe me? Who is *'here's what I would do'* about: you or the other person?

Only speak when you have something important to say—and always define important as what matters to the other person, not to you.

2. They don't practice selective hearing.

Some people—I guarantee you know people like this—are incapable of hearing anything said by the people they feel are somehow beneath them. Sure, you speak to them, but that particular falling tree doesn't make a sound in the forest, because there's no one actually listening.

Remarkably charismatic people listen closely to everyone, and they make all of us, regardless of our position or social status or "level," feel like we have something in common with them. Because we do: We're all people.

3. They put their stuff away.

Don't check your phone. Don't glance at your monitor. Don't focus on anything else, even for a moment. You can never connect with others if you're busy connecting with your stuff, too.

Give the gift of your full attention. That's a gift few people give. That gift alone will make others want to be around you and remember you.

4. They give before they receive—and often they never receive.

Never think about what you can get. Focus on what you can provide. Giving is the only way to establish a real connection and relationship. Focus, even in part and even for a moment, on what you can get out of the other person, and you show that the only person who really matters is you.

5. They don't act self-important...

The only people who are impressed by your stuffy, pretentious, self-important self are other stuffy, pretentious, self-important people. The rest of us aren't impressed. We're irritated, put off, and uncomfortable.

And we hate when you walk in the room.

6. ...Because they realize other people are more important.

You already know what you know. You know your opinions. You know your perspectives and points of view. That stuff isn't important, because it's already yours. You can't learn anything from yourself.

But you don't know what other people know, and everyone, no matter who they are, knows things you don't know. That makes them a lot more important than you—because they're people you can learn from.

7. They shine the spotlight on others.

No one receives enough praise. No one. Tell people what they did well. Wait, you say you don't know what they did well?

Shame on you—it's your job to know. It's your job to find out ahead of time.

Not only will people appreciate your praise, they'll appreciate the fact you care enough to pay attention to what they're doing. Then they'll feel a little more accomplished

and a lot more important.

8. They choose their words.

The words you use impact the attitude of others. For example, you don't have to go to a meeting; you get to go meet with other people. You don't have to create a presentation for a new client; you get to share cool stuff with other people. You don't have to go to the gym; you get to work out and improve your health and fitness.

You don't have to interview job candidates; you get to select a great person to join your team. We all want to associate with happy, enthusiastic, fulfilled people. The words you choose can help other people feel better about themselves—and make you feel better about yourself, too.

9. They don't discuss the failings of others...

Granted, we all like hearing a little gossip. We all like hearing a little dirt.

The problem is, we don't necessarily like—and we definitely don't respect—the people who dish that dirt.

Don't laugh at other people. When you do, the people around you wonder if you sometimes laugh at them.

10. ...But they readily admit their failings.

Incredibly successful people are often assumed to have charisma simply because they're successful. Their success seems to create a halo effect, almost like a glow. Keyword is seem.

You don't have to be incredibly successful to be remarkably charismatic. Scratch the shiny surface, and many successful people have all the charisma of a rock. But you do have to be incredibly genuine to be remarkably charismatic.

Be humble. Share your screw-ups. Admit your mistakes. Be the cautionary tale. And laugh at yourself. While you should never laugh at other people, you should always laugh at yourself. People won't laugh at you. People will laugh with you.

They'll like you better for it—and they'll want to be around you a lot more.

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Coaches Receive \$300,000 IN AWARD PAYMENTS

Since its inception in 2001, the National Team Coaches Incentive & Reward Program has made more than \$3.8M in direct cash awards to individual coaches. For 2014, \$330,000 in total payments were made to 38 coaches.

The average payment was \$8,684/coach and the highest payment was \$27,635. Payments were based on the medal-winning performances of athletes at the Pan Pacific Championships.

A notable aspect of the program is that an athlete's development coach receives the same award payment as the current coach of record. Following is a list of the coaches who were awarded payments for 2014.

