



**VALLEJO AQUATIC CLUB  
PARENT HANDBOOK**

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## **WELCOME TO THE VALLEJO AQUATIC CLUB**

Welcome to the Vallejo Aquatic Club! The Vallejo Aquatic Club (our nickname VJO) is a year-round competitive swim team for young people of all abilities. VJO is a non-profit organization managed by an elected Board of Directors. Each member of the Board of Directors is the parent of a VJO swimmer. Feel free to consult any of the coaches or any of the Board members if you have questions. Again, our heartiest welcome!

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**The Vallejo Aquatic Club takes pride in the diversity of its members. We welcome families from all backgrounds that embrace our core values. The VJO core values consist of: maintaining a positive self-esteem, developing self-motivation, a strong work ethic, personal accountability, goal setting and goal realization, respect for others, and a commitment to community service. Through competitive swimming, we teach and model the core values that will endure for a lifetime.**

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Our overall philosophy is to provide a multi-level Medley-based program within USA Swimming. Our multi-level program provides a challenging, success-oriented program that addresses the needs of all ages and abilities.

1. We focus on self-improvement and doing one's personal best. Winning or beating another swimmer is not the goal. If we focus on self-improvement, the ribbons and medals and other awards will be a by-product.
2. Sportsmanlike behavior is of utmost importance. Each swimmer is to show respect for fellow competitors, coaches, officials, teammates and parents.
3. The role of the coach is to provide feedback on times, pacing, technique, etc.
4. The role of each parent/guardian is to provide love and support to their swimmer.
5. Each swimmer is taught personal goal setting, both in practice and in meets.
6. Our Medley-based program means that each swimmer is encouraged to train and race in all strokes. Early focus on all strokes is paramount to alter success in Individual events.

## **PURPOSE**

### **Personal and Physical Development for the Greater Vallejo Area**

- Provide a wholesome, life-saving, lifetime sport and recreational activity.
- Promote physical fitness and encourage proper conditioning and healthy habits.
- Provide opportunities for healthy social, emotional and educational development and encourage peer and family participation in this development.
- Foster the development of high self-esteem and help cultivate positive self-images.

### **Competitive Development**

- Create an environment in which the desire for self-improvement and goal achievement motivates the individual to fully develop his/her natural abilities and to help others do likewise.
- Provide opportunities to learn the value of hard work, dedication, self-discipline and perseverance.
- Promote honesty, integrity, good sportsmanship and team loyalty.
- Provide quality instruction, training and competition at all peer and ability levels.

### **Community Involvement**

- Cultivate interest in competitive swimming among all socioeconomic groups in the Greater Vallejo area.
- Cultivate an organization that participates in community activities that support youth.
- Cultivate the support of community-oriented individuals and organizations.

### **Instruction, Training and Competition**

- Provide age-appropriate and ability-based competitive swimming program in conjunction with the structure put forth by United States Swimming, Inc. and Pacific Swimming, Inc.
- Provide a quality senior level training program in conjunction with the programs sponsored by United States Swimming, Inc., Pacific Swimming, Inc., and the United States Olympic Committee.

### **Local and National Administration**

- Participate in the direction and management of Zone III and Pacific Swimming to further the growth of competitive swimming in the area.
- Participate in the administration of United States Swimming, Inc., to represent Pacific Swimming, Inc., and establish Vallejo Aquatic Club as a contributor to swimming nationwide.

## **CLUB ORGANIZATION**

Vallejo Aquatic Club is a member of United States Swimming (USA-S), the national governing body. USA Swimming is divided into geographical areas called Local Swimming Committees (LSC). Vallejo Aquatic Club is a member of the Pacific Swimming LSC, which governs local swimming. The Pacific Swimming LSC is divided into five zones (Zone 1 North, Zone 1 South, Zone 2, Zone 3, and Zone 4) and Vallejo Aquatic Club is a member of Zone 3. Vallejo Aquatic Club is structured and governed by a set of Club By-Laws. The Coaching Staff and a Board of Directors (comprised of elected and appointed members), jointly share Club operation, as stipulated by the By-Laws. If you have any questions relating to your child's/children's daily swimming involvement, please see his/ her coach directly. If your questions are about general Club operation, feel free to contact one of the Board members. The Board members have the team's best interest at heart and are more than willing to help you.

## **FACILITIES**

The John F. Cunningham Aquatic Complex is located at 801 Heartwood Ave., Vallejo, CA (telephone number (707) 648-4635). The pool is owned by the City of Vallejo and operated by the Greater Vallejo Recreation District. The pool is 50-meters long and 25-yards wide. Depths range from 4 to 13 feet, with a hydraulic floor capable of raising and lowering the minimum depth to address special needs at the east end of the pool. The pool is heated year round and kept at an ideal range of 78-82 degrees Fahrenheit. Ample deck space and bleachers provide for over 1,000 people.

Because of the pool's dimensions, Vallejo Aquatic Club can set its training regimen parallel to the National Swimming calendar when practical. From September through April, the Club practices using the 25-yard course (width). At selected times from May through August, the Club practices using the 50- meter course (length).

## **COACHING STAFF**

### **Jennifer Thiem (Head Coach)**

Jennifer Thiem has been Head Coach of VJO since 2012. She has over 15 years of coaching experience. Jennifer graduated from San Diego State University (2004) with a B.S. in Kinesiology and later attended Humboldt State University where she received an M.S. in Kinesiology (2010). Jennifer swam for Santa Rosa Junior College and later for San Diego State University as a sprint Breaststroker/ I.M.er. Before Coach Jen came to VJO, she was an assistant coach for the Coronado Navy Swim Association (2006-2008) in San Diego, CA, for the Humboldt Swim Club (2008-2010) in Arcata, CA, for the Santa Rosa Junior College (2010) in Santa Rosa, CA and was a Head Coach for PASA- Pacific Athletic Club site (2010-2012). In 2016, Coach Jennifer was inducted into the Santa Rosa Junior College Athletic Hall of Fame. Jennifer has always had a passion for competitive swimming, synchronized swimming and water polo, and really anything that has to do with water! Jennifer lives in American Canyon with her husband Ryan, daughter Whitney, and two dogs. In her spare time Jennifer enjoys swimming, gardening, and camping with her family and dogs.

