Para Swimming:
Coaching disabled athletes and the positive impact they can have on YOU & YOUR SWIM TEAM

Presented by: Helen Garcia
Head Coach & Co-Founder
Albany Armada Aquatics

My Story

* Athlete to Coach
* Bellflower Aquatic Club
  * Coached by Don Watkins
* Swam at University of California, Berkeley
  * Coached by Teri Mckeever
* First experience
  * 1 night a week disabled athletes would swim after our workouts
  * Volunteered to help with group
  * Taught basic skills
  * Some swimmers trained with team and competed in our able bodied meets
  * Facilitated by Don Watkins
  * Went on to coach Roy Perkins
At age 24 Bryce lost her hands and feet

Met Roy Perkins Jr. through Challenged Athlete Foundation Swim Clinic

Relearned How to Float & Swim
  * Able Bodied Experience in Synchronized Swimming & Water Polo

Used YouTube to Learn Strokes
  * Much of her Strokes were Self-Taught

Searching for a Team

Started to Compete

Coaching Outside of the Box

Develop Trust

Trial and Error

Slower Before Faster

Rethinking Stroke Mechanics

Coaching by Committee
Stroke Classification

- Even Playing Field?
- Freestyle, Back & Fly
  - S6 Stroke Classification
- Breaststroke
  - SB4 Stroke Classification

Breaststroke

- Best shot at MQS
  (Minimum Qualifying Standard)
- Building the Stroke
- Finding the Kick
- Rate of Improvement
Learning the Dive

* In Water with Assistance
* Sit dive
  * Video 1
  * Video 2
* Standing Dive from Edge
  * Video 3
* Standing Dive from Block
  * Video 4

Competing

* Goal Setting
* Able Bodied Meets
  * Video 5
* Travel Meets
  * Cincinnati, Ohio Para Swim Meet
* Para Olympic Trials
  * Do not assume rules are the same
Introducing Bryce to the Team

Part of the Armada Family

Trains Alongside Team
  * Modified Sets

Create Opportunities to Work Together

Inspire
Advice

- Treat them like everyone else
- Disabled does not mean Helpless
  - Allow them to do what they CAN
  - Independence
- Competing at Able Bodied Meets
  - Contact the Meet Director
  - Warm Up?
  - Dives
  - Exit strategy
  - Be Prepared for Anything!
- Look for Equipment that Fits their Needs
  - Shin Fin
  - Volo-blade Paddles
  - Noodle
What’s Next?

- Short & Long Term Goals
  - Para Meet Schedule
  - Tokyo 2020

- New swimmer
  - Sharing the Love of Swimming

- Raise Awareness
  - Challenged Athlete Foundation
  - Wounded Warriors
  - Local Media