

Welcome Letter and State of the Team

September 2023

“Building Champions in Life Through the Sport of Swimming”

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Introduction and Executive Summary
- Board of Directors Role at Tide Swimming
- Vision, Values, and Behaviors – Tide Culture
- Staff Leadership
- Team Achievement
- Strategic Priorities
- Parent Leadership



Hello Tide Swimming!

Welcome to the 2023-24 Season! As I enter my second year as President, I would like to introduce myself to new families, highlight important organizational information and provide a “State of the Team” update on behalf of your Tide Swimming Board of Directors. My name is Jenny Huelsberg and I have served on the Board since 2017. My husband, Trey, and I live in Virginia Beach and our daughter, Alexis, swims in Senior Gold at the Princess Anne YMCA. In addition to Tide, we also are active with high school swimming at Norfolk Academy and with the Alanton Baycliff Recreation Center in Virginia Beach (where Alexis started swimming at the age of 6). Trey and I have come to learn about and greatly appreciate the sport of swimming through our daughter’s involvement, and my background as an attorney and desire to contribute to the team and swim community led me to serve on the Board. I continue to enjoy working with Katy Arris-Wilson, our President Emeritus, as well as our Vice President, Jenn Strach, and all of our enthusiastic and talented volunteer Board members. For both new and returning families, we hope that this letter gives you insight into our team culture, the high quality of our growing team, where we focus resources and how we operate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thanks to our coaches, staff, athletes and parent volunteers, I am happy and pleased to share with you that the State of our Team is very strong. I make that assessment for the following reasons:

1. Our financial position is stable with adequate reserves to weather short term unforeseen issues and allow for investment to pursue our strategic plan.
2. We are led by a national caliber, experienced and dedicated staff. We would put our staff up against any club coaching staff in the country and compete favorably in terms of performance, leadership and integrity.
3. We have a well-defined team culture that we prioritize in all aspects of our planning, decision making and daily actions.
4. The Board of Directors remains focused on dry side issues to both support our staff and work towards implementing our strategic plan. We are constantly assessing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats so that we can best serve our membership now and into the future.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ROLE AT TIDE SWIMMING

Tide Swimming is a 501c3 non profit, governed by an all volunteer, parent led Board of Directors. We meet monthly and we focus on the dry side of our team. The Board hires the Head Coach, and the Head Coach hires his staff. By focusing on the dry side of the team, the Board strives to support the coaches so that they can focus more of their time on athlete development. The Board does not get involved in the wet side of the team. Instead we support the staff and membership with strategic direction (retaining/acquiring pool space, financial oversight, and some operational leadership - PR, Service Hours, Facilities, Professional Development, to name a few.) Please find pictures and brief bios of your Board on our website - [Tide Swimming :: Board of Directors](#).

VISION, VALUES, BEHAVIORS - TIDE CULTURE!

In 2019 Tide Swimming leadership spent two weeks with an outside consultant, Renata Porter of Your Sports Resource, to define our Vision, Values, and Behaviors (VVB), establish a solid organizational structure and develop a successful professional development program for our coaches. Last spring we brought Renata and new partner Jack Roach back to meet with leadership to update our VVB and organizational structure as we grow and develop as an organization. Our VVB should answer every question any stakeholder of Tide Swimming might have.



Vision

To create a culture that empowers every athlete, coach, and parent to have meaningful experiences in life and sport through TEAM.



Values/Behaviors

GRIT

- Display mental toughness over time and through adversity.
- Celebrate failure; learn from your mistakes.
- Finish what you start. Persevere.

RESPECT

- Behave with positive intent in how you listen, speak, and act.
- Be punctual, present, and prepared.
- Take pride in your environment.

INTEGRITY

- Be honest and transparent.
- Honor your commitments and be accountable for your actions.

GRATITUDE

- Be thankful by showing appreciation and support for all.
- Honor relationships.

MERIT

- Bring meaningful contributions daily.
- Grateful for everything. Entitled to nothing.

PERFORMANCE

- Be accountable to your highest standard.
- Commit to and appreciate the journey.
- Strive together!



It is important that our membership read and understand our Vision, Values, and Behaviors because this is the culture we strive to achieve. Notice that our VVB does not state that we are striving to create Olympians, National Champions, or USA Swimming Gold Medal status. While all of those achievements are important, the culture our coaches and Board want to instill in our team is one defined by actions and behaviors. The concept is that if we live by these day in and day out, the performance will follow. We have control over the behaviors that drive performance, whatever the goals might be.

STAFF LEADERSHIP

The success and sustainability of our team relies on the professionalism and expertise that our coaches bring to our athletes and the experience, work ethic and attention to detail that Jennie Carder brings to her important role as Executive Director. Our team operates at six locations across Virginia Beach and Chesapeake and we employ 14 full-time and over 20 part-time staff.

Head Coach Richard Hunter

Is in his fifth year as Head Coach and his eighth year with Tide Swimming. Coach Richard has developed Tide swimmers to the semi finals at Olympic Trials in 2021, to represent Team USA at international competitions including World Cup (2021), Junior Pan Pacific Championships (2022) and Pan American Games (2023), to swim at college Division I, II, and III levels, and to many state championships. Former Head Coach, Jack Roach, hired Richard Hunter from the Mission Viejo Nadadores in Mission Viejo, CA to be the Associate Head Coach of Tide Swimming in 2016. Richard graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, was an Academic All American and competed at the US Olympic Trials. His “coaching tree” is with some of the very best in our sport – the late Nort Thornton, Mike Bottom (current University of Michigan Men’s Head Coach), Dave Durden (current UC Berkeley Head Coach and 2021 USA Men’s Olympic Coach), Greg Meehan (current Stanford Head Women’s Coach and 2021 USA Women’s Head Olympic Coach), and Bill Rose (Head Coach Mission Viejo Nadadores). Richard has established himself as one of the top club coaches in the country. He teaches his athletes accountability and he brings energy, experience, and thoughtful organization to every season plan. He has been voted the Virginia Swimming Senior Coach of the Year three times and he served as the Chair of the Senior Committee for Virginia Swimming.

Associate Head Coach Mike Salpeter

Is in his sixth year as Associate Head Coach at Tide Swimming. Mike has 20 years of coaching experience in the area and brings a wealth of expertise and leadership to our entire staff and Board of Directors. In addition to coaching, Mike taught fifth graders at Western Branch Intermediate along with serving as Head Coach of Western Branch High School, VYAC and DIG Swimming before coming to Tide full time to lead our Chesapeake programming. He also has been the Coaches Representative to the Virginia Swimming Board of Directors for the last five years. In 2021 Mike was named Head Coach of the Virginia Swimming Eastern Zone All-Star team (his second time being elected to serve as a coach of that team) and led them to their first championship in 8 years. Mike brings passion, energy, enthusiasm and expertise to leading his athletes and guiding our team’s strategic direction.

Head Age Group Coach Cat Leach

Is in her eