

Meet the Coaches: Coach Allison Collins:

1. How long have you been coaching?

I started coaching right after graduating from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ in 2006.



2. What sports did you do as an athlete, and if swimming, what events did you swim?

Other than swimming, the only other sport I played was soccer from 8 years old.

3. What club team did you represent?

I never had time to swim for a club team, because my schedule didn't allow, juggling between sports, Robotics, practicing for performances for dance and chorus, then squeezing in time to do homework and study for exams.

4. What brought you to BAC?

In 2013, I was job searching and saw that BAC was looking for swim instructors. Since I already had a coaching background, I saw that it was a great fit for me.

5. Who is your athlete role model and why?

My athlete role model is my husband, Manny Collins. As a scholar athletes, I was able to see how he was able to balance school and sports in high school. Yes, we met in calculus class our Junior year. He then played football at Rutgers helping to turn around a record of 1-11 to 12-2. After graduating, he didn't have the opportunity to get drafted, but worked really hard and was able to become a cornerback for the Jets in the NFL. He then became a financial advisor for Stifel and works as a financial advisor in Wall Street. He always told me that giving up is never an option. Keep trying until you are successful in whatever you want to achieve.

6. Do you have any pets? If so, what animal (s)?

I don't have pets, but if I would get a pet tomorrow, it'll be a husky. They are very beautiful, smart animals.



7. Do you have a favorite BAC core value? If so, which one and why? (Respect, Integrity, Accountability, Courage, Perseverance, Pride, Humility, and Commitment)

My favorite core value is courage. It's incredible how much talent someone has once they overcome fear.

I was not always really good at swimming. Between the ages of 4 and 12, I had 3 near drowning experiences. I felt as though I would never be able to learn how to swim and hated pools. Then, in my Junior year at the Plainfield High School, the head swim coach, Coach Jim Schmidt, was recruiting students to learn how to swim for gym class. He told me that all I have to do is show up dressed every day, try to do the skills in the water and I can pass the class with an A. So, I tried it, learned how to swim even in the deep end and learned how to dive. Oh, yes, I got an A. Even better, I conquered my fear!



Coach Schmidt (pictured on the left along with a scholar athlete) said that I learned so quickly in time for swim team and I should try out. Well, I made the team and in my Senior year, I was able to break the record for 50 yd freestyle. My name didn't even get a chance to stay on the score board, because in the next meet, someone beat my time.

Courage is what helped me overcome one of my greatest fears. I pushed myself, even if I was terrified, and learned that I should never give up. Like my husband always tells me, "You are way better than you think you are. Just keep focusing on what you want to achieve and you'll get there!"

8. Finally, what is one piece of advice you could give to the current athletes at BAC?

Never give up! Even if you aren't very good at something, there's a way you can succeed. Even though I was not as fast in swimming, and I learned how to swim my Junior year in High School, I found out that staying on track towards my goal helped me to learn about competitive swimming, the technique to help swimmers place in States every year, how to teach terrified swimmers how to become safe swimmers, and how to become an exceptional coach by always remembering what it took for me to get where I am today. You can do anything you put your mind to.