



# **Building Community through Fitness & Education**

**Presenters  
Brandi Bashor, Charlotte Brynn,  
and Bill Brenner**

# Agenda

- Introductions
- Topic 1: ALTS & Bridge to Masters
- Breakout Exercise
- Topic 2: Open Water & Dryland Training
- Breakout Exercise
- Topic 3: Education & Resources
- Q&A / Wrap-Up



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## Presenter



### **Brandi Bashor**

- Head Coach, Nickel City Splash Masters (NICK), Buffalo, NY
- Director, NICK Adult-Learn-to-Swim Program
- Niagara LMSC Coaches Chair
- Member, USMS Coaches & ALTS Committees
- Certified USMS Level 2 Coach & ALTS Instructor
- Joined by Abby Dickson and Del Grant, who began as ALTS students and now are Masters swimmers & ALTS instructors

## Presenter



### Charlotte Brynn

- Executive Director, The Swimming Hole, Stowe, VT
- Coach, Stowe Masters Swimming
- USMS Level 4 Coach, ALTS Instructor, Personal Trainer
- Former Open Water Chair, New England LMSC
- Former Member, USMS Open Water Committee
- 12-time USMS Long Distance All American
- Resume includes the “Triple Crown of Marathon Swimming” English Channel, Catalina Channel, Manhattan Island
- Holds 3 AG World Ice Swimming Records
- Inductee, Vermont Open Water Hall of Fame
- Recipient, NELMSC Frank Wuest Open Water Service Award



## Presenter



### **Bill Brenner**

- Senior Director, USMS Club & Coach Development
- Member, Sarasota Sharks Masters (SHARK), Florida LMSC
- Certified USMS Level 4 coach & ALTS lead instructor
- Developed USMS coach certification & Clinic Course for Coaches curricula
- Established the ALTS instructor certification program
- 40 years of swim coaching experience at all levels
- Taught hundreds of classes to thousands of coaches & swimmers
- Former USMS local and national volunteer



# Topic 1: From Adult Learn to Swim to the Masters Swimming community

- Adult-Learn-to-Swim program
- Growing the community
- Introduction to Masters – Bridge Program
- From Student to Teacher



# Adult-Learn-to-Swim program

## Since 2021

- 173 Swimmers
- 38 progressing to become active Masters swimmers (21.9%)

## Year-Round

- 10 participants in a swim meet (26%)
- Four 10-week sessions (30 max)
- One coach plus volunteer instructors (1:3 ratio)



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# Community

## Keys to success:

- Breakfast Social
- Team Social
- Opportunities to get involved
- 5K
- Facebook page
- Youtube channel
- Communities joining communities



[NickelCitySplash.com](http://NickelCitySplash.com)



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# Bridge program - ALTS to Masters

## Introduction to Masters Swimming



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# Communities working together



# Breakout session #1

## Welcoming the newly skilled swimmer to your community

- Small Groups of 2 to 4 people each
- Introduce yourselves (name, club, location), your LMSC, volunteer role, why are you attending this session
- **Task One:**  
As the program leader, you're seeing new students gain comfort and ready to graduate ALTS. How do you keep them learning and engaged in your program?
- **Task Two:**  
How do you engage the greater community to attract new students?



# Topic 2: Comfort in the open water for safe, enjoyable swimming and recreation

- Building comfort in the open water
- Best practices
  - Learn to Swim
  - Survival Floating
  - Swimmer Responsibility
- Open Water Pool Clinic 101
- Beyond the open water enthusiast
  - Triathletes
  - Open water event participation



# Introducing swimmers to open water

**Safety, Overcoming Fear, Building Comfort & Confidence**

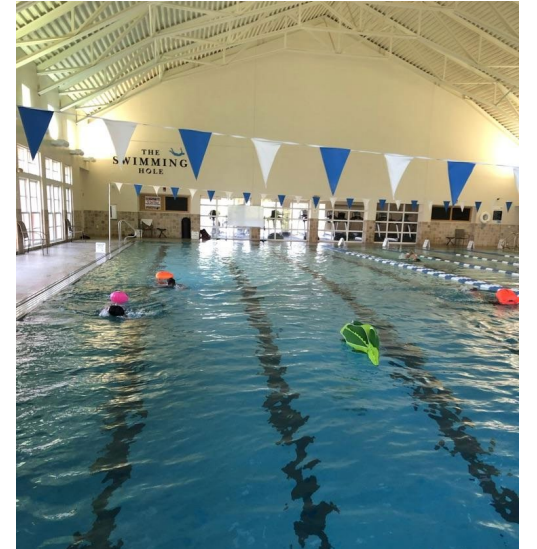


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# Pool open water clinic 101

