

FINALISTS: Coaching Staff of the Year

Laurel East Hartford YMCA (LEHY)

In 2021-2022 we were able to return to East Hartford after being displaced from the Pandemic, but we returned to only one pool (we had previously used two pools) and returned with no head coaches (due to Coach Ed's illness). Our assistant coaches did not skip a beat, running evaluations (largest group of new swimmers we have had in 6 years), and getting the season started. Our coaches work with all groups so they really get to know our swimmers as athletes and as young people.

8 and Under Program

- 22 swimmers strong
- End of season 8U Finale- proud to say completed with no DQs, 7 event winners (including all boys' relays), and multiple swimmers creeping up on 9/10 Age Group Cuts. One 8u made an AG cut for the long course season.
- Coaches created a "Swimmer Mentoring" program. Our senior swimmers would come in and help out with the 8 and under program. This created a bridge between our groups and was wonderful to see the senior swimmers be great role models.

Developmental Program- swimmers who need more individual attention and stroke refinement

- 15 swimmers strong
- Coaches were able to work 12 of these swimmers into regular junior practices and compete in USA Swim Meets.
- Coaches created a "Swimmer Mentoring" program. Our senior swimmers would come in and help out with the Developmental program. This created a bridge between our groups and was wonderful to see the senior swimmers be great role models.

Age Group Program

- 2022 LC Age Group Championships
 - Event Champions
 - 2 13/14 year old swimmers qualified for YMCA Nationals
 - Multiple finalists
 - Sent swimmers to CT Swimming Age Groups in all ages (9/10, 11/12, 13/14) including relays.
- 2022 SC Age Group Championships
 - Multiple finalists
 - Sent swimmers to CT Swimming Age Groups in all ages (9/10, 11/12, 13/14) including relays.
- Sent 6 swimmers to SC Eastern Zone Age Group Championship- multiple finalists
- Sent 3 swimmers to LC Eastern Zone Championships- multiple finalists
- Regional Championships (SC and LC)- over 80% best times with multiple additional Age Group Championship cuts

Laurel East Hartford YMCA (LEHY), Cont.

Senior Program

- 2 New Winter Junior National Qualifiers, plus relay
- 2 USA Swimming Academic All Americans
- 3 New USA Swimming Futures qualifiers, plus all relays
- 2022 LC YMCA Nationals- Overall Women- 8th
 - All 5 relays placed in the top 16
- Multiple finalists
- 2021 SC YMCA Nationals- Overall Women- 14th
 - First time in program history- MULTIPLE relays finished Top 16, with the 800 Free Relay finishing 6th
 - 800 Free Relay qualified for Winter Junior Nationals
 - Multiple finalists
- 2022 SC Senior Championships- Overall Women- 3rd, Overall Team- 5th
 - Won 400 and 800 freestyle relays
 - Individual Event winner
 - 17/18 CT Swimming State Record in the Women's 4 x 100 Free Relay

Additional Information

- CT Scholar Athletes- 12 swimmers
 - CT Top 16 Swimmers- 24 swimmers
 - 3 swimmers ranked #1 in one or more events
 - Senior Swimmer Mentoring Program
 - Kindness Rocks Project
 - Collection and Donations to East Hartford Food Pantry
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Rapids Swim Team (RST)

The Rapids Swim Team Coach Staff over the 2021-2022 Year has:

- Staff of 12 coaches who continue to build a love of swimming in the athletes and help them achieve individual excellence.
- Associate Head Coach sits on the Senior Committee and is a Collegiate Division 1 Head Coach. ● Head Coach has been with the team for over 20 years. Won coach of the year for the 2020/21 year.
- Expanded and opened 2 satellite/practice locations.
- Grown from pre-pandemic numbers of 120 to over 200 registered swimmers this past year. ● Created a college training group in conjunction with Fairfield University
- Senior athletes swam to an 8th place finish at CT Senior Championships
- Age Group athletes swam to an 11th place finish at CT Age Group Championships
- Numerous zone qualifiers for Short Course and Long Course seasons.
- As a staff we continue to host CT Regional Championships

