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## Dear Coaches,

### Quote of the week:

**"In every person who comes near you look for what is good and strong; honor that; try to imitate it, and your faults will drop off like dead leaves when their time comes."**

~John Ruskin (1819-1900) English Art Critic

## The Chuck Wielgus Blog: What Does 'Fun' Mean in SwimToday Campaign?

**(Editor's note: This was posted Monday in conjunction with the SwimToday email you received)**

USA Swimming and nine other swimming industry partners are launching a campaign called SwimToday. It's swimming's version of a "Got Milk?" campaign, if you will. For the first time in our sport's history, this campaign will unite our industry for one common goal – to grow participation in the sport. So, instead of my regular blog, below is a "guest blog" by USA Swimming's Chief Marketing Officer, Matt Farrell. His post should provide some insight into our thinking behind the campaign and why we took the direction of focusing on the fun side of our great sport. My blogs will continue in the future, but for today, enjoy a different perspective on an exciting program.

~Chuck Wielgus, USA Swimming Executive Director

Today you will see USA Swimming and nine other industry partners\* unveil our [SwimToday campaign](#) designed to get kids (and their parents) excited to join a swim team after they have learned to swim.

The campaign uses the tagline of "the funnest sport there is" which will immediately bring two questions to mind:

1. Is "funnest" a word? (No, but more on that later); and
2. What does "fun" mean?

From the earliest planning stages of SwimToday, we wrestled with what the word "fun" really means. Is it too broad? Too loose? Too casual? Too Pollyanna?

I recently asked 30 National Team athletes what they feel is fun about the sport. They immediately perked up and gave thoughtful, unfiltered answers. Their body language changed. They leaned in to speak with more conviction. The simple question hit a passion point.

Down to the person they described the many benefits of the sport: achievement, friendship, discipline, values, fulfillment, fitness and more. Fun was always at the core. Even [Michael Phelps recently made repeated references](#) to the fun side of the sport that helped motivate his comeback.

It's important to remember that these are athletes who do not treat the sport like a game of Marco Polo. They have dedicated their lives to swimming and still enjoy it.

The process may not always be fun. Basketball players won't tell you line drills are fun, neither will football players about burpees, or tennis players and golfers hitting ball after ball in practice. It's no different in swimming. An age group coach runs a set of 12 x 200 freestyle not to make it fun. Quite the contrary, actually. That's the process.

Fun is the outcome.



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Critics of swimming, and even some within the sport, don't use the word fun to describe the dedication that is core to the sport. Some would say it's hard, boring or even grueling as if having fun connotes a lack of dedication or a weakening of our culture. Some may even say to call it fun, is disingenuous at best, misleading at worst.

But the more we looked at this, the more fun came up in every conversation and every aspect of our research. It's what parents want for their kids in sports. It's what kids want. It's what those who love the sport tell us they ARE getting!

But we don't confuse fun with silly. Fun can mean the lifelong friendships, hanging out before practice, the pumpkin glow meet, team skits, or the development of life skills. It can mean a earning a best time and even winning a hard-fought race.

We fully expect this campaign to create attention, maybe even disagreements or arguments around what really is "the funnest sport". We hope it starts a dialogue and enables the swimming community to brag about our sport to those who don't currently get it. Too often the folks within the sport see its value, but are too shy about sharing what's special to those outside it.

If a kid joins our sport duped by the campaign thinking it's all cannonballs, laughs and giggles they will find themselves on the soccer field much quicker. And that's ok. But if they give it a shot, hang with it for a few months and experience the culture of the sport, then I like our chances against any sport out there.

That brings us to the tagline of "the funnest sport there is" which is sure to attract letters from English teachers across America. (So did Got Milk? And Think Different by the way). Like any campaign, it's designed to get people talking. It also typifies a playfulness that drives the campaign.

It's tongue-in-cheek and intentionally lightens the mood as the target audience is kids who have just finished swim lessons! You will see that confidence come through in all aspects of the campaign, including the [web site](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and the public service announcement.

Our secret hope is that every elementary school teacher has to correct the word "funnest" in an essay because those kids are motivated by the campaign and join swim teams.

And that's the funnest thing about this.