Scott Armstrong	Bruce Patmos
Patti Haney	Carl Cederquist
Kit Ashenfelter	Jeff Pease
Jim Henry	Chris Collier
Chuck Batchelor	Franz Resseguie
Michael Lawrence	Cathy Corcione
Harvey Humphries	Bill Rose
Steve Lochte	Rick DeMont
Allison Beebe	Dave Salo
Sergio Lopez	Dave Durden
Jay Benner	Todd Schmitz
David Marsh	Jack Fabian
Mike Bottom	Yuri Suguiyama
Lea Maurer	Bruce Gemmell
Bob Bowman	Gregg Troy
Teri McKeever	Dan Greaves
Steve Bultman	Jon Urbanchek
Greg Meehan	Bob Groseth
Clayton Cagle	Corrina Weinkofsky





ASCA - Age Group Coach Certification 10 & Under Performance Standards - 2013-2014



National 10th Place Time - Good for ASCA Level 3, 4, and 5 Recognition					
GIRLS	EVENT (SCY)	BOYS	GIRLS	EVENT (LCM)	BOYS
26.51	50 FR	26.28	30.06	50 FR	29.79
58.30	100 FR	56.92	1:05.85	100 FR	1:05.43
2:07.27	200 FR	2:05.39	2:24.56	200 FR	2:21.42
5:38.89	500 FR	5:33.08	5:04.73	400 FR	4:54.59
30.28	50 BA	29.96	34.85	50 BA	34.32
1:05.22	100 BA	1:04.65	1:15.75	100 BA	1:14.84
33.82	50 BR	33.88	38.76	50 BR	39.09
1:14.04	100 BR	1:14.77	1:24.72	100 BR	1:25.20
29.08	50 FL	28.80	32.27	50 FL	32.29
1:04.75	100 FL	1:04.49	1:13.48	100 FL	1:12.26
1:06.13	100 IM	1:05.82			
2:23.10	200 IM	2:22.75	2:42.16	200 IM	2:41.53
5:17.93	400 IM	5:16.35	5:59.96	400 IM	6:10.00

National 1st Place Time - Good for ASCA Level 5 Recognition					
GIRLS	EVENT (SCY)	BOYS	GIRLS	EVENT (LCM)	BOYS
25.62	50 FR	25.42	29.51	50 FR	29.03
56.23	100 FR	53.81	1:03.35	100 FR	1:03.79
2:02.50	200 FR	2:00.81	2:17.97	200 FR	2:17.77
5:27.97	500 FR	5:22.06	4:52.15	400 FR	4:48.97
28.93	50 BA	27.52	33.10	50 BA	33.42
1:01.85	100 BA	1:01.81	1:10.96	100 BA	1:12.17
31.73	50 BR	32.23	36.13	50 BR	37.03
1:08.07	100 BR	1:11.41	1:17.74	100 BR	1:22.31
27.88	50 FL	27.23	31.02	50 FL	30.89
1:01.20	100 FL	1:00.61	1:08.67	100 FL	1:08.11
1:02.89	100 IM	1:02.91			
2:16.29	200 IM	2:16.53	2:33.76	200 IM	2:36.55
4:55.11	400 IM	5:06.86	5:32.02	400 IM	5:37.49

ASCA has long valued the role of the Coaches of 10 & Under swimmers and their contribution to the development of our national age group program. We have taken the Top 10 rankings, long course and short course, from the most recent seasons of each, and established those times as ATHLETE ACHIEVEMENT TIMES for Coach Certification for coaches of 10&U swimmers. The 2013-2014 season's List of Times can now be included with a coach's overall performance list to accumulate credits towards certification level.

The coach must be the Primary Coach of the athlete. Primary Coach is defined as a coach who plans and executes 90% of any athletes

training in the 12 months prior to the achievement. Proof of Time is available in the USA Swimming "SWIMS" database online. Send proof of performance with your request for Certification upgrade. One National ranking is needed to access Level 3 Age Group certification; twenty plus are needed for Level 4, and forty plus for Level 5.

An age group designation can be any of 10 & Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18 times from the SWIMS database. (Note: USA Swimming still does not provide certificates for ten and under athletes, but the data on rankings still exist.) Congratulations to all of our 10 & Under Coaches. Keep up the great work! ■

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SCARY science

One of the developments I have followed for a decade or more, and find very frightening for all of us, has surfaced strongly in the literature of maturation.