### **Maureen Orr (Junior and Mako Coach)**

**Maureen** grew up swimming in the Walnut Creek area and has a huge passion for the sport. After swimming for rec teams for many years she began swimming for Orinda Aquatics and stayed with them for 4 and a half years and loved every minute of it. After she left Orinda Aquatics she started coaching and life guarding. Her favorite events are the 100 backstroke, 100 and 200 freestyle. When she's not on the pool deck she enjoys hiking, going to the beach, camping and spending time with her family.

### **Brendan Kearney (Junior 2 and Masters Coach)**

Coach Brendan is a long time coach and VJO Alumni. He has 14 years competitive swimming experience with Vallejo Aquatics that has truly influenced his life from that point forward. Since joining Vallejo Aquatics Club at age 9 he has never left the aquatic world. He was a 4 Year San Joaquin High School Section Finalist for Vallejo High School, and 2 year State Championship finalist for Solano Community College. He has also spent much of his life in the aquatics world coaching and educating young swimmers in swim lessons. With 18 years of swim lessons and lifeguarding, and 16 years of teaching the next generation of lifeguards, his favorite part of the aquatics world is coaching. With 15 years of coaching experience from Vallejo High School Swimming and a previous short go with VJO in 2011, he is very excited to be back at Vallejo Aquatic Club and contribute what he can to an already fantastic coaching staff. He hopes to make a contribution of meaningful time and energy to an institution that was so formative, and gave and continues to give him so much pride.

### **Daniel Chavez (Hammerhead 1 & 2 Coach)**

## GROUP PARAMETERS AND PROGRESSION GUIDELINES

The coaching staff uses the Progression Guidelines to decide how athletes move through levels in the program. All movement will be handled on a case-by-case basis and the coaching staff reserves the right to make the final decision.

Group	Coach	Age Range	Practice Time
Pre-Team	Daniel	5-13	6:00-6:45pm (Summer & Fall Months)
Hammerhead Sharks 1	Daniel	5-10	M-F 5:30-6:15pm
Hammerhead Sharks 2	Daniel	10-13	M-F 6:30-7:30pm
Leopard Sharks	Jennifer	7-10	M/W/F 6:30-7:30pm T/TH 6:00-7:30pm
Mako Sharks	Maureen	11-15	M/W/F 6:30-7:30pm T/TH 6:00-7:30pm
Tiger Sharks (Juniors)	Maureen	10-13	M/W/F 4:30-6:30pm T/TH 4:30-6:00pm Summer: M/W/F 6:45-9:00am
Tiger Sharks 2 (Juniors 2)	Jennifer & Brendan	12-17	M-F 4:00-6:00pm Summer: M/W/F 6:45-9:00am
Great Whites (Seniors)	Jennifer	13-Older	M/W/F 4:00-6:30pm T/TH 4:00-6:00pm Winter & Spring: T/TH 5:45-7:00am Summer : M/W/F 6:45-9:00am

### Swim Practice Behavior

All swimmers are expected to:

- Support teammates at practice and in competition
- Show Team Spirit by working together for the benefit of each individual in the group
- Follow coaching staff directions: disrespectful attitudes or indifference will not be tolerated
- Absolutely NO abusive language, bullying, fighting, lying, stealing and/or vandalism: if a swimmer displays any of the behaviors they will face disciplinary measures.
- Remain in the pool area during swim practice: to leave the pool area you must have the coach's permission.
- Follow Greater Vallejo Recreation District's Rules and Regulations while at the aquatic

complex.

- Train exclusively with VJO Aquatic Club unless given prior approval by the Head Coach.
- Be on time and be prepared for each swim practice with ALL equipment in hand.
- Please make sure to use the restroom before practice or during the designated breaks during practice.

## **Hammerheads 1**

Entry level swimmers ages 5-10 years

- swims 25 yards freestyle without stopping
  - o With face in water
  - o With side breathing
- swims 25 yards backstroke without stopping
- performs breaststroke and butterfly kick and has basic knowledge of the breaststroke and Butterfly stroke
- swims in the deep end
- performs a somersault in water
- attends at least 3 practices per week
- attends at least 3 swim meets per year

### **Group Goals**

- the emphasis is on fun and learning
- swim a 100 yard Individual Medley (IM) legally
- streamline off of every wall
- perform open turns and freestyle flip turns
- circle swim and have good lane etiquette
- perform a head first dive

## **Hammerheads 2**

Beginner and intermediate level swimmers ages 10-13 years

- swims 25 yards freestyle without stopping
  - o With face in water
  - o With side breathing
- swims 25 yards backstroke without stopping
- performs breaststroke and butterfly kick and has basic knowledge of the breaststroke and butterfly stroke
- swims in the deep end
- performs a somersault in water
- attends at least 3 practices per week



- attends at least 3 swim meets per year

### **Group Goals**

- Emphasis on fun and learning
- Be able to swim a 100 yard Individual Medley (IM) legally
- Be able to streamline off of every wall
- Be able to perform open turns and freestyle flip turns
- Be able to circle swim and have good lane etiquette
- Be able to perform a head first dive
- Be able to swim 200 yards freestyle with flipturns and without stopping.

## **Leopard Sharks**

Advanced level swimmers ages 7-10.

- swims 200 yards Freestyle without stopping and with flip turns
- swims a 100 yard Individual Medley (IM) legally
- uses streamline kicking of all walls
- attends all team designated meets
- attends at least 4 practices per week
- performs a head first dive, flip turn, and open turn
- Increased level of intensity and commitment expected.