P.S. If you still want to write us, you can send us a message at [itisnotaword@usaswimming.org](mailto:itisnotaword@usaswimming.org)  
~Matt Farrell, USA Swimming Chief Marketing Officer

\* = Arena, Speedo, TYR, American Swimming Coaches Association, National Swimming Pool Association, TeamUnify, Swimming World Magazine, U.S. Masters Swimming, Colorado Time Systems

## **Synchronizing Dryland Strength with Swim Training** **By Dan McCarthy, USA Swimming High Performance Consultant**

The National Team Coaches Seminar in April featured much discussion on the subject of dryland training. Just about every Division I team has access to a good facility and a strength & conditioning coach. Club teams have made the most of their own resources, advice from other programs and the proliferation of valuable information available online. Our post-graduate programs have elevated dryland strength training to a point probably never seen before in swimming. This will only be a success if the dryland strength training enhances the in-the-pool training and creates stronger swimmers.

Synchronizing dryland strength training with swim training requires a balance between the two, and identifying the proper starting point for the athlete.

[To read more click here.](#)

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## High Altitude Training at Colorado Springs

If you wish to request rooms and pool space at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs for 2015, please make note of the following details.

If you have a National Team or Junior National Team Athlete:

- For requests between January - March 2015: contact [Jennifer Thomas](#) by Thursday, May 22
- Remainder of 2015: submit request to Jennifer by Monday, August 4

For all other clubs and/or LSCs:

- For requests between January - March 2015: contact [Cindy Hayes](#) by Thursday, May 22
- Remainder of 2015: submit request to Cindy by Monday, August 4

[Please see additional information and form:](#)

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## Educational Opportunity Available

Make your plans now to attend the [Central States Swim Clinic](#) at the Oak Brook Marriott

in Oak Brook, IL on May 17-18! Call [\(630\) 573-8555](#) [\(630\) 573-8555](#) to make your hotel reservation or book online through our [website here](#).

It should be an amazing clinic — the outstanding lineup includes:

Bob Bowman: '04, '08 & '12 Asst. Olympic Coach, Coach of Michael Phelps

Dave Durden: '04 Olympic & '03 Pan Pac Coach, Head Coach UC Berkeley men

Todd Schmitz: '12 USA Olympic Coach, Head Coach Colorado Stars, Coach of Missy Franklin

Alan Goldberg: Applied Sports Psychologist & Author

Ian Crocker: 3 time Olympian '00, '04, '08 – 3 Gold, 1 Silver, 1 Bronze medal, World Record holder

Kate Ziegler: 2 time Olympian '08 & '12, World Record holder, 4 time World Champion

USA Swimming's Club Leadership & Business Management School (CLBMS) will be offered on Thursday & Friday evening (5/15 and 5/16) from 6-9p through the Central States Swim Clinic. This course is required for all new USA Swimming clubs. Club coaches & board members will learn strategies to improve club governance, management, and leadership. Included are the basic models for swim teams, responsibilities of nonprofit boards, staff/board responsibilities, roles of the Head Coach, governance versus management, financial development, recruiting volunteers, evaluation, & assessment. Attendance at both sessions is required to fulfill the requirement (the first half of the course is taught on Thursday evening with the conclusion of the course on Friday evening). Either the Board/Booster Club president or Head Coach must attend (both are encouraged). This is required for new clubs, but all are welcome. Cost is \$20 per registrant-please use the registration form at the link below.

Please note that optional ASCA courses are also available. This year, the following courses are being offered: Dryland Training for Age Group Swimmers, Coaching the Novice Swimmer, The Stroke School, and Creating Team Leadership.

[More information and registration forms can be found here:](#)

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## LSC Reports

An extensive collection of reports about LSC membership and performance is now publically available on the LSC Portals on the USA Swimming website. To access the reports, go to LSC Portals and select an LSC. (Note that the list of portals is BELOW the list of websites.) Open the reports tab to view the reports.

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## SwimToday TV Commercial

The following videos will be sent to hundreds of TV stations throughout the country to run as public service announcements that talk about the benefits of swimming. Along with the hundreds of TV stations, they have also been sent to your inbox!

