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February 25, 2026

ASCA Fellows Launch Nationwide Study on Coach Sustainability, Invite Coaches to Participate

The 2025 Fellows Class of the American Swimming Coaches Association (ASCA) has launched a nationwide research initiative focused on one of the most urgent issues in the sport: coach sustainability — and they are asking coaches across the country to participate.

The *Nationwide Swimming Coach Sustainability Survey* is now live at www.swimmingcoach.org/survey_25, where coaches can access the survey and contribute to what ASCA describes as a first-of-its-kind effort to better understand burnout, retention, and long-term career viability in swimming.

Each year, the ASCA Fellows Program selects a cohort of coaches to conduct research aimed at strengthening the profession. This year's class has centered its work on a foundational belief: supporting coaches is not optional — it is fundamental to the health and future of the sport.

Understanding the Drivers of Burnout and Retention

While conversations about coach burnout and turnover have become increasingly common, comprehensive national data examining the structural drivers behind those trends has remained limited.

The survey explores how role expectations (Head Coach vs. Assistant Coach), employment structures, compensation models, board relations, and access to professional development interact to influence career longevity and job satisfaction. The goal is to identify patterns that help explain why coaches stay — or why they leave.

By gathering responses from coaches at all levels and across diverse club structures, the Fellows aim to develop a Sustainability Framework that provides actionable insights for club leaders, Local Swimming Committees, and national stakeholders.

Why Coaches' Voices Matter

The study is designed to elevate the lived experience of coaches. Rather than relying on isolated anecdotes, the research will aggregate responses nationwide to identify broad trends and systemic opportunities for improvement.

All responses are confidential. The research team will reference macro-level trends from the USA Swimming SWIMS 3.0 database to contextualize findings, but no individual club-level data will be used for evaluation or critique.

The strength of the study depends on participation. The more coaches who complete the survey, the more meaningful and representative the findings will be.

A Profession Worth Sustaining

The 2025 ASCA Fellows Class includes coaches **Stephanie Bates, Adam Coffman, Melissa Healy, Emily Laurent, Jesse Lewis, Darla Long, Katie McNerney, Trevor Rill, and David White**, under the leadership of Fellows Chair Coach **Kathleen Prindle**.

Their message is clear: coaches are the backbone of competitive swimming. Athlete development, team culture, and club stability all depend on a coaching workforce that is supported, valued, and positioned for long-term success.

Coaches nationwide are encouraged to visit the ASCA website at www.swimmingcoach.org and participate in the survey — helping shape a more sustainable future for the profession.

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