### **Group Goals**

- Learn a breaststroke pull-out
- Be able to dolphin kick in a streamline past the backstroke flags in Freestyle, backstroke, and Butterfly
- Be able to read the pace clock and use basic intervals
- Be able to swim 500 Freestyle with flip turns and without stopping in 7:30
- Be able to swim a legal 100 IM in 1:30
- Be able to swim 8x100 on 1:45 interval
- Be able to swim 6x100 IM on 2:00 interval
- Qualify for Zone 3 Championships and 10 & Under Championships

## **Makos Group**

Beginner & Intermediate level swimmers 11-15 years of age

- swims 200 yards Freestyle without stopping and with flip turns
- swims a 100 yard Individual Medley (IM) legally
- streamline kicks of all walls
- performs a head first dive, flip turn, and open turn
- attends at least 3 practices per week
- attends 6 swim meets per year

### **Group Goals**

- Learn a breaststroke pull-out
- Be able to dolphin kick in a streamline past the backstroke flags in Freestyle, backstroke, and butterfly
- Be able to read the pace clock and use basic intervals
- Be able to swim 500 Freestyle with flip turns and without stopping in 7:30
- Be able to swim a 200 IM legally
- Be able to swim 8x100 on 1:45 interval
- Be able to swim 6x100 IM on 2:00 interval
- Qualify for Zone 3 Championships

## **Junior (Tiger Sharks)**

Intermediate & Advanced swimmers 11-15 year of age

- swims a 500 Free in 8:00
- swims 8x100 Free on the 1:45 interval
- swims 6x100 IM on the 2:00 interval
- attends all team designated meets and all championship meets.
- attends at least 4 practices per week in Winter/Spring and 6 practices per week in the Summer
- practices extensive biomechanics in all four strokes, starts and turns including the Individual medley.
- increased level of intensity and commitment expected

### **Group Goals**

- Swim in High School and or College
- Qualify for Junior Olympics and or Far Western Champs
- Be able to swim 500 Freestyle in 6:15
- Be able to swim a 400 IM legally
- Be able to swim 10x100 on 1:20 interval
- Be able to swim 8x100 IM on 1:45 interval

## **Junior 2 (Tiger Sharks 2)**

Advanced swimmers 12-15 year of age

- swims a 500 Free in 6:45
- swims 8x100 Free on the 1:30 interval
- swims 6x100 IM on the 1:50 interval
- attends all team designated meets and all championship meets.
- attends at least 4 practices per week in Winter/Spring and 6 practices per week in the Summer
- practices extensive biomechanics in all four strokes, starts and turns including the

Individual medley.

- increased level of intensity and commitment expected

### **Group Goals**

- Swim in High School and College
- Qualify Far Western Champs and Senior 2 Champs
- Be able to swim 500 Freestyle in 6:00
- Be able to swim a 400 IM in 6:30
- Be able to swim 10x100 on 1:20 interval
- Be able to swim 8x100 IM on 1:45 interval

## **Senior (Great White Sharks)**

Elite level swimmers ages 13 and older

- swims a 500 Freestyle in 6:30
- swims a 10 x 100 Freestyle on 1:20
- swims an 8 x 100 IM on 1:35
- attends 7 practices a week (2 morning and 5 afternoon practices)
- attends all team designated meets and all qualified championship meets
- practices extensive biomechanics in all four strokes, starts and turns including the Individual Medley (IM)
- Increased level of intensity and commitment expected

### **Group Goals**

- Swim in High School and College
- Qualify for Far Westerns, Sectionals, Futures and or Junior Nationals

## **TEAM UNIFORM**

NOTE: Team suits and team caps are **REQUIRED** at all swim meets. The purchase of other team apparel items is highly recommended, but not required. Ask our Team Apparel Chairperson for the order forms and more information.

### **Swim Caps**

The VJO team cap is mandatory at all meets. Coaches have VJO team caps for sale. (Silicone \$12 and Latex \$5). Personalized VJO team caps can also be special ordered.

### **Racing Suits**

The VJO team suit is mandatory at all meets. It is a black polyester blend-racing suit with our team logo.

### **Practice Suits**

Swimmers are not required to wear a team suit during practice. Girls may not wear two-piece suits at practice. Any other swimming suit that meets the common standards of decency and

does not interfere with a swimmer's ability to use proper technique are permitted to be worn at practice.

**Team Shirts/Tank tops/Sweatshirts:**

Please see the Apparel Chairperson for purchase.

**Warm-up Outfits:**

The official VJO warm-up outfit consists of a black VJO logo jacket and pants. This warm-up outfit must be worn on all team travel meets (Lost Dutchman, SR Western Zones, Sectionals, Futures, Arena Pro Series and Nationals).

**Parka:** VJO swim parka orders can be placed at any time. Please see the Apparel Chairperson for the VJO parka Order form.

## **VJO SWIM MEET SUIT POLICY**

### **12 & Unders**

Swimmers that are age 12 and under are not allowed to wear a technical racing suit for any meet. At this age, the focus is on technique, training and race strategies...not a swimsuit. 12 and under swimmers must wear the VJO team suit at all meets. There is no documented evidence that technical suits benefit the performance of athletes in this age demographic. Please see USA Swimming Rule section 102.8 SWIMWEAR, 1. Design that is taking effect Fall 2020.

### **13 & Overs**

All meets up to Championships MUST be in a VJO team suit. 13 & Over swimmers may wear technical racing suit to highest level Championship meet for which they qualify.

### **The Philosophy behind our Policy**

- Swimming is a great sport that allows the swimmers to compare their times against their own previous times, not just another swimmers.
- Kids need to work hard for their accomplishments and see that hard work pays off because of the effort that they put in, not because of the suit they are wearing.
- Tech suits are made for older athletes who have the ability to understand the mental aspect that the suit adds.
- Young swimmers need something to work toward. A tech suit is a great reward for the accomplishment of achieving a JO, Far Western or Sectional cut.
- Looking long term - It is not expected that our 12 year olds are going to the Olympic Games at 12 (maybe for the next games at 16, but they will be old enough for a tech suit at that point).

