2026 2027

COACH ADVISORY COUNCIL ELECTION GUIDE

Nominees

	First name	Last name	LSC	Team Affiliation
1	Lucas	Curotto Ferreira	GA - Georgia Swimming	Gwinnett Aquatics
2	Adrian	Damasco	GU - Gulf Swimming	Texas Elite Swim Team
3	Emily	Daniels	NC - North Carolina Swimming	Marlins of Raleigh
4	O Thomas	Johnson	AZ - Arizona Swimming	UN
5	Ellen	Johnston	CT - Connecticut Swimming	Westport Weston Family Y Water Rat Swim Team
6	Shawn	Klosterman	AR - Arkansas Swimming	Springfield Aquatics - SPA
7	Emmanuel	Lanzo	CT - Connecticut Swimming	Ridgefield Aquatic Club
8	Robert	MacLeod	AD - Adirondack Swimming	USAM
9	Cliff	Murray	AK - Alaska Swimming	Northern Lights Swim Club
10	Briley	Penner	NC - North Carolina Swimming	Enfinity Aquatic Club
11	Alison	Pick	SE - Southeastern Swimming	Huntsville Swim Association
12	Sheldon	Sucre	MR - Metropolitan Swimming	MECPS Cougars
13	Jason	Walter	NT - North Texas Swimming	Lakeside Aquatic Club
14	Jonathan	Watson	NC - North Carolina Swimming	YOTA

Lucas Curotto Ferreira

Having served in a few different roles at the LSC level, as I am about to sunset at General Chair of Georgia Swimming, I would like to stay involved in governance. I also really appreciate the role the CAC has in making sure the coaches' voices are heard throughout all the committees within USA-Swimming and would be honored to help serve in one of those roles.

Adrian Damasco

I am writing to formally submit my self-nomination for a seat at the USA Swimming Coaches Advisory Council (CAC). As our sport continues to evolve at a rapid pace, I believe it is imperative that our coaching community is represented by individuals with genuine, on-deck experience spanning all levels of competitive swimming.

Throughout my coaching career, I have been fortunate to gain a comprehensive perspective on the swimming ecosystem. I have worked with small community clubs, medium-sized programs, and large multi-site organizations. These experiences have allowed me to understand, firsthand, the financial and operational challenges faced by clubs of all sizes—from the resource limitations of a 60-swimmer club to the complex demands of managing a multi-million-dollar program. My experiences range from introducing young swimmers to their first legal breaststroke kick to supporting athletes at the U.S. Olympic Team Trials.

This continuum—from grassroots fundamentals to elite senior performance—has provided me with a grounded understanding of the entire athlete and coach pathway. I appreciate the dedication required to advance our sport, as I have experienced the day-to-day realities coaches encounter at every juncture of this journey.

In addition to my roles in club leadership, my involvement with the USA Swimming camp system at regional and national levels has deepened my commitment to coach education, athlete development, and fostering a collaborative culture. Through these camps, I have had the privilege to exchange ideas with coaches from across the country, observe a wide array of training methodologies, and identify areas where our governing body can further support coaches in their vital work.

Should I have the honor of serving on the Coaches Advisory Council, I will strive to contribute energy, clear communication, and thoughtful, forward-looking solutions. My commitment includes:

Coaches are the driving force behind USA Swimming. It is essential that the council includes voices who understand the diverse needs of developmental coaches, while also upholding the high standards necessary for international competition. I am eager to offer my experience and enthusiasm in support of the council's mission.

Thank you very much for your time, thoughtful consideration, and your ongoing dedication to the coaching community.

Emily Daniels

I am excited to express my interest in serving on the USA Swimming Coaches Advisory Council. As an experienced coach of 17 years who is newer to the club swimming world, I believe I can bring a unique perspective, enthusiasm, and a strong commitment to supporting both new and experienced coaches throughout the USA Swimming community.