[The Walk](#) :40  
[Alligator](#) :25  
[Cannonball](#) :25

Have a favorite? Share it on social media with the hashtag #FunnestSport!

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## Free Webinars from BoardSource

Use your free memberships to participate in these great educational webinars and Free material.

How to activate your membership

It's simple! Just visit <http://www.BoardSource.org/usaswimming> and complete the membership registration form.

Widen your knowledge through our upcoming webinars and trainings!

Free webinar for organizational members only!

[Orientation to Organizational Membership](#)

Tuesday, May 6 | 2:00 – 3:00pm ET

Are you a new organizational member? Start off on the right foot with our orientation webinar to ensure that you know how to access and optimize your benefits.

Webinar 101:

[How Board Members Can Avoid Legal Pitfalls](#)

Thursday, May 8 | 2:00 – 3:00pm ET

Many board members are concerned about their liability for the nonprofits they serve. Join us to learn of common scenarios that might lead to liability and what you can do to avoid liability.

Peer-to-Peer Discussion: [Engaging the Board in Fundraising](#)

Tuesday, May 13, 2014 | 2:00 – 3:00pm ET

Come listen and learn as you and your peers share information about how to engage the board in fundraising. You're bound to learn of new and creative ways to boost its participation!

Webinar 201:

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[Breaking Down Barriers: Achieving Real Board Diversity & Inclusion](#)

Thursday, May 15, 2014 | 2:00 – 3:00pm ET

Many nonprofit boards find that there are structural, cultural, and emotional barriers to building greater diversity among their members. In this webinar, we'll walk through the steps to breakthrough these barriers for sustainable board diversity and inclusion.

Webinar 201:

[Mired in a Legal Battle? Here's What You Need to Know](#)

Thursday, May 29, 2014 | 2:00 – 3:00pm ET

Following up on Webinar 101, we'll discuss practical actions board members and management can take to deal with and mitigate the effects on your organization when liability situations actually arise.

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## Will Text Messages Become Obsolete?

By Tim Elmore

I just met with a group of high school students and realized they'd experienced another shift in how they communicate with others. We were conversing about how we could stay in touch, and I suggested we could text. They smiled patronizingly, as if they were interacting with their grandpa, and offered another option.

Hmmm. Just when I thought I was caught up on contemporary culture.

"We don't have a need for texting anymore," one of them said to me. "We send pics. It's a more interactive way of communicating."

[Read more:](#)

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## Where To Go For Evidence-Based Parenting Advice

By Annie Murphy Paul, Author, Speaker, May 6, 2014

If you've surfed the web lately, you know there is no lack of information and advice aimed at parents available on the Internet. As a reader and a parent myself, though, I've often been dismayed by the snarky tone, bellicose attitude, or because-I-believe-it's-true subjectivity of this writing intended for moms and dads.

One place I know I can go to avoid all that is [Motherlode](#), the New York Times' parenting blog. Edited by KJ Dell'Antonia, Motherlode consistently serves up thoughtful, intelligent pieces about parenting, from a variety of perspectives.

My admiration for Motherlode makes me especially grateful that KJ has asked me to begin contributing posts about educational research to the site. I've gathered the four posts I've written so far below. I hope you enjoy them, and I hope you have a chance to explore the rest of Motherlode's riches while you're there.

[Read more:](#)

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## How to Turn Your Socially Engaged Employees Into Brand Advocates

By Jennifer King, Published April 30, 2014

As a die-hard Mad Men fan, I was sad to learn the show is coming to an end next year. In preparation for the final season, I recently started rewatching a few episodes and reminiscing over some of my favorite ad campaigns from the show. One ad, in particular, stills piques my interest the second time I watch its scene—the episode in which Don Draper and his team pitch a thoughtful print ad for Heinz ketchup.

But it's not the ad's wit or Don Draper's charm that makes my taste buds yearn for the tasty condiment. Rather, it's what my pals, social connections and influential contacts might have to say about it.

While the Mad Men-era advertising agency brings back some of those romantic feelings for print ads, snazzy taglines and retro imagery, the modern consumer is looking for a more genuine way to fall in love with your product. Your advertising and marketing may accurately describe what your product can do, but in the age of social media, consumers are more likely to trust what other people say about your brand.

[Read more:](#)