### **Meet Schedule**

Copies of meet schedules are distributed into each swimmer's file folder and are also available

online at [www.vallejoaquatics.org](http://www.vallejoaquatics.org) . It is the responsibility of each swimmer and/or their parents to check their file folder for current announcements and Club news.

- Meets are not scheduled unless the Club and coaches deem it is important for swimmers to participate. One can also choose to enter only one day of a meet. Please inform coaches if not attending entire meet.
- It is encouraged that all swimmers participate in at least one meet per calendar month. The meet schedule is developed with this philosophy in mind. In some cases, meets with similar classifications are scheduled as close as two weeks or as far as five weeks apart. This occurs when the meets that are available to us offer no other alternative.
- VJO members may only compete in Club and coach sanctioned competitions. No swimmer shall attend a meet without a VJO coach in attendance, or without prior approval of the Head Coach.

### **Team Effort Meets**

Team championship meets are indicated on the meet schedule. Since most emphasis is placed on these meets, it is expected that those Vallejo Aquatic Club swimmers who qualify to swim shall attend these meets and contribute to the total team effort. Meets that are in this category include: the Zone III Championships the Redwood Empire Athletic League (REAL) Championships, the Junior Olympic Championships, and the Far Western Championships.

## **ENTERING SWIM MEETS**

### **Option 1: Swim Connection**

You will use the online Swim Connection site to sign up for most USA Swim events. Entering a meet online is fast, easy, accurate and reliable. One of the benefits of using this system is that all of your swimmers' times are accessible with the click of a button (provided they have already swum in a meet previously). The cost of using swim connection is \$1.00 + 5% of the entry fees.

#### **How to enter a meet online using swim connection:**

- 1: Have the swimmers USA Swimming/Pacific Swim membership number ready. The number is shown on the Pacific Swimming membership card.
- 2: Decide which events the swimmer should enter. Usually swimmers are limited to 3 events per day (listed on meet sheet).
- 3: Go to <https://ome.swimconnection.com/> You do not need to be a OME Member to sign up for swim meets.
- 4: Click on "Enter Meet"
- 5: Pick "Pacific Swimming" under "Swimming Association"
- 6: Click on the meet that you are looking for.
- 7: Click on "Online Meet Entry"
- 8: The system will only load up the entries that the swimmer is eligible to swim in at that specific event.
- 9: By becoming a OME member you will be able to look up swimmer's best times and go back

to modify an existing meet entry.

## **Option 2: Mailing in/Turing in Consolidated Entries**

You can also download and print your own meet sheets from [www.pacswim.org](http://www.pacswim.org). It is also possible to enter swim meets by filling out the downloaded entry form and mailing it in with a check by the meet deadline.

- If you have any questions about whether to enter a specific meet, always confer with your coach.
- If you have any questions about which events to enter, always consult with your coach.
- If you have any questions about how to fill in meet entries, consult with one of the more experienced parents or with a coach. They will be glad to help you.
- At certain meets the coaching staff reserves the right to choose a number of events. For example, the Coach may require all swimmers to enter one IM event.

## **SWIM MEET PROCEDURES**

- **Arrive at Meet On Time** – The meet arrival time will be specified by the VJO coaching staff.
- **Report to Check-in Table** - Swimmers must report to the check-in table and check in for all events entered. If there are any problems during check-in or possible mistakes made with entry forms, discuss the matter with your coach, so corrective action can be taken immediately.
- **Check In with Your Coach** – Make sure to check in with your coach, so they know you have arrived at the meet. If your coach is not present, check in with you specified meet coach.
- **VJO Coaching Staff will Oversee Warm-ups** - A member of the Vallejo Aquatic Club coaching staff will oversee warm-ups. Parents are not allowed behind the blocks during warm-ups. Some meets may even have closed decks.
- **Mandatory to Wear Team Suit/Team Cap** - It is mandatory for VJO swimmers to wear the team suit and team cap at all meets. All other team apparel is recommended; however, wearing the complete team uniform promotes team unity and greatly aids spectator recognition.
- **Know Your Events** - All swimmers should know which events they are swimming before warm-ups and be present to swim each event. Most swimmers write their events, heats and lanes on their hand with a sharpie.
- **Sit in Team Area** - All VJO swimmers need to be sitting in the designated VJO team area of the pool. This helps to prevent our swimmers from missing events and allows the VJO coaching staff to find swimmers if needed.
- **Check in With Your Coach Before Each Race** - Prior to each event each swimmer must check in with their coach.
- **Getting Your Time** - At most meets, electronic timing is used. The official time is generally the one recorded in the computer by the swimmer touching the wall and appearing on the scoreboard.

- **Check in With Your Coach After Each Race** - At the conclusion of each race, the swimmer should ask the lane timers for their stopwatch time. The swimmer should then come IMMEDIATELY to the coaching staff. This gives the coaches an opportunity to discuss the race with each swimmer and add positive and constructive comments concerning splits, stroke technique, race strategy, etc.
- **Warm-up & Warm-down** - Before and after races, swimmers should **warm up and warm down** in the designated warm-up/ warm- down area. Ask your coach for specifics. In between races, swimmers are also asked to rest and stay warm. All energy should be saved and used for competition.
- **Check Out With Coach Prior To Leaving Meet** - It is very important that swimmers check with the coaching staff prior to leaving any meet. This makes certain that swimmers are not entered on a relay or in additional events.