For me, coaching is about much more than developing successful swimmers. It is about building relationships on trust and vulnerability, fostering confidence, creating positive and safe team environments, and helping athletes develop essential life skills that extend far beyond the pool. My desire to serve on the Coaches Advisory Council comes from a passion for making coaching a positive, accessible, and rewarding experience for all from rookies to veterans. I believe that providing mentorship, encouraging collaboration, and creating opportunities for continued education are essential to developing confident, knowledgeable, and successful coaches. Our athletes are only as successful as the effectiveness of our coaches.

Though my coaching career started in club swimming over a decade ago, I have spent most of my career in education based athletics and recently returned to the club swimming scene. I believe this mix of experiences allows me to recognize both the rewards and challenges that come with being in this profession- from navigating coach education and professional development opportunities to learning how to effectively communicate with athletes and families to maintaining a work-life balance. In addition, being newer to the club scene, I can be a voice for new coaches who face a unique set of experiences that deserve representation and support.

I would welcome the opportunity to share the perspectives of newer coaches while learning from experienced leaders throughout USA Swimming.

If selected, I would focus on strengthening communication between USA Swimming and its coaching community, advocating for resources that support new coaches, and encouraging an environment where coaches at every experience level feel valued and heard. I would also work to promote opportunities for mentorship and professional growth while helping address the challenges that may discourage individuals from entering or remaining in the coaching profession.

I believe one of the greatest strengths of USA Swimming is its community of dedicated coaches who continually strive to improve themselves and the experiences of their athletes. Serving on the Coaches Advisory Council would allow me to contribute to that community in a meaningful way while helping shape a positive future for the next generation of coaches.

I would be honored to represent the voices of new and veteran coaches, contribute fresh ideas, and work collaboratively with fellow council members to strengthen the coaching profession and the sport of swimming. Thank you for considering my interest in this opportunity.

O Thomas Johnson

I am seeking to serve on the USA Swimming Coach Advisory Council to contribute to the continued growth, development, and success of competitive swimming in the United States. I have been a USA Swimming club coach since 1988 and have served as head coach of large club programs, including Birmingham Swim League, Fort Collins Area Swim Team, and Liverpool Swim Club. My experience also includes coaching at the University of Wyoming, where I had the privilege of coaching a swimmer who went on to represent the United States as a member of the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team.

Throughout my career, I have gained a broad perspective on competitive swimming, from developing age group athletes and building successful club programs to coaching at the collegiate level. These experiences have reinforced my belief that successful swimming programs depend on strong coaching, positive team cultures, long-term athlete development, and an environment that challenges swimmers to reach their potential.

I believe the future of competitive swimming depends on supporting coaches, improving the athlete's experience, and ensuring that coaches have a meaningful voice in decisions affecting our sport. We must continue to invest in coaching education and mentorship, share effective practices, strengthen club programs, and create opportunities for athletes to progress from introductory competition to the highest levels of the sport.

If selected for the Coach Advisory Council, I would bring the perspective of a coach who has spent nearly four decades working in competitive swimming, combined with leadership experience in the broader aquatics' profession. My background has given me an appreciation for the challenges facing coaches and clubs, including access to quality training facilities, athlete recruitment and retention, staffing, and the resources necessary to maintain strong, sustainable programs.

I would also bring a collaborative and practical approach to the council's work. I believe the best decisions come from listening to coaches across different levels and backgrounds, understanding their experiences, and working together to identify solutions that benefit athletes, clubs, and the sport. It is important that we continue to prepare athletes to compete at the highest levels while building a culture that values personal growth, sportsmanship, inclusion, and a lifelong connection to swimming.

After nearly four decades in competitive swimming, I remain passionate about sport and committed to giving back to the coaching community. Serving on the USA Swimming Coach Advisory Council would provide an opportunity to share my experience, learn from fellow coaches, and contribute to initiatives that strengthen coaching and athlete development nationwide.

It would be an honor to serve and help ensure that USA Swimming continues to provide coaches with the support they need and athletes with the opportunities they deserve to succeed at every level of competition.

