



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASCA Announces Key Staff Additions: MJ Truex, Sarah Winstead, Dan McCarthy

New hires support a broader strategy to expand in-person learning, drive innovation in coach education, and strengthen professional support for coaches.

Fort Lauderdale, FL -- The American Swimming Coaches Association (ASCA) has announced a strategic expansion of its team, welcoming three highly respected new hires — **MJ Truex, Sarah Winstead, and Dan McCarthy**. These respected professionals in the swimming community bring deep experience in coach development, membership growth, and event programming, positioning ASCA to deliver more in-person learning, innovative online education, and accessible member support to coaches at every level.

Mariejo “MJ” Truex joins ASCA as Director of Programs and Events. With three decades of experience in coaching, program development, membership services, and team support, Truex is a highly respected strategic and people-focused leader. During the past 20 years at USA Swimming, she managed extensive program portfolios, overseeing services for more than 18,000 coaches, 2,700 teams, and numerous Local Swim Committees (LSC). Truex has a proven track record in enhancing member engagement and satisfaction through initiatives like the launch and expansion of USA Swimming University, as well as her work in diversity, equity, and inclusion, and nationwide coach and athlete development programs. MJ brings over 25 years of collegiate and club coaching experience to the role.

Sarah Winstead has been hired as Membership Development Manager. A former Division I swimmer at Clemson University and club swimmer in the Atlanta area, Winstead brings a strong background in membership-focused communications and digital strategy from roles spanning private club membership management, university admissions marketing, and most recently fitness coaching and brand development with Team Pro Physique. During her tenure at the Atlanta Athletic Club, she worked on campaigns that increased retention and helped build a waitlist of prospective members, while coordinating CRM-driven communications, launching new digital platforms, and leading initiatives to keep members informed and engaged.

Dan McCarthy joins ASCA as Coach Education Consultant. For the past two decades, McCarthy was a valued member of the USA Swimming staff, most recently serving as Director of Coach Education, where he led professional development initiatives for more than 10,000 coaches, oversaw education and certification systems. He also led the development of USA Swimming

University, an award-winning learning platform recognized with a Brandon Hall Gold Award. Earlier, McCarthy spent more than 15 years as project manager for sport performance initiatives with USA Swimming, focusing on data-driven program development and professional learning. He holds an MBA from Point Park University, and a Master of Science in Exercise Physiology from the University of Pittsburgh.

Growing Roles for Growing Services

In addition to the new hires, ASCA staff member **Russell Mark**, a world-renowned stroke technique expert, is working on new and innovative education offerings, such as the **ASCA Technique Pod** and the new **Stroke Lab Live** webinar series.

To further support the organization's continued growth, veteran ASCA staff member **Dr. Ariel Hodges, PhD**, has assumed expanded operational responsibilities, with her title changing to **Director of Online Education and Operations**. ASCA has also created a new **Financial and Administrative Manager** position, which is currently posted and has not yet been filled.

"Guided by the strategic leadership of our Board of Directors, this expansion positions ASCA to have an even greater impact on the coaching profession," said **Bill Dorenkott, ASCA President and Head Coach at Ohio State University**. "By investing in people and programs, we're strengthening the support system for coaches and helping shape the future of our sport."

"We're thrilled to welcome this talented group to the ASCA team," said **ASCA Chief Executive Officer Jennifer LaMont**. "They each bring a deep understanding of both swimming and service, and together, they'll help us offer more to coaches, expand access to professional development, and build an even stronger sense of community across our sport."

Expanding Programs and Vision

ASCA's staff expansion comes during a period of transformation for the organization. Over the past year, ASCA has expanded its regional clinics to include the **Pacific, Central States, Eastern States, and International Swimming Hall of Fame (ISHOF)** Clinics, while also adding clinics in collaboration with LSCs across the country.

Looking ahead, ASCA's priorities include a major update to its Certification Program, enhanced digital education offerings, expanded social media engagement, deeper collaboration with USA Swimming, and new initiatives designed to support coaches entering the profession.

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About the American Swimming Coaches Association

The American Swimming Coaches Association (ASCA) is the leading professional association for swim coaches in the United States and around the world. ASCA is dedicated to providing education, certification, and professional development opportunities that support coaches at every stage of their careers and elevate the sport of swimming.