### **What to Bring to Swim Meets?**

- VJO team swimsuit (plus extra suit)
- VJO team swim cap (plus extra cap)
- Goggles (plus extra pair)
- Towels (one for each race & warm-ups = 4 towels)
- Swim parka or other warm coat on colder days
- Old blanket or sleeping bag
- Quiet games or books
- Food - nutritious snacks
- Water bottle (stay hydrated)
- Rain gear/sunblock if necessary
- Chair

### **Behavior at Meets**

- When you wear the VJO team uniform, remember that your actions reflect on the entire team. Let your actions reflect the pride you have in the Vallejo Aquatic Club!
- For safety purposes, swimmers and parents should stay out of the competition area during a meet unless swimming or serving in an official capacity. Keeping off the deck is also a matter of courtesy to the officials and meet host.
- All questions swimmers and parents have regarding meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of an individual, will be referred to the VJO coaching staff only. They will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
- As a matter of pride, VJO families should leave the rest area and the pool in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion of each day of a meet.
- VJO swimmers are never to scratch an event without consulting with their specified coach first.
- **After a swimmer is finished with his/her races for the day, they must notify a coach if they wish to leave the meet.**

## **Out of Town Meets**

Trips to meets in other cities are an important aspect of a swimmer's career while advancing through the age group ranks. Vallejo Aquatic Club has established the following policies for the safety of the swimmers and the peace of mind of the parents:

- Parents are encouraged to attend out of town meets with their swimmers and to help chaperone other swimmers.
- A coach has too many responsibilities to the entire team to accept responsibility for an individual swimmer. If this option must be utilized, a release form will be required for the swimmer in question and signed by his/her parent.
- Any swimmer riding in a car is responsible to the parent/driver for his/her behavior and is expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct and or VJO Travel Policy at all times.

## **PARENT-COACH-SWIMMER RELATIONSHIP**

Cooperation and understanding among parents, swimmers and coaches are what makes a successful program. The progress made by your swimmer depends to a great extent on this three-way relationship.

### **Parent/Guardian Guidelines**

You, as a parent/guardian, have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, your structure, and your example. When it comes to the development of your child as a swimmer, the following guidelines may help you keep that development in proper perspective and help your child reach his/her full potential:

- **Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to the various methods of presenting skills.** The slower learner obviously takes more time to learn. This requires more patience on the part of the coach. Both parent and coach must remember that a child's ultimate swim potential may be as great as or greater than that of the faster learner.
- **Be patient.** It is possible for swimmers to see no immediate improvement, when they first start practicing with the team. This is because emphasis is placed on stroke technique. It takes a great deal of the swimmers energy and attention to master these skills. These new sets of habits are the basis for later improvement. As training proceeds, additional strain is put on the muscles. The muscles will, at first, break down under the demand of additional work. This can explain the initial lack of improvement. As the need for improvement is realized, the muscles will gradually strengthen and the athlete's performance will improve.
- **Plateaus are normal** and can occur at any time during a swimmer's career. Plateaus can occur in competition or in training. A plateau can occur for many different reasons, but growth and physically maturing seem to be the most common culprits. The best thing you can do is focus on different events for a while. The more successful athletes are those who work through



this momentary delay in improvement, and go on to achieve greater performances and approach their personal potential.

- **Ten and under age swimmers are the most inconsistent swimmers**, and this can be frustrating for a parent, coach and swimmer alike. We must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport.
- **Slow development of a competitive drive at an early age is normal** and perhaps more desirable than precocious or forced. It is important that everyone learns to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is also important for children to learn to adapt to reasonable levels of emotional stress. The small disappointments they must learn to handle as youngsters prepare them for the larger ones they are certain to experience as adults.
- It is the coach's' job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance.
- It is the parent's job to supply love, recognition and encouragement necessary to help the young athletes feel good about themselves.
- **No parent should behave in such a way as to bring discredit to the child, the Club or the sport of competitive swimming.** Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of the coaching staff and resolved by the coaches.
- **Be sure that your youngster swims because he/she wants to.** People tend to resist things they "have to do". Self-motivation is the stimulus of all successful swimmers.
- The word competition goes back to the Latin words, "comc" and "petere", which mean together to strive. Please avoid "playing" your child against their nearest competitors, thereby creating vendettas within the team and swimming community. Close competition provides two great services for the athlete: it brings out the best in them and shows where improvement is needed.
- **The communication between swimmer and coach is very important.** A two-way relationship must exist daily at practice. It is for this reason that we ask parents not to participate in coaching at any time and to remain in the bleachers during practice.

Please remember, particularly in the case of the younger swimmers, the attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child. In swimming, as in life, nobody can win or succeed all the time – there will always be some disappointment. Every youngster can gain from his/her experience whether or not he/she wins a single race. The important thing is to keep striving to do better next time. The secret is not only to produce great swimmers, but also to produce great young people.

## **Questions/Issue Resolution Procedure**

- All of your questions should be directed to those who can answer or solve your problem.
- Avoid negative talk and rumors completely. If you have a concern, please contact the coach immediately.
- If, or when concerns/problems arise, they must be addressed at an appropriate time and in a proper manner with the coach. Please refrain from approaching coaches on deck during

practice hours. Respect the coach's responsibility to focus on the swimmers during practice and swim meets. (VJO Parent & Family Code of Conduct)

- Email will not be used for issue discussion or resolution.

If or when a parent has a concern regarding their swimmer, the following steps should be taken:

- The parent will set up an appointment to meet with their child's coach. Coaches are available in person before or after practices and swim meets. Coaches can also be reached via email or phone to set up an appointment.
- The parent may set up a meeting with their child's coach and the VJO head coach.
- If not satisfactorily settled, the parent may set up a meeting with their child's coach, the VJO head coach and the VJO Board of directors.

Please do not leave questions or concerns unanswered. VJO 's goal is to promote open communication between parents, swimmers and coaches.

## TEAM COMMUNICATION

Good team communications are vital to a smooth operation of the VJO swim team. The team communicates through the following channels:

### Email

Please make sure your family is on our VJO email list. **Email is our main form of communication** for the swim team. We send out weekly emails to help keep families updated on upcoming events, meets, and entry deadlines.

### Family File Folders

Each family is given a file folder in our swim team box at the pool. Your file folder is alphabetically arranged on the rolling cart. The swim team boxes are brought out onto the pool deck every day before practice. Please check your file folder daily for information, awards, and other handouts.

### Shark Attack Newsletter

Our newsletter is emailed out and posted on the website every couple months. Newsletters can also be found in your team file folder at the pool. Additionally, a monthly calendar that outlines upcoming events is distributed to folders in the deck cart at the beginning of each month that highlights upcoming events.

### Bulletin Board

The swim team bulletin board is located on the pool deck in the shark tank. Team announcements, practice schedules, meet schedules, meet announcements, a monthly calendar, and other important notices are posted here.

### Web Sites

- **Vallejo Aquatic Club (VJO)** - [www.vallejoaquatics.org](http://www.vallejoaquatics.org) Official team site.
- **Pacific Swimming**- [www.pacswim.org](http://www.pacswim.org) Lists the local swim teams, local meet schedules, time standards and Pacific Swimming contacts.

- **USA Swimming** - [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org) . Lists the meets at our National level, time standards, parent/swim/coach educational tools, and coach/official certification tools.
- **Swim Connection**- <https://swimconnection.com> . Here you can find meet schedule, time standards, and enter USA swim meets online.
- **Online Meet Entries (OME) Swim Connection** - <https://ome.swimconnection.com> . Here you can sign up for swim meets online.

## **SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

The primary objective of the Vallejo Aquatic Club is to provide our youngsters with excellent training in competitive swimming. Equally important, however, is that VJO is a family organization. We feel it is important to provide an environment where swimmers and families may form lifelong friendships. We feel that Club social activities enhance team unity and help to forge these friendships. The Vallejo Aquatic Club has several social events during the year. Examples of these events include the Annual Awards Banquet, Holiday parties, poolside barbecues, potlucks, ice skating, bowling, and other social activities.

**General Membership Meetings** A General Membership Meeting (parent meeting) is held at the beginning of the fall and summer season. The meeting include: voting on bylaws changes, discussion of coaches and team objectives and expectations, season meet schedule, season events, team volunteer opportunities and treasury reports.

If any questions or problems arise, the lines of communication between the parents and coaches will always be open. Feel free to contact any coach about problems or suggestions concerning your swimmer. It is very important that you let us know if there is anything we can do to aid your swimmer in his/her full enjoyment of the sport from which he/she can realize greater success. It is best to communicate with the coach involved with your youngster's group.

## **VJO FAMILY VOLUNTEER HOURS**

### **Parent Volunteer Requirements**

VJO Policies and Procedure state that each family is required to volunteer a total of 10 hours each home swim meet. The volunteer requirement is met through Volunteering at Swim Meets. In addition, volunteer hours are available for serving on the Board of Directors and officiating and timing at away meets. The volunteer requirement is calculated one month following a home swim meet.

**Failure to comply:** Each family will be charged \$15 for every hour not fulfilled during that swim meet/officiating/timing *within one month of home swim meet.*

Families may not roll hours over, this includes hours worked over the 10 required hours or hours

that they are billed for.

Families will not be required to fulfill the volunteer hours requirement while their swimmer(s) is on inactive status.

Volunteer hours cannot be prorated during a given month. Even one day of swimming in a month obligates the swimmer's family for volunteer hours that month.

### **Submitting Volunteer Hours**

Volunteer hours are tracked and accounted through quarterly statements that verify the number of hours a family has submitted toward their obligation. When an individual volunteers for the team, they are required to sign up for jobs online or submit their own hours manually. Failure to submit your volunteer hours may result in a bill for unmet hours. VJO recommends that families keep track of their own submitted volunteer hours and reconcile their records with quarterly statements. Volunteer hours may be submitted:

In person - "Volunteer Hours" file located in the VJO family file folder Box in the Shark tank

Via Email - [vhours@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:vhours@vallejoaquatics.org) (Heidi Scharffenberg - Volunteer Coordinator)  
Please include :Parent and swimmer(s) names, Event, Date, Times you volunteered, total hours and Job description

### **Swim Meet Volunteers**

The Vallejo Aquatic Club hosts at least 3 swims meets a year at the John F. Cunningham Pool in Vallejo. **VJO depends on swim meets as a major source of revenue.** The more parents we have trained to fill the various official roles at swim meets, the better.

The need for trained officials cannot be overstated. All meets attended by VJO require a one official for every 10 VJO swimmers. If this requirement is not met the team is fined \$100 per session per day. Meets cannot be held unless there are enough officials to run the meet. For further information, contact the Officials Chairperson, Candace Van Dewark [officials@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:officials@vallejoaquatics.org)

**Swim Meet Officials Officials:** Our Officials are our ambassadors for Vallejo Aquatic Club and for the sport of swimming. They are responsible for ensuring that swimmers comply with the technical rules of swimming on stroke, kick, turns and finishes. **NOT TO FEAR!!** In-depth training sessions will be provided to those volunteers. Please consider becoming a VJO Official, because without Officials, our swimmers will be prohibited from competing.

- **Stroke and Turn Judge**
- **Starter**
- **Referee**
- **Colorado Operator**
- **Computer Room Operator**

### **Other Swim Meet Volunteer Areas:**

**Adobo Chef:** Prepares the Chicken Adobo for the Snack Bar.

**Announcer:** Announcer should have a clear, pleasant voice and be able to function under pressure in the midst of a noisy crowd and a demanding referee. Responsible for announcing events and heats so that all at the pool are aware of where we are in the meet.

**Awards:** Work at awards table. Place labels on awards and distribute to eligible swimmers.

**Check In/Clerk of course:** Check in all swimmers and confirm swimmer's events. Manage the length of the meet by closing events 30 to 60 minutes before the event begins.

**After Meet Clean-up:** Help clean up and /or break down all canopies and meet equipment.

**Colorado Timing Operator:** Experience working with computers is not necessary. Work in the Colorado Timing booth, next to the starter. Responsible for operating the system that gives swimmers their results.

**Computer Operator:** Responsible for running the swim meet software; Seeding events once they have been closed at Clerk of Course; Entering results from each event; and Printing results. The Computer Operator will shadow the computer office lead for training.

**Head timer:** Supervise timers. Start two watches every heat in case any timers watch fails.

**Hospitality:** Serve snacks, beverages and meals to coaches, officials and meet workers.

**Meet Marshal:** Enforce safety procedures during warm up and maintains order in the swimming venue.

**Meet Runner:** Gather and distribute all paperwork including Timing sheets, heat and lane assignments, results and all paperwork from the Colorado. Comfortable shoes a must.

**Parking Attendant:** Early in the morning of each meet, this person will monitor the coaches/officials parking lot to ensure that only those authorized gain access.

**Potato Baker:** Bakes potatoes at home for snack bar.

**Program Sales:** Sell programs during the meet and field general questions.

**Silent Auction Coordinators:** Create and sell Silent Auction items and collect donations from club members.

**Meet Set Up:** Help set up and/or break down all canopies and meet equipment.

**Snack Bar:** Set up, prepare food and serve in the snack bar. Major source of swim meet revenue.

### **Board of Directors & Coordinator Volunteers**

**Board of Directors** The officers of the Club are : President, Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer. The Executive Board consists of President, Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer, and three Members-at-Large. Board positions are nominated and elected by the annual General Membership Meeting in September. All officer positions have a one-year term, except for the VP/President-Elect position, which has a 2-year term, commencing on October 1st. The maximum term for officers is two consecutive years. For additional information, refer to the Vallejo Aquatic Club By-Laws.

#### **2018-2019 Board of Directors**

**President:** Tamara Kawashiri ([president@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:president@vallejoaquatics.org) )  
**Vice President/President Elect:** Phil Grant ([vicepresident@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:vicepresident@vallejoaquatics.org) )  
**Secretary:** Cindy Delange ([secretary@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:secretary@vallejoaquatics.org) )  
**Treasurer:** Madelyn Cueva ([treasurer@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:treasurer@vallejoaquatics.org) )

The VJO Board of Directors is comprised of four elected officers and six appointed members. The appointed positions are appointed by the President and approved by the other officers. The six appointed Board members are:

- 1. Meet Director** – Joe & GiGi Sapida ([meetdirector@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:meetdirector@vallejoaquatics.org))  
Coordinates and oversees meets hosted by VJO.
- 2. Officials Chairperson** - Candace Van Dewark ([officials@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:officials@vallejoaquatics.org))  
Coordinates and oversees officials for the Club.
- 3. Communications Chairperson** - Genevieve McQuilling ([communications@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:communications@vallejoaquatics.org)).  
Coordinates VJO's internal and external communications.
- 4. Membership Chairperson** - Open Position ([info@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:info@vallejoaquatics.org)).  
Manages registration of new members and maintains current membership list.  
Manages the Club's Pacific Swimming Registration.
- 5. REAL / Zone 3 Representative** – Coach Jennifer Thiem ([jenniferthiem@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:jenniferthiem@vallejoaquatics.org)) represents VJO in all REAL and Zone 3 board meetings and activities.
- 6. Senior Athlete Representative** - Eliana Matteo and Juan Madrigal  
Represent and speak for our athletes.

## Coordinator Volunteers

**Volunteer Coordinator** - Heidi Scharffenberg ([vhours@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:vhours@vallejoaquatics.org))  
Organizes volunteers for swim meets, fundraisers and other team functions. Coordinates and communicates with Parents and Board to manage volunteer hours.

**Swim-A-Thon Coordinator** - Sarah Melanephy ([melanephymadhouse@gmail.com](mailto:melanephymadhouse@gmail.com))  
Each year the Vallejo Aquatic Club participates in USA Swimming Swim-A-Thon. This year our Swim-A-Thon will be held in August. Swimmers earn money for the team by swimming lengths of the pool. Each swimmer is encouraged to swim 2 hours or 200 lengths. Each Family is required to raise \$200.

Coordinator will:

- complete and mail a contract to USA Swimming
- send out packets with pledge information to families
- assist in creating incentive prizes with Board of Directors
- organize food & beverages for the event

**Event Coordinator** - Jennifer Matteo ([events@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:events@vallejoaquatics.org))  
Works with the Board and Head Coach to help organize and set facilities for our VJO events. Also helps organize volunteers for setup and clean-up.

- Awards Banquet
- Holiday Party
- Halloween Party
- Summer Pool Party and Alumni Reunion
- Monthly Social Events

### **Fundraising Coordinator**

Collaborate with the Board and Head Coach to organize team fundraisers for the Club.

### **Publicity & Grant Writing Coordinator**

Works with the Board & Head Coach to increase public awareness of VJO. Includes: interacting with other organizations such as schools and civic groups. Applies for and prepares Grants.

### **Sponsorship Coordinator**

Reaches out to local businesses for team sponsorship. Manage and maintain relationship between VJO and business sponsor by renewing contracts annually, ensuring publicity and advertisement of the business during home swim meets and on the team bulletin board and website.

### **Equipment Manager**

Works with the Meet Director, Board, & Head Coach to keep equipment inventoried & maintained.

### **Team Apparel Coordinator**

Process and deliver orders for team wear; t-shirts, shorts, sweatshirts, parkas, warm up suits, etc.

## **DUES and FEES Policies and Information**

The Vallejo Aquatic Club is a non-profit organization and Monthly Dues covers majority of the Clubs expenses such as pool rental and coaches salaries.