Ellen Johnston

Head Coach

Westport Weston Family Y

Water Rat Swim Team

It would be an honor to be elected to the Coach Advisory Council. I take great pride in having been able to volunteer within the swimming community having served – and currently serving - in the following: Connecticut Swimming and the American Swim Coaches Association. I just finished my term with USA Swimming Rules & Regulations National Committee

Anything I can do to help educate, facilitate and promote the important role of coaching within swimming and the broad spectrum of responsibilities that come with being a swimming professional. To be able to offer a voice and work with USA Swimming as the organization navigates its way to supporting programs from grass roots through the Olympic level and work alongside other coach professionals.

Thank you for consideration.

Respectfully,

Ellen Johnston

Shawn Klosterman

I grew up swimming for the **Viking Swim Club** in **Petersburg, Alaska** and went on to compete at **Missouri State University** (SW MO State back then,) for Coach **Jack Steck** from 1992-96.

I recently retired from my position as **Aquatics Director** for the Webb City R7 School District in Webb City, Missouri. My responsibilities there included managing a facility, teaching K-12 learn to swim classes, and coaching Varsity swim teams. I also oversaw multiple renovations during my tenure, and ran a two-week **free** swimming lessons program for every student enrolled in Kindergarten for the upcoming year in the Webb City School District. Despite the busy schedule I was also able to carve out time to write for multiple swimming websites as a staff and freelance writer.

During my 27 years in that position, I take the most pride in having started **BERZERKER Swimming**, (originally named Jasper County Killer Whales,) in a low-income area that had very little swimming presence. I served as **Head Coach and Chief Operating Officer**, and built the club from being just a dream to developing athletes who achieved national level success from our shallow, six-lane, 25 yard pool.

I am now the Head Coach for **Springfield Aquatics**, on the campus of **Drury University** in Springfield, Missouri.

I have served in **multiple positions** that have given me experience that might be valuable to the Coaches Advisory Council:

- MSHSAA Swimming & Diving Advisory Board (multiple terms ending in 2026)
- City of Joplin Parks & Recreation Board (2016-18)
- City of Joplin Sports Authority Board (2016-18)
- Arkansas LSC General Chair (2017-2018)
- Arkansas LSC Administrative Vice Chair (2018-20 and 2025-current)
- Arkansas LSC Technical Planning Committee Chair (2025-26)
- Arkansas LSC Coaches Representative (2023-24)

I have also received two **awards** for service to the swimming community:

- **MISCA Walter H Lundt Award** for “Contributions and unselfish devotion given to the youth of Missouri in the sport of Swimming & Diving” - 2010
- **USA Swimming Service Award** - Arkansas LSC - 2019

I hope that my experience can help with the mission of the CAC to ensure that coaches' voices are heard in the governance process. I like to think that I can bring a perspective that can relate to coaches at all levels and help them to build a strong communicative relationship with USA Swimming.

Emmanuel Lanzo

As a Black Latino, bilingual coach, and DEI ambassador, I bring a perspective that is central to my intent to serve USA Swimming. My Puerto Rican background and experience coaching in Puerto Rico and Connecticut inform my commitment to representation, access, and belonging. I want to help ensure that athletes, families, and coaches across cultures and communities have a voice in the decisions that shape our sport.

Since 2013, I have served as Head Coach and CEO of Ridgefield Aquatic Club. That responsibility has taught me to listen carefully, work with a board, lead staff, and translate policy into daily practice. My bilingual perspective reinforces my commitment to clear communication and meaningful participation. I believe effective governance combines accountability with an understanding of the people affected by each decision.

