

DISABILITY AWARDS

Eligibility & Criteria



USA Swimming encourages people with disabilities to participate in the sport of swimming and facilitates their inclusion in USA Swimming programs through education and collaboration. We seek to involve people with disabilities in existing competitions and programs for all swimmers, rather than provide unique disability-only opportunities.

NOMINATION PROCESS

Any USA Swimming member athlete, coach, volunteer, club, or LSC (Local Swimming Committee) may submit a nomination by completing the official nomination form for any, or all, disability awards via the USA Swimming Disability Awards nomination link on the USA Swimming DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) webpage here under “Disability Top Resources”, “Resource and Recognition”.

QUALIFYING YEAR

The qualifying year for all Disability Awards is October 1st thru August 31st of each USA Swimming membership year.

TIMELINE

- Nominations open July 1st of each year.
- Nominations close September 5th of the current membership year.
- Committee consideration of nominees and selection of award recipients, early September of each year.
- Awards presented in conjunction with the Annual Business Meeting which takes place in mid to end of September each calendar year.
- The Committee, in consultation with USA Swimming staff, reserve the right to adjust the nomination and selection timeline.

TRISCHA L. ZORN ATHLETE AWARD

The purpose of the Trischa L. Zorn Award is to recognize a swimmer with a disability (or relay team) for outstanding performances during the previous membership year. The award is named in honor of Trischa Zorn, an American swimmer blind from birth who is one of the most decorated Paralympic athletes of all time in any sport. Trischa Zorn competed in seven Paralympic Games from 1980 through 2004. During Paralympic competition she established multiple world records and earned 41 gold, 9 silver, and 5 bronze medals.

ELIGIBILITY

Nominees may include individual swimmers or relay teams. Swimmers with any disability are eligible. As a prerequisite to nomination, swimmers or relay team members must demonstrate (a) USA Swimming membership at the time of the performances, and (b) competition in at least five (5) events across two (2) USA Swimming sanctioned meets during the qualifying year. The results of the five (5) events must appear in the SWIMS database. Collegiate swimmers may substitute competition results from USA Swimming observed meets. Swimmers may be nominated for and/or receive the Trischa L. Zorn award more than once.

AWARDS AND NOMINATION CRITERIA

- Trischa L. Zorn Award: One Trischa L. Zorn Award, a plaque, will be presented annually to the swimmer who best exhibits excellence in swimming at the national or international level during the qualifying year.
- Honorable Mention Awards: Up to five Honorable Mention awards will be presented annually to swimmers who satisfy the criteria for the Trischa L. Zorn Award. Swimmers receiving Honorable Mention will receive certificates suitable for framing, with certificates distributed via the swimmers’ LSCs or via mail service.
- The nomination form will include: (a) contact information for the swimmer; (b) results of the qualifying performance; (c) the swimmers’ coach; (d) reference of a USA Swimming sanctioned or observed meet.
- The committee will give special consideration to any swimmer or relay team who establishes a new long course or short course world record, or earns a gold, silver, or bronze medal at a long course or short course international championship where they are representing the USA within their disability or para-specific NGB (National Governing Body).



Disability Awards



JAMES RAYMOND "JIMI" FLOWERS DISABILITY SWIMMING COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

The purpose of the "Jimi" Flowers Disability Swimming Coach of the Year Award is to recognize significant contributions by coaches for the inclusion of swimmers with a disability in USA Swimming programs. This most prestigious coaching honor is named in honor and memory of James Raymond "Jimi" Flowers, an incredible coach who developed numerous Olympic and Paralympic champions. Read more about Jimi's amazing contribution to the sport of swimming at the bottom of this page.

ELIGIBILITY

Nominees may include an individual coach, or a coaching staff from the same USA Swimming club. Nominees must be USA Swimming coach members in good standing. Coaches may be nominated for and/or receive the "Jimi" Flowers Disability Swimming Coach of the Year Award more than once.

AWARDS AND NOMINATION CRITERIA

- One national-level award shall be presented annually.
- Criteria includes: (a) excellence in coaching swimmers with a disability as demonstrated by the swimmers' improvement and performances; (b) significant efforts to attract and welcome persons with a disability to competitive swimming; (c) significant efforts to foster inclusion within the club, LSC (Local Swimming Committee), other USA Swimming programs, or in the sport of swimming. The nominee's contributions to inclusion may include club,

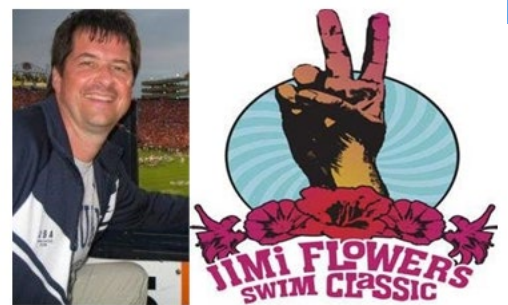
LSC (Local Swimming Committee), national, or international examples. The nomination should focus on contributions during the qualifying year.

- The nomination form will include: (a) nominator contact information; (b) contact information for the coach; (c) significant contributions and their results (d) date/season in which the significant contribution took place.

NAMESAKE

The USA Swimming Disability Swimming Coach of the Year Award is named in honor of James "Jimi" Raymond Flowers. An avid swimmer, Jimi was a four-time conference champion in the 200m breaststroke at Tulane University, competing in three NCAA Championships and two U.S. Olympic Team Trials-Swimming (1980 and 1984). During his tenure at Tulane, Jimi was named the University's Athlete of the Year, and in 2010 was inducted into Tulane's Athlete Hall of Fame.

After college, Flowers started his career as an Assistant Coach for Auburn University (1984-1989) and returned to Auburn (1995-1999) after serving USA Swimming as the National Team Coordinator (1989-1995). In 1999 Flowers assumed the role of Aquatic Center Manager at the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee Training Center in Colorado Springs, where he assisted with aquatics operations at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, airport operations at the 2006 Torino Olympic Winter Games, and logistics and airport operations at the 2007 Parapan American Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



In 2007, Flowers began working for U.S. Paralympic Swimming as the National Team Manager and Resident Team Coach, and in 2009 assumed the role of Associate Director of High Performance and National Team Head Coach. Jimi's contributions to inclusion were significant. In addition to contributing to many athletes' success at the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing, and other international competitions, Jimi engaged with and empowered athletes of all ages and abilities.

Following his untimely death at age 47 from a climbing accident, USA Swimming posthumously awarded Jimi the 2010 Disability Swimming Coach of the Year Award. "We hope that naming the award in Jimi's honor will help to inspire other coaches to follow his example of inclusion of swimmers with disabilities in the sport of swimming. The impact that Jimi had on our sport was felt by many and we know that his legacy will continue to live on for years to come", former Executive Director Chuck Wielgos.

In Jimi's honor, U.S. Paralympic Swimming hosts the international Jimi Flowers Classic, an annual Long Course competition open to swimmers with physical, visual, or intellectual impairments.