Ridgefield Aquatic Club (RAC)

Long Course Season

- Phillip 66 Nationals Men's High Point Award, two participants/finalists, 3 Resident Records
- One Speedo Summer Junior National Participant
- 6 Summer Futures Championship participants, 3 Finalists, 2 Medalists
- 4 Senior Zone Participants, 3 Finalists, 1 Medalist
- 8 Eastern Zone Long Course Age Group Championship Participants
- CT LC Senior Championships 2nd Place Overall, 1st Place Men, 2nd Place Female, 2 State Records, 1 13/14 State Record, Male Distance High Point
- CT LC Age Group Championships. 2nd Place Overall, 1st Combined 11-12, 1st Combined 13-14. 2 Individual Resident Record, 2 Individual Connecticut Records, 2 Relay Res/Ct Records

Short Course Season:

- CT SC Senior Championships 2nd Place Overall, 1st Place Men (Unattached), 1st Place Female, Male Overall High Point, Male Overall Distance High Point,
 - CT SC Age Group Championships, 2nd Place Overall, 3rd Place 10/U Combined, 3rd Place 11-12 Combined, 2nd Place 13-14 Combined.
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Westport Weston Family YMCA Water Rats (WRAT)

The Westport Weston Family Y Water Rat Swim Team believes strongly in the development of the swimmer's skill/technique. This begins when the swimmer is an 8 & Under and continues through to senior year in high school. This consistent approach has seen the team experience tremendous success in Connecticut, in the Zone and nationally. During the swim year of 2021-2022, the Water Rats won the CT Swimming Age Group Championships in both the short course and long course season; won CT Swimming Regional Championships for the section with which they swam, excelled in the CT Swimming Senior Championships – short and long course, 2022 YMCA National Championships, USA Swimming Futures Championships and Eastern Zone Age Group Championships – short and long course.

The coaching staff has immense passion and love for the sport of swimming. Every day, when they walk on deck to work with our swimmers, they make sure the swimmers find their own passion and love for the sport while instilling the core values for which we strive: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Our goal is for every swimmer "To be the best they can be regardless what level meet they may race."

Our coaching staff spreads their swimming prowess in other areas. As meet and facility hosts, we were able to step forward and in working with the Wilton Y Wahoos, host the finals session of the CT Swimming Short Course Senior Championships as well as the CT Swimming 10 & Under Championships. For our own team, we hosted a number of successful meets. The standout was our Age Group Qualifier in November of 2021 where we had 650 swimmers participate with absolutely no impact or interference with other programming or the membership of our Y. The coaching staff is integral in working with our parent volunteer to see that our meets are run at a high standard.

Additionally, our coaches are involved with the sport outside of the Water Rats:

- CT Swimming - We have coaches that are involved in the following:
 - CSI Board of Directors: Ex-Officio – Ellen Johnston
 - CSI Governance Committee: Ellen Johnston
 - Age Group Committee: Kristen Finnegan
- College Coaching: Kristen Finnegan – Sacred Heart University
- High School Coaching: Rob Urban
- Summer Club: Kristen Finnegan, Jamie Gremp, Ellen Johnston, Adam King and Rob Urban
- High School Officiating: Michele Koubeck
- ASCA Board of Directors: Ellen Johnston

The team itself has been sturdy and vibrant. Heading into the start of the 2021 fall season, we experienced 85% retention, our best retention to date as we typically retain 75-80%.

Westport Weston Family YMCA Water Rats (WRAT), Cont.

The coaching staff also oversaw the hosting of our Water Rat Alumni Panel, the Pink Plunge (PP) and Blue vs Red Intrasquad Meet. The Pink Plunge is an in-house swim meet held in October where the swimmers race to raise money for the Norma F Pfriem Breast Care Center. Our annual Blue vs Red Intrasquad Meet is a fun meet with off-beat relays culminating in a relay of swimmers vs parents. We hosted a food drive for the Bridgeport Mission that the swimmers of all ages help to collect the food from donors.

The many successes of this past swim year is due to a coaching staff that shares a vision, believes in the vision and works well together.

GO WRATS!