My ASCA Governance Committee work, beginning in 2021, has included reviewing organizational policies and procedures, ethics, whistleblower protection, board recruitment, and Council bylaws. I have also served as an ASCA Ambassador and on the 2025-2026 World Clinic Committee, contributing to coach education and professional engagement. At USA Swimming, I participated in the 2023-2024 Camp Working Group, reviewing athlete and coach selection criteria, and was designated a voting delegate for the 2025 and 2026 House of Delegates. These experiences have reinforced the importance of clear standards, consistent processes, and decisions that can be explained to the membership.

My national coaching assignments include assistant coach at the 2017 World Junior Championships; head coach of the 2018 National Diversity Select Camp, 2022 Southern Zone Select Camp, and 2025 Girls National Select Camp; and assistant coach at the 2023 National Junior Team Camp. Along with my National Team coaching experience and Connecticut Swimming DEI/DICE and Program Operations service, these roles have given me insight into athlete development, access, selection, and the responsibilities of representing USA Swimming.

If selected, I will bring my governance experience, national coaching background, and commitment as a DEI ambassador to this service. I will listen to different perspectives, respect confidentiality, disclose conflicts of interest, and apply policies consistently. I want to help build an organization where excellence and inclusion advance together, where opportunity is accessible, and where athletes, coaches, and families can see themselves represented in the leadership of USA Swimming.

Robert MacLeod

I am seeking a position on the USA Swimming Coach Advisory Council to help ensure that coaches from programs of all sizes and competitive levels have a meaningful voice in the decisions shaping our sport.

With over 20 years of coaching experience, I have worked with athletes ranging from beginners to national and international competitors. As Head Coach of Uncle Sam Swim Team, I understand firsthand the challenges facing community-based programs, including facility access, financial sustainability, athlete development, and retaining qualified coaches.

My involvement in Adirondack Swimming governance, including serving on the Governance Committee, as a Coaches Representative, and as Records and Top 10 Chair, has strengthened my understanding of how organizational decisions affect coaches, clubs, and athletes.

I believe USA Swimming is strongest when coaches are actively involved in shaping policies rather than simply responding to them. I am particularly interested in improving communication and transparency, strengthening coaching education and mentorship, supporting smaller clubs, and ensuring competitive opportunities remain accessible and equitable.

If elected, I would approach this responsibility with an open mind, a willingness to listen, and a commitment to representing coaches across all levels of our sport—not just those whose experiences mirror my own. My goal is to help bridge the gap between national governance and the everyday realities coaches face on the pool deck.

Cliff Murray

I am writing to express my intent to serve on the USA Swimming Coach Advisory Council through the 2026-2027 nomination process. If selected, I will serve the full three-year term and give my best on behalf of coaches throughout USA Swimming.

As Head Coach of Northern Lights Swim Club and the current Senior Coach Representative for Alaska Swimming, I bring a practical coaching perspective and experience in swimming governance. My Alaska Swimming service has included Senior Chair, Age Group Chair, and Administrative Vice Chair, and I am now in my third term as Coach Representative. I have also served on the Legislative, Time Standards, and Hall of Fame committees. These roles have given me opportunities to consider issues from several sides and to contribute to decisions beyond my own club.

I believe one of the most useful things a representative can do is listen carefully. I would make a point of understanding the concerns of coaches whose programs and circumstances differ from mine, asking thoughtful questions, and bringing those perspectives into the Council's discussions. I would contribute honestly and constructively, remain open to other viewpoints, and look for practical ways to support coaches in their daily work.

I would welcome the opportunity to bring my experience and judgment to the Council while continuing to learn from fellow coaches. I understand that effective service requires preparation, consistent participation, and follow-through, and I am prepared to make that commitment for the full term.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Briley Penner

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Briley Penner, declare my intent to seek election to the USA Swimming Coach Advisory Council and submit this letter as my self-nomination.

As the current Head Age Group Coach and Site Director at Enfinity Aquatic Club, a part of the North Carolina Swimming LSC (NCS), I currently serve on the NCS Age Group Committee and have previously served on the NCS Coaches Committee, ASCA Advocacy Committee, and have been selected by my peers to represent NCS on the coaching staff of the Southern Zone LC Age Group Championships the past four (4) years, most recently serving as the Assistant Team Manager. I also serve as the President of the Board of Directors of the Forsyth Swimming Foundation, a 501(c)(3) focused on water safety, drowning prevention, and equitable access to aquatics in our region.