Older coaches have all remarked about the (to us) peculiar frequency of “early maturation” in young females. In the journal *Pediatrics*, it is noted that development of secondary sexual characteristics is now beginning at age 8/9 in girls and as young as 9/10 in males.

The article goes on to explain that the trend is accelerating. As world-wide obesity increases, so do the signs of early female maturation. Male early increase, less scientifically notable. Also noted, “distance from the equator” (of residence) has a negative impact on the trend... meaning that those near the Arctic Circle, less influenced, those born and living closer to the equator, much more influenced.

The ways this effects swimming performance are many, but the most obvious is the window for aerobic development. For many decades, physiologists have told us that the ideal window exists in males AND females from 6 months before the onset of puberty to about 2/3 years into puberty. So if puberty begins at age 9, that means that the ideal window for aerobic development of females has moved from age 11/12 to ages 8/9? Wow.

Various journal articles are clear that the impact is seen more clearly in young women than young men.

This should be making us all “rethink” both how we do our aerobic development work and WHEN we begin it and in what fashion. We must take care not to “train before we teach.” Increasing training volume before establishing biomechanically correct strokes clearly is a recipe for long term failure. If we should be increasing volume around age 9, then there is intense pressure to establish good biomechanics in all strokes prior to that age.

Important news for all swim coaches to consider. ■

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Lewis".

A Tale of Two Communities And the **LESSONS** They Taught a Swim Coach

By **Michael F. Switalski**
Buffalo City Swim Racers

A HISTORY:

At the age of 16, I became a lifeguard in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. During my summer months in college, I would lifeguard for a local water park (now out-of business). On Wednesday evenings, the park owner would rent out the facility to interested groups. One of the regular groups to rent out the park was an inner-city church youth group that used a blue bus to transport their minority kids. The ongoing joke among the lifeguards at the park was about who would have the most rescues that evening and how many would there be. The rescues were nothing more than assisting struggling swimmers reach the side of the pool after coming down one of the park's slides. As a white male from a suburban neighborhood involved in competitive swimming, I could not understand why these kids had no swimming ability. I was completely oblivious to the challenges many inner-city families face when providing for their kids. I thought everyone had parents that could provide for them and give them opportunities. The blue bus was my first experience with inner-city families that had financial challenges. The memory of the bus was something that always stuck with me while I coached and later moved to Buffalo, New York in 1997.

In 1997, while coaching a program in the suburbs of Buffalo, I was presented with an opportunity to help an inner-city middle school start swim lessons for some of its students. The person that presented this opportunity had two swimmers in my suburban program and was the assistant principal at the school. When I asked him

about the school, he described the school as 100% African American and 100% low income. The first thing that stuck out was the ethnicity. Being young and unworldly, I told him that I did not believe we would persuade many children from that community to swim. From my experience with USA Swimming, seeing the faces in the crowds at swim meets, and always hearing the phrase "Black people don't swim," I thought it would be a long shot to get any sort of numbers to join.

After giving the program some thought, I suggested that I visit every classroom to explain our plan in greater detail. The school had roughly 650 students. After visiting every classroom, over 500 submitted permission forms to join the program. A remarkable number. The challenge I now had was how to get 500 kids through the 4 land, 14 yard pool, three days a week for 90 minutes each day. So we developed academic and behavior criteria for the children to reduce the number. Since there was not going to be a financial obligation from the families, we established academic standards to be eligible for the program. We provided a roster and the criteria to the school's teachers, who then submitted the names of the kids that met the criteria. The list was reduced to fewer than 100 names. Those students were then tested in the water and we chose 50 kids to start the program with. The students that were not chosen, for whatever the reason, were told to focus on their academics and if a student were to leave the program, we would choose the

next best student to participate.

The 500 permission form response opened my eyes to the thought that maybe the statement "Black people don't swim" was false. Maybe, just maybe, that phrase was an incomplete sentence that needed an answer to the question "why?" Was it access, fear, transportation, economics? If so, how could an answer be found?

The program became known as the Buffalo Schools Swim Racers. Three of us were considered the program's founders. One person was tied to fundraising, the second to the Buffalo Public School system, and the third (myself) was responsible for coaching and the day-to-day operations.