### **Monthly Dues (Active):**

Monthly dues are arranged according to group and are as follows:

- Pre-Team Group \$80.00
- Hammerhead 1 Sharks Group \$85.00
- Hammerhead 2 Sharks Group \$90.00
- Leopard Sharks Group \$110.00
- Mako Sharks Group \$110.00
- Tiger Sharks (Junior Group) \$130.00
- Tiger Sharks 2 (Junior 2 Group) \$135.00
- Great Whites (Senior Group) \$150.00

- Alumni / College Swimmers (Senior Group) \$40.00
- Sibling Discounts: 25% off their swim rate. Max family: 260.00/month

### **Monthly Dues (Inactive):**

- Inactive Status \$10.00

**Monthly Dues are due on the 1st of each month and become delinquent after the 10th of that particular month.** VJO highly recommends setting up automatic bill pay through our team website and having dues automatically deducted each month. Checks can be made payable to "VJO" or "Vallejo Aquatic Club". Dues may be placed in the black lock box in the Shark Tank or can be mailed to: **Vallejo Aquatic Club, P.O. Box 5846, Vallejo, CA 94591**

If an account is 30 days delinquent with failure to resolve outstanding dues and fees owed, swimmers will not be allowed to participate in practice until all late fees and dues are paid up to date. An account remaining more than 60 days delinquent results in termination of membership. Reinstatements will be considered when all unpaid dues have been paid with a written request for reinstatement is submitted to the Board of directors. **Swimmers will not be allowed to practice until all late fees and dues are paid up to date.**

### **Fundraising Requirement**

Each VJO family is asked to meet a \$200.00 annual fundraising goal. The annual Swim-a-Thon is a great way to fulfill this requirement. Families may also collect sponsorships equalling this amount.

### **Financial Assistance**

If a family is undergoing financial hardship, please contact the club treasurer ([treasurer@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:treasurer@vallejoaquatics.org)) or Membership chair ([info@vallejoaquatics.org](mailto:info@vallejoaquatics.org)) and alternative arrangements may be sought. Scholarship and Hardship applications are available upon request. Contact the club treasurer for more information regarding financial assistance.

**OUR FIRST OUR CONCERN IS TO TRY TO KEEP THE SWIMMER IN THE WATER.**

### **Penalty Fees**

It is essential that dues be paid on time. Penalty fees are as follows:

\$10.00 late fee if dues are not received by the 1st of each month

\$20.00 fee for any returned checks.

### **Late Pickup Fees**

Please be courteous to our coaches and pick up your child(ren) on time. Late fees will be



collected after 7:45pm. If you are more than 15 minutes late picking your child(ren) up on any given day, the standard fee will be imposed. Late fees will be billed by our treasurer. Penalty fees are as follows:

\$1.00 for **EVERY** minute late. First hour would equal \$45.00. **DON'T BE LATE!**  
\$20.00 fee for any returned checks.

Every year, VJO takes a two-week break from all meets and practices, usually the middle two weeks in August. This is a great time for swimmers and coaches to take a well needed vacation.

#### **New Swimmer:**

Dues for new members are due on the first day of registration. Swimmers can start their practice when the Membership Chair has received a completed registration form, Pacific Swimming Registration Form and applicable dues. The Membership Chair and the Treasurer will determine the start date for each swimmer.

**Inactive Swimmer:** Vallejo Aquatic Club members may request Inactive Status on a monthly basis. Please notify the Membership Chair or the Treasurer in writing or by email and include the swimmers name, group, and month that the swimmer will be going inactive. For families with more than one swimmer, the Inactive Fee does not apply as long as one swimmer in the family is still active. Appropriate monthly dues for active swimmers would still apply. **NOTE: A swimmer that is on "Inactive" status with VJO cannot swim in meets.**

**A swimmer who comes to practice at least one day in a month will be considered as "active" for the entire month.**

#### **Annual Family Membership Fee:**

The Annual Family Membership Fee is \$50.00 and is payable at the time of registration. This fee is due annually on September 1st. If you join after March 1st the cost is \$25.00, and if you join June through Sept there is no cost, but the full amount must be paid on September 1st.

#### **Pacific Swimming Fee:**

Every swimmer who competes or practices in a USA Swimming sanctioned event must register with and become a member of USA Swimming, Inc. (USA-S). This registration is renewable annually on the 1st of November. The registration fee is \$73.00. Swimmers who register between May and the end of August pay a "*Summer Only*" fee of \$45.00.

#### **Summer Only Swimmers:**

Swimmers who wish to continue past August 31st must re-register at the full \$73.00 Annual

Pacific Swimming Registration Fee in September. This \$73.00 fee will cover the swimmer for the remainder of the year (4 months) and the following calendar year. Included with this registration is accident insurance which would cover the swimmer beyond their family's own insurance policies. Ongoing members will re-register by November 1st for annual renewal of their Pacific Swimming Registration.

### **Pre-Team Swimmers**

There are no required volunteer hours and no required family member fee for swimmers in the Pre-Team Group. Pre-Team swimmers who wish to continue past August 31st must re-register at the full \$73.00 Annual Pacific Swimming Registration Fee in September.

### **College Swimmers**

Collegiate swimmers who were past VJO members for 3 or more years may practice with VJO over any holiday or break. Over the summer months collegiate swimmers have a discounted rate of \$40 per month and without any volunteer hour or Family Membership Fee requirements. College swimmers must be current Pacific Swimming/USA swimming members.

### **Leave of Absence**

In the event a swimmer discontinues or takes time off please contact the team Treasurer, Membership Chairperson and your VJO coach as soon as possible. Failure to notify the team treasurer will result in any recurring fees.

### **Refund Policy & Prorated Dues**

VJO does not have a refund policy. Dues are prorated only when a swimmer joins the team. In case of prolonged illness or injury, contact the team treasurer for a possible adjustment.