Thank you for considering my nomination.

Sincerely,

Coach Briley Penner

Alison Pick

Over the past three years on the CAC, I have gained an even deeper appreciation for the importance of coach representation, collaboration, and thoughtful advocacy within USA Swimming. I remain passionate about ensuring that coaches' voices are heard and meaningfully incorporated into the decisions that shape our sport.

Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working with diverse individuals and teams, developing my skills in both personal and professional growth. Early in my coaching career, I benefited from the mentorship of experienced coaches, including Kathy McKee and Jennifer Gibson, and had the opportunity to work alongside some of the best in the profession. I also intentionally sought experience coaching athletes at different levels so I could learn as much as possible before becoming a head coach. Working in different parts of the country and within different Local Swimming Committees (LSCs) has broadened my perspective and strengthened my commitment to giving back to the sport of swimming and helping advance our profession.

These experiences have given me firsthand insight into the challenges and opportunities coaches face across the country. From navigating different competitive structures and adapting to athletes' needs to addressing broader issues affecting our profession, I understand the importance of representing coaches across a range of roles and environments. Serving on the CAC for the past three years has further developed my understanding of how coach perspectives can inform discussions, initiatives, and decisions within USA Swimming.

My experience as a coaches' representative for an LSC and my participation in the Women in Governance program have expanded my understanding of the sport beyond the pool deck. These opportunities, along with my work on the CAC, have helped me better understand the processes and protocols that guide our organization and the value of active, informed participation in governance. I am also currently serving on the American Swimming Coaches Association (ASCA) Coach Advocacy Committee, where I continue to contribute to conversations and efforts focused on representing and supporting coaches.

My commitment to representing fellow coaches comes from a genuine desire to strengthen our coaching community. I believe that working together to address common challenges, share best practices, and advocate for supportive policies is essential to the growth and sustainability of our profession. I want coaches to feel heard, supported, and empowered, and I believe effective advocacy starts with listening carefully to the experiences and concerns of coaches at every level.

As a member of the CAC, one of my primary goals is to help facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practices among coaches while bringing forward perspectives that support both coaches and athletes. I believe collaboration and shared learning can elevate our entire coaching community. I will continue to contribute thoughtfully to discussions and initiatives that develop useful resources, strengthen communication, and help USA Swimming understand the needs of its coaches.

In conclusion, my three years of service on the CAC have reinforced my belief in the value of coach representation and collaborative leadership. Combined with my experience as an LSC coaches' representative, my participation in Women in Governance, and my current service on the ASCA Coach Advocacy Committee, I would bring both continuity and a broader advocacy perspective to the Council.

Thank you for considering my statement of intent. I welcome the opportunity to continue contributing my experience, perspective, and commitment to the Coach Advisory Council.

Sheldon Sucre

As a long-time USA Swimming member coach working at the intersection of high school, club, and educational aquatics in New York City, I am committed to amplifying the voices of coaches across all levels of the sport—particularly those in grassroots, urban, and under-resourced environments—while advancing governance that supports coach development, club sustainability, equitable access, and athlete pathways.

Currently, I serve as Administrative Dean, Physical Education Teacher, and Head Swim Coach (Boys' and Girls' teams) at Medgar Evers College Preparatory School in Brooklyn, and as Head Coach of the Cougar Swim Team, a USA Swimming club. In these dual roles, I develop age-group and high school athletes while navigating the practical realities of limited facility access, recruitment of new participants, coach retention, and program sustainability in a major urban center. I also bring extensive adjunct experience teaching swimming and related courses at multiple CUNY institutions since 2012. This combination of high school, club, and higher-education coaching gives me a grounded perspective on the full continuum of the sport and the challenges facing coaches who work primarily with developing athletes.

