

Thank You!

As we celebrate the holiday season, the MSST coaches would like to THANK all of our team families for your dedication to the team. The greatest joy as a coach is to work with young people and help them achieve their goals. We are thankful that we have the opportunity to work with so many great athletes and families. We appreciate that we are all bound together by our love of the water; our passion for the sport of swimming; and our knowledge that the life lessons learned through competitive swimming can play powerful roles in our growth and development. By setting goals and putting in the effort to achieve them, MSST athletes gain a strong work ethic that can last a life time. Thank you for sharing in our values of hard work, sportsmanship, and team spirit! Thank you for supporting our athletes and MSST!

"I give thanks everyday that I've been able to take my craziness and make it work for me."

Training Like Champions

The sport of swimming allows athletes to experience a variety of successes. Swimmers can achieve best times; they can win ribbons and medals; they can attain qualifying times and an opportunity to race at selective meets; they can even gain the chance to represent Alaska or USA Swimming on a Zone Team or a National Team. No matter what the outcome of a race, athletes can gain something from every event – whether it is the joy of achievement or the satisfaction of learning from experiences. Our athletes can be champions in every race. The coaches believe that, since swimmers often have the chance to be champions at the meets, it is important that they practice the behaviors of champions every day in training. By rehearsing the attitudes and actions of champions in training, MSST swimmers learn to be champions in swimming and in life. What are the attitudes and actions of champions that MSST coaches work on with the athletes? While there are as many championship attitudes and actions as there are champions, some of the key concepts that the MSST coaches reinforce are the following:

- The first prerequisite for success is attendance. Consistent practice attendance is necessary for long term success.
 - Champions do their very best to be prepared for training; to maintain a positive attitude in their training; and to complete their training with a high level of quality. They are committed to their training body, mind and soul!
 - Champions challenge themselves every day in every workout. Champions are focused on their goals and push their physical and mental limits in training. They know that it is only in breaking through these limits that improvements can be made.
 - Champions encourage those around them to challenge themselves. True champions seek success for themselves, their teammates and their team. They take responsibility for supporting their teammates and pushing them to work hard too.
 - Champions appreciate those who help them achieve their goals. They are never boastful or too proud to say THANK YOU to their teammates, coaches and parents.
 - Champions show courage in the face of fear and perseverance in the face of failure.
- What other qualities to champions possess? How will you train like champions today? In what other venues can you be champions?*

"In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure."

MSST Team Philosophy

The team philosophy is encompassed in the words **COURAGE** and **PERSEVERANCE**. **COURAGE** is the willingness to accept risks and endure failures. Courage does not exist without a situation that presents the opportunity for success. We encourage our athletes to embrace these opportunities and not fear the outcome.

PERSEVERANCE is the backbone of success in any endeavor in life. One cannot succeed at the highest levels without enduring some setbacks. These difficult times can create a lack of faith, low self-esteem, and an obvious drop in enthusiasm. Perseverance is the quality that transcends these difficult times. It allows that individual to find the true strength of his or her character.

MSST believes that **COURAGE** and **PERSEVERANCE** developed by swimming will prepare our athletes for the challenges they will face in life. We hope that you find sufficient opportunities on MSST to display your courage and perseverance! The coaches can certainly recall MSST athletes who have displayed these qualities in the last five years, in the last year, in the last month and in the last week. Way to go MSST! Keep up the great work! You are terrific role models!

"Each time we face our fear, we gain strength, courage, and confidence in the doing."

Training Your Goals

The MSST Coaches subscribe to a specific training philosophy for all of our team members. We believe that swimmers must "train their goals." This requires that, first; swimmers acknowledge their goals for the season, for the month, for the week and for the day. Each day in each set, we ask that swimmers have something that they are working to achieve. This focus and effort in practice is necessary in order for swimmers to drop time, to achieve qualifying times and to improve their stroke technique. With their focus directed toward their goals, swimmers must attend practice consistently and exert their best efforts regularly. Throughout the years, the athletes who have had the most success in our program have been those who attended practice most frequently and challenged themselves daily. The swimmers' attendance and effort should directly match their specific performance goals. The most challenging goals will require the greatest attendance and focus.

Finally, achieving goals is much more than just getting pumped up from the race or feeling motivated by external rewards. Athletes are most likely to get pumped up psychologically and race their best when they are confident that they have worked hard in practices, and when they feel powerful in the water thanks to their training. The most effective way to feel confident and ready to race is to "train your goals" in every practice.

"Records are produced in practice. They happen in meets."