Fast forward to 2001: the program is in 10 schools, with 12 coaches serving over 250 students, when I am presented with the opportunity to be the head coach at a local college. I accept the position and the program ultimately closes its doors a few months later. The next 10 years, while as a college coach and then a teacher, I regretted leaving the program. I struggled with, but did not believe, the thought that no one else could keep the program together but me. I considered the reasons: was it me, our structure, a lack of support? What could it be?

STARTING AGAIN

In February 2012, I was approached with the thought of restarting the program. My response was absolutely, but I decided to take my time and create the program the right

way, with a Board of Directors, committees, and transparency. In the previous program, the three of us worked in our own silo with minimal communication, bookkeeping, or outside support. The new program would be like nothing I was familiar with associated with USA Swimming: a potential new model to attract diverse or challenged families to the sport of swimming.

For months, I researched everything relevant to starting a club, fundraising, grants, statistics about Buffalo, obesity, crime, household income, and academics. My goal was to make the program an agent of change on several levels. The program would not be one that rewarded the successful students but would be an open lottery. I wanted to impact the lives of children that needed it, not just reward those that are already being successful in the classroom. I felt that a mix of troubled or challenged students intermingled with already successful students could provide peer mentorship. In addition, I wanted to add successful people as board members, committee members, and staff, who would provide leadership and role models.

The Support of the Community

I started to think about who I could find to be on my Board of Directors. I sought the help of Sue Anderson, Director of Programs and Services from USA Swimming and informed her about my plan. Sue was very interested in the possibilities of the program. I started to reach out to respected people in the local swimming community, local business owners, friends, and people in the civil service. What I needed were people with connections, leadership experience, knowledge of how to build a business, and manage finances. I also needed people with knowledge about swimming and the operation of a swim organization.

A meeting was set for May 2012, where I could present to all these people about a unique program that focused on motivating disadvantaged children to perform in the classroom and reward them with free swim lessons. To educate families about nutrition in a community that is at greater risk of obesity over any other. To create a model that could be replicated in other urban centers around the United States. We had roughly 30 people in the meeting, 28 volunteered. We formed a Board of Directors and several committees (audit, fundraising, grant-writing,

communications, governance, nominating, parent recruitment, and student-athlete recognition). Sue flew out for our inaugural volunteer meeting to meet with everyone and help me identify who could be good in what positions. We chose a president that I felt could ask the hard questions, manage meetings, and was connected into the philanthropic community. Our vice president had knowledge about the swimming community. Our treasurer is a certified public accountant. The secretary has experience building a million dollar business. Our at-large members have experience in communications, swimming, entrepreneurship, and law. In July 2012, the Buffalo City Swim Racers received its not-for-profit status. By November 2012, the board had raised about \$4000 to start the program and were actively searching for additional funding.

The network was taking form. Board and committee members were introducing me to new people on a regular basis. I would have breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings. I would be asked to attend meetings at well established businesses. Over the first few months, we identified the people that would be truly active and involved and created our board. As the network grew, we found people with specific experiences that could help us create our committees. A copywriter, a marketing vice president, a certified public accountant, an IT specialist, a chief financial officer, and a Head Trades Manager among others were all actively involved in the formation of the board and committees.

The Trust of the Community

While creating our board and committees with prominent people in the City of Buffalo, the next step was to start thinking about where the swimmers would come from. Our board president and I went to King Center Charter School and met with the Executive Director. The school is located in one of the most challenging (crime, economics) areas of Buffalo. He has been involved with the community for several years and offered me a small piece of advice. He talked to me about developing trust in the community. He explained that this community is skeptical of new programs and how long they will be around. They receive promise after promise from politicians and other groups, but nothing develops or if it does, it doesn't last. He recommended that if we were to do this program to make sure that it was something that would become a fixture in

the community. He continued to talk about the financial challenges of the community. They could not afford to pay for anything like suits, goggles, caps, etc. Eighty percent of kids are from single parent homes that did not have transportation to get their kids to the pool.