My leadership in aquatics governance and equity initiatives further prepares me to contribute to the CAC's work. As NYSAHPERD Aquatics Section President and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Section President (2026–2028), and as DDEI Chair for Metropolitan Swimming LSC (2026–2027), I have led efforts to expand inclusive programming, address barriers to participation for underrepresented communities, and support professional development for coaches. My scholarly and professional presentations have focused on topics including strategies for increasing minority participation in swimming, creating inclusive environments that address racial and gender microaggressions in PE and PETE, and the practical realities of teaching swimming in inner-city schools. These experiences align directly with the CAC's pillars—particularly Clubs (supporting start-up and sustained operations in diverse settings), Coaches (professional pathways, education, and retention), and Communications (ensuring clear outreach to coaches working outside traditional high-performance pipelines)—while also informing thoughtful engagement on Fast/Elite Swimming pathways that remain accessible and developmental.

I am particularly drawn to the CAC's role in representing the full spectrum of USA Swimming member coaches in governance processes, including discussions around coach representation on the Board of Directors, LSC structures, coach assignment to committees, and initiatives that strengthen the sport's foundation. My background equips me to advocate for practical resources that help clubs and coaches thrive, improved communication channels that reach coaches at every level, and policies that expand opportunity without compromising the competitive integrity of the sport. I am prepared to participate fully in monthly virtual meetings, pillar work, and additional responsibilities as needed.

I welcome the opportunity to contribute my experience as an urban high school and club coach, my leadership in LSC and state aquatics organizations, and my longstanding commitment to equity and youth development to the Coach Advisory Council. Thank you for your consideration. I am available for any additional information or discussion.

Jason Walter

I am applying to serve on the USA Swimming Coach Advisory Council because I believe coaches who run clubs every day should help shape the decisions that affect them. For more than 20 years, I have worked on both sides of that line: on deck with athletes, and in the meetings where meets, budgets, and policies get decided.

What I bring

Since 2011, I have been Head Coach of Lakeside Aquatic Club, a 501(c)(3) club with more than 1,000 competitive swimmers across four sites in North Texas. My job covers coaching and staff development, but also finances, facility agreements, HR, and family communication. This past year, our largest site lost its pool for five months. Keeping athletes in the water meant negotiating with school districts, cities, and HOAs, and that experience gave me a clear view of how fragile pool access is for clubs across the country.

I have also served in governance at the LSC and regional levels. In North Texas Swimming, I served as Senior Vice-Chair, Technical Planning Chair, and TSA All-Star Committee Representative. I currently serve on the Texas Senior Circuit board, where I helped plan senior sectional competition for Texas and Louisiana. Those roles taught me how policy decisions land in real clubs, and how to build agreement among coaches who don't always see things the same way.

At the national level, I have worked on USA Swimming National Junior Team staff, and I have coached athletes from the grassroots level through national competition. I understand what coaches need at each stage.

What I would focus on

- **Pool access and facilities.** Clubs need tools, data, and support from USA Swimming when they negotiate with facility owners or face closures.
- **Coach development and retention.** Clear pathways, education, and recognition keep good coaches in the sport, especially age group and developmental coaches.
- **Club sustainability.** Many clubs are small non-profits managing rising pool, staff, and meet costs. Practical business resources matter as much as coaching education.
- **A strong voice for working coaches.** I want to make sure the council hears from coaches at every level and that information moves in both directions between the council and the coaches it represents.

My commitment

If selected, I will prepare for every meeting, speak honestly for the coaches I represent, and follow through on the council's work. I have spent my career building programs, staff, and systems that last, and I would bring that same commitment to the Coach Advisory Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jonathan Watson

This is a statement of my intent to be able to make the monthly meetings and participate for a 3-year term if elected. I will maintain my coach membership with USA Swimming throughout the term and would love the opportunity to serve the sport and the coaches in USA Swimming.