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Dear Coaches,

Quote of the week:

“Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which, in prosperous circumstances, would have lain dormant.”

~Horace (65-8 BC) Roman Poet

The Chuck Wielgus Blog: The Value of Volunteers

Volunteerism is as American as apple pie. The notion of volunteering is born out of need, and the idea that people within a community can come together to overcome that need.

Within our swimming community, I have often referred to coaches as the essential segment of our club system, but the system requires events and it is the volunteers who make the events work so well.

Throughout the entire month of March, USA Swimming is recognizing its tens of thousands of volunteers who are such an important part of the swimming community. We're calling March: #1VolunTeam Month.

There is something new on our website every day, and our communications team will be using social media to put out messages and to recognize the work of volunteers in our sport. We are also bestowing awards on some of most dedicated volunteers, including Jill Maki of Lionville Riptide Swim Team in Exton, Pennsylvania, who won the Dusk to Dawn Award.

[Read more:](#)



Katie Ledecky Named Semifinalist for Sullivan Award

Vote Now and every day for her to win.

Olympic gold medalist and world-record-holding swimmer Katie Ledecky (Bethesda, Md.) has been named one of 14 semifinalists for the 85th annual AAU James E. Sullivan Award, presented annually to the “outstanding amateur athlete in the United States.”

Online voting for the Sullivan Award is open through Sunday. [Click here to cast a vote](#) for Ledecky and view the other nominees. The list will be trimmed to six finalists, who will attend the award presentation Sunday, April 19 at the New York Athletic Club in New York City.

The 17-year-old Ledecky posted five world-record swims last summer. She set world records in the 400- and 1500-meter freestyle events on back-to-back nights at the 2014 Pan Pacific Championships, and in Australia became the first woman to win four individual gold medals at a single Pan Pacs, as she topped the podium in the 200m, 400m, 800m and 1500m free and added gold in the 800m free relay. At the 2014 Phillips 66 National Championships, Ledecky won titles in the 200m, 400m and 800m free. In December 2014 at the AT&T Winter National Championships, Ledecky won three events and set an American record in the 1650-yard free.

She was named USA Swimming's Athlete of the Year for the second straight year and won three Golden Goggle Awards, Female Athlete of the Year, Female Race of the Year and Relay Performance of the Year. Ledecky, a two-time USA Swimming Scholastic All-American, signed a National Letter of Intent to attend Stanford University.



Randy Julian
Sport Development
Consultant
Central Zone
USA Swimming

[719-866-3578](tel:719-866-3578) [719-866-3578](tel:719-866-3578)
[866-3578](tel:719-866-3578) Direct

[719-440-2421](tel:719-440-2421) [719-440-2421](tel:719-440-2421)
[440-2421](tel:719-440-2421) Cell
[719-866-4669](tel:719-866-4669) Fax

[719-866-4578](tel:719-866-4578) [719-866-4578](tel:719-866-4578)
[866-4578](tel:719-866-4578) Office
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Spring, Colorado
80909
[email](#)

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Ledecky is also extremely active within her high school – Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart – and local community where she supports such charitable organizations as the Wounded Warriors Project, Bikes for the World and Help 2.0. [Click here for more on Ledecky](#) from the Sullivan Award.

The Sullivan Award has been presented annually by the AAU since 1930 as a salute to founder, past president of the AAU, and a pioneer in amateur sports, James E. Sullivan. Besides athletic achievement, the AAU Sullivan Award also looks for leadership, character and sportsmanship. Past recipients of the award include fellow world-record-holding swimmers Michael Phelps (2003) and Missy Franklin (2012).

The AAU's press release announcing the Sullivan Award nominees can be [found here](#).

Coach-Owner Seminar

Registration Deadline April 3rd

In the past decade the concept of the “Coach-Owned” Swim Club has increased in popularity. USA Swimming has gone from ~2% of our clubs being coached owned in the early 2000’s to more than 15% in 2015. While this can be a positive thing for the coach, swimmers, and parents, the Coach must be professionally prepared to handle the business of Aquatics. USA Swimming’s Club Development Division will host the second Coach-Owner Club Seminar at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs April 17-19, 2015. This seminar is for the prospective coach-owner and the current coach-owner.

The featured speakers are Tom Ugast from Nation’s Capital Swim Club, Dave Anderson and Matt Miller from the Walter Schroeder Aquatic Center, and Rick and Lori Klatt from Fresno CA. USA Swimming has always believed in education and sharing methods of success so you will hear the stories and methods used by 3 very successful and very different coach-owned programs. Registration is open through April 3rd.

[Link Information & Registration Page](#)

Swimming is a Team Sport

By Lindsay Mintenko, USA Swimming National Team Managing Director

It’s championship season. You are racing to make the NCAA Championships. The Big Dance is your goal. You have been working hard all year, and finally, this is your chance.

In a few years you aren’t going to remember how hard the workout was or how excited or disappointed you were to make the NCAA Champs, to final, to score points for your team... You are going to remember the journey that got you there, and more importantly, the teammates who helped you along the way.

Many outsiders think swimming is an individual sport. I am always the one arguing with them.

Swimming is a team sport. It is hard enough getting up every morning for morning workout, but knowing your teammates are with you makes all the difference.