The Executive Director, our board president, and I continued our discussions over the next few weeks and decided to run a pilot program with 15 students from his school. The pilot ran for 6 weeks in November and December of 2012. A local bus company stepped forward to transport the students, right after school to the pool for a reduced price. Buses solved one half of the dilemma for parents. A local tutoring agency offered their services for the pilot, so each student received one hour of swimming lessons and one hour of tutoring three days a week. By the end of the final week of the pilot, word was spreading around the school about the program. People were inquiring about the new swim program at the school. We started getting interest.

On the final day of the pilot, we were able to demonstrate the effectiveness of our belief. We hosted an exhibition event where our swimmers could proudly show off their newly acquired skills. We invited parents, politicians, members of local foundations, government officials, and faculty from King Center Charter School. The results on every level were amazing. We had all these esteemed guests watching parents and grandparents cry and show a sense of pride that their "babies" could swim. The cheers were deafening. The energy was electrifying. And every child walked onto and off that pool deck with their head high, chest puffed out and with pride in what they had accomplished. The trust had been established.

From that exhibition event, the City of Buffalo Fire Commissioner donated \$5,000 and a local bank donated \$10,000. We were on our way. A prominent local real estate company donated free office space and a marketing agency offered pro bono services. The marketing agency created our team logo which reflects the principle of the program. The swimmer is color neutral like our sport should be and is raised up by an open book representing the importance of education as a foundation for everything a person does in life. They created our team brochure, stationary, and work with us on our newsletter.

We took a few months to examine everything we had done in those six weeks to determine if we needed to change anything. In March 2013, we kicked off our first day of swimming as an established program. The entire group from the pilot program returned. We opened spaces for 20 additional students from King Center Charter School. A local YMCA pool is what we use. As the program started to grow, members of the YMCA started to ask about the program. Could their child get involved? Did we offer learn-to-swim for adults? Were we in any other locations around Buffalo? Ninety-nine percent of the inquiries were from minorities.

We knew we had to expand. The easiest way to do this was to ask for additional pool time at the YMCA. The problem: how do we find the funds to pay for additional pool time? The YMCA stepped forward with a proposal to charge the program per day instead of hourly regardless if the time was for one hour or more. The fee was also reduced. Because of the assistance of the YMCA, we were able to add a second block of time to our schedule and make the program available to the YMCA members and the surrounding community. On November 30, 2013, a 9 year-old girl, one of the original swimmers from the pilot program that would not put her face in water for her first three weeks on the team, competed in a local swim meet, marking the introduction of a competitive level to the program. The City of Buffalo Parks and Recreation Department has heard about our program and is working with us to get the program into the city pools.

The Local Colleges Get Involved

As the program has grown, so has its need for funding. One way the program is supported is through grants. The chairs of two departments at a local college have volunteered their time to write grants for the program. The one department chair actually uses the grant-writing process as part of his curriculum for doctoral students to gain experience. One of the important parts to writing a grant is the ability to show measurable results. So in 2015, they are working with the Buffalo City Swim Racers to track academic performance, classroom attendance, Body Mass Index, and self-esteem. The other department's

focus is on Urban Studies. They are going to track where our students come from and the challenges they face in their neighborhoods.

A second local college has a professor that specializes in childhood obesity. We are working with him on the education of our families as it relates to healthy food choices in a food desert. A food desert is a community that relies on shopping at local convenient stores because supermarkets are not in their neighborhood and families do not have personal transportation to get to them in other areas of a city. The food choices at convenient stores are traditionally not as healthy as what is offered in supermarket chains. Additionally, the prices are higher and a budget cannot be stretched as far. The vice president of the college is working to get us free access to the college pool. We have also had conversations with him about working with the Elementary Education students at the college to offer study tables at our site and future sites.

THE LESSONS

Lesson 1: Swimming is colorless. While mislabeled as a “white” or “suburban” sport, I cannot help but think that perhaps the reason why many African-Americans do not swim has more to do with a lack of pools in their communities and opportunities.

Lesson 2: Fears can be overcome no matter how deep they may go. While the belief that there is a “cultural fear” of the water that has been passed down through many generations of certain ethnic populations. Providing the learn-to-swim opportunity can inspire some families to eliminate that fear for future generations.

Lesson 3: First generation swimmers can create a sense of pride in families whose previous generations were not afforded the opportunity for whatever reason. To hear from parents and grandparents about how proud they are of what their kids are learning and how they were not afforded the same opportunities in their childhood is both tragic and inspiring.

Lesson 4: Trust is the most treasured gift that a community can give you. For a community or communities to believe in your efforts and vision for their children is something that inspires you to do your best.

THE OUTLOOK

In a little over 2 years of existence, the volunteers of the Buffalo City Swim Racers have raised over \$200,000 in funding and donation of services. With the continued support and growth of the team's network, we have demonstrated how two communities can come together to support the youth of a city and offer an experience that would otherwise be difficult to provide.

In 2014, 136 children registered with the Buffalo City Swim Racers. 129 are considered low-income. 98% are from a different ethnic group than Caucasian. Perhaps the most interesting part about the children from the program is that we are nearly 50/50 when it comes to gender. How we can attract perhaps the most difficult population (African American boys) is undetermined and may warrant further investigation.

In 2015, the Buffalo City Swim Racers plans to increase its fundraising efforts with the intention of expanding the program to other areas of the City of Buffalo. We are looking at 5 potential sites for the program. Each site added, possesses the potential to add 50-80 students.

In addition to expanding the water side of the program, another goal of the Buffalo City Swim Racers is to motivate children to perform in the classroom. With the current academic standards of the program as the focus, we hope to add study tables and tutoring to the programs services as a way to facilitate the academic efforts of our participants. I could not be more pleased with what we have accomplished or more excited about what the possibilities still are. Every day, the staff of the Buffalo City Swim Racers focuses on the growth of its participants as people and as students. And because of all of those involved as participants or contributors, I have grown. ■

About the Author: Michael Switalski is the founder/head coach of the Buffalo City Swim Racers in Buffalo, NY. He is an ASCA Level 4 coach. To learn more about the Buffalo City Swim Racers, go to www.buffaloracers.org. To make a donation to the Buffalo City Swim Racers, contact Michael Switalski at (716) 359-4729.

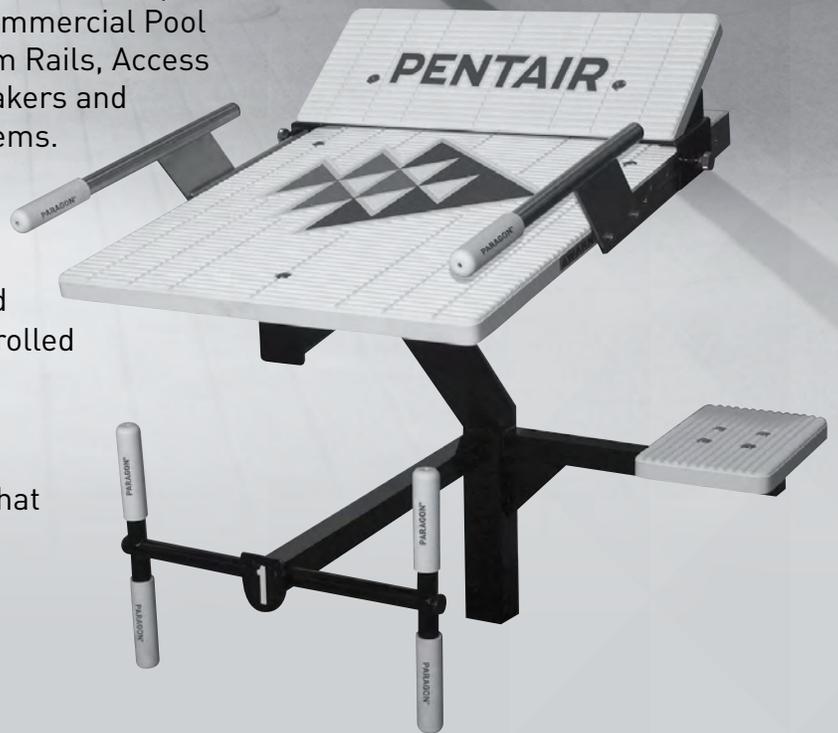


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