## Learn safe practices:

- Safe entry & exit
- Swimming with no lanes
- Swimming with others
- Sighting & navigation
- Treading & changing direction



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# Beyond the open water enthusiast: triathletes, open water events

- Improve technique = efficiency, comfort, speed
- Gain experience = training, preparation
- Get support = club, group, coach, instructors



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# Dryland – get stronger together

## **Build Community:**

Group activities that connect and enhance swim technique, performance, and overall health and wellness.

**Goal:** Stronger body, mind, and social connection.

- Instructor-led core conditioning class for your team
- Post-class social gathering after class at a café, park, house, etc.
- Monthly core challenge
- Workshops – e.g., invite a PT to present to your group



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# Breakout session #2

- Small Groups of 2 to 4 people each
- Introduce yourselves (name, club, location), your LMSC, volunteer role, why are you attending this session
- **Task 1** : Lead the group in a plan to introduce a group of novice swimmers to their first open water swimming experience. Include safety measures and any equipment.
- **Task 2** : Lead the group in a Pool Open Water Swimming Workout (POW) incorporating open water skills in the pool, which may include sighting, treading, etc.
- Discuss your questions, concerns, experiences, and proposed solutions.



# Topic #3: Education & Resources

- How USMS can help you and your swim community grow
- USMS Adult learn-to-swim certification course
  - Hosting a class
- Clinic Course for Coaches
  - ALTS 2
- Stroke Development Clinics
- April is Adult-Learn-to-Swim Month
  - Try Masters Swimming campaign
- Grown-Up Swimming



# Resources



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# Questions & Answers

Don't be afraid. Ask away.  
(If you're thinking it, someone else  
probably is too!)

## **Brandi Bashor**

The Head Coach of Nickel City Splash Masters and program director of the Nickel City Splash Masters & Adult Learn to Swim Program in Buffalo, NY. Brandi is a certified USMS ALTS instructor, Level 2 coach; Member of the USMS Coaches Committee and the ALTS Committee; and the coaches Chair of the Niagara LMSC.

Brandi is joined by two of her swimmers Abby Dickson and Del Grant that began their swimming journey as ALTS students and progressing to become Masters swimmers and ALTS instructors.



## Charlotte Brynn

The Executive Director of The Swimming Hole Non-Profit Community Pool & Fitness Center in Stowe, VT. Charlotte has over 20 years coaching experience age group & masters swimmers. Charlotte has been teaching for 35 years. Charlotte founded BRYNNSWIM Open Water coaching, clinics and solo swims in 2020 and works with swimmers of all abilities to find success in the OW. She is a certified USMS ALTS instructor, Level 4 coach; ASCA Level 2 coach, Certified Personal Trainer and lifeguard. She is a 12-time USMS Long distance All American and has swum some of the world's toughest Marathon Swims including the English Channel, Catalina Channel, and Manhattan Island Marathon Swim. Charlotte holds 3 AG World Ice Swimming Records and has completed two Ice Miles. She was inducted to the Vermont Open Water Hall of Fame in 2016, received the NELMSC Frank Wuest Open Water service award in 2019 and served on the USMS National Open Water Committee and as NELMSC Open Water Chair.



## Bill Brenner

The Senior Director Club and Coach Development of U.S. Masters Swimming. He has over 40 years of experience coaching swimming at the age group, college and Masters levels. A USMS certified level 4 Masters coach, Bill has been involved in the evolution of the USMS Masters coach certification courses curricula and has taught hundreds of classes to thousands of Masters coaches. Bill established the USMS Adult learn-to-swim certification program and serves as an ALTS lead instructor. With the knowledge acquired from coaching 20-30 Masters swim clinics each year, Bill recently wrote the USMS Clinic Course for Coaches, teaching Masters coaches how to run a successful USMS stroke development clinic. Bill serves as an ambassador and advocate for USMS. Prior to joining USMS as a staff member, Bill served USMS as a volunteer at the local and national level. He has been a swim meet director, support team staff member and coach at his local program, the Sarasota Sharks Masters. Bill enjoys sharing his passion for swimming with others by encouraging adults to swim for life.