They are also live with you, eat with you and go to class with you. Your teammates will be your friends for life. You will be there for the good and bad times. And because you are swimmers, no one else will know your bond.

Good Teammates never see themselves as better and understand the importance of all members of the team, regardless of their ability level or motivation. NCAA swimming taught me that everyone needs a team behind them, pushing and encouraging. Individual goals are incredibly important, but being part of a team goal is extraordinary.

While most of you may not be athletes on an NCAA Championship team, you are still a part of a swim team and can help each other stay motivated during a killer set or to help your teammates stay focused on their goals.

Each person on a team has a role...find yours! And if you are ever blessed to be able to

swim on a team in college, remember when NAAs come around, you are swimming for your teammates.

Insight from the Ice: Minnesota Hockey and Injury Prevention

By Matt Barbini, USA Swimming National Team Sports Performance Consultant

Two weeks ago I had the opportunity to attend the MIT Sloan Sports Analytics Conference for the second time. I consider this to be one of the most valuable events on my annual calendar, and the insights gleaned from what other sports are doing have helped immeasurably to inform what I do here at USA Swimming.

As always, there were some big-name presenters from the four major sports, as well as representatives from teams and leagues from around the world. However, the talk I found to be the most impactful and informative took place in a small conference room during a split mid-day session in front of a relatively small audience.

[Read more:](#)

Need Your Help

Dear Coaching Friends and Colleagues,

My name is Mirko Mirkov, and I am member of the American Swimming Coaches Association's 2014 Fellows class.

As part of my Fellows work, I am conducting a survey on organizational structures and coaches in USA Swimming clubs. I would appreciate if you would take a few minutes to [complete the survey](#) I have, which can be found at the link.

Thank you in advance for your help and consideration.

[Mirko Mirkov](#)

Head Age Group Coach, Midway Aquatics

The Importance of Sleep for Elite Athletes

By Christopher Winter, Martha Jefferson Hospital & NBA Sleep Doctor, Insight, March 13, 2015

Alongside working as the Medical Director of the Martha Jefferson Hospital Sleep Medicine Center, he is known as the National Basketball Association's 'sleep doctor' due to the large number of teams he works with. Currently working with Oklahoma City Thunder, Dr Winter has also worked with Major League Baseball (MLB), including the San Francisco Giants, Los Angeles Dodgers, Tampa Bay Rays, and Pittsburgh Pirates teams. In this video, Dr. Winter discuss why sleep is so important for athletes, how it can support decision-making and sleep analysis' relevance across different industries.

[Watch video:](#)

What It Really Takes To Change Our Habits: A Discussion With Author Gretchen Rubin

By Kathleen Davis, FastCompany, March 2015

[This is a really interesting transcript](#) of a discussion between author Gretchen Rubin and

a Fast Company editor:

Read from the bottom up.

Here is the blurb of what this exchange is about:

Many of us want to change our lives by getting rid of bad habits and adopting new habits. But changing something that is fundamental to our daily lives can be difficult.

To get insight into how we can make effective and lasting habit changes we'll talk to Gretchen Rubin, the New York Times best-selling author of the new book *Better Than Before: Mastering the Habits of Our Everyday Lives*, about her research and experience in transforming everyday behaviors.

Also, you may want to take the [online quiz](#) about how you approach habits/change: Besides the obvious life applications, this could be extremely useful information for coaches to use when working with athletes.

Parental Athletic Dreams Can Become Youth Sports Nightmares

By John O'Sullivan, [Changingthegameproject](#), [Huffington Post](#) March 11, 2015

American pop culture loves to promote the great achievements of successful young athletes. We celebrate the accomplishments of Little League World Series stars and teenage Olympic champions. We have watched youth sports prodigies such as Tiger Woods and Serena Williams grow from child superstars to top professionals, and think, "Great, my kid can do that, too!"

But can they? And what is the best path to pursue elite sport performance, while ensuring sport remains a positive experience for kids?

Sports should be a wonderful pursuit for all children. Under the right conditions kids can not only develop athleticism, but also learn about life. They can build character, learn to overcome challenges, and develop grit, integrity, and the ability to work with others in pursuit of a common goal. Participation in sports can be one of the most rewarding parts of childhood.. when done the right way.

All too often these days, sports are not a positive, rewarding experience for our children. There are numerous kids for whom early sport specialization and inappropriate adult-centered environments lead not to elite athletic performance, but to physical and emotional scars that may last a lifetime.

[Read more:](#)

Olympic Day

June 23rd

Do you have an event in June 2015? If so, the USOC would like that you tie it to Olympic Day. Last year, 1,055 Olympic Day events were hosted across the U.S., currently there are over 300+ registered events for 2015. With your help, we can make Olympic Day 2015 the greatest in U.S. history!

Olympic Day can be associated with a pre-existing event or distinguished as a standalone celebration. Registration is simple and free – [to sign up](#). Each event host will receive a complimentary Olympic Day flag and Team USA stickers along with the opportunity to host an Olympian or Paralympian at their celebration.

With any additional questions, feel free to contact the Olympic Day Hotline – [\(719\) 866-](#)

[4535](#) [\(719\) 866-4535](#) – or reach out to us at OlympicDay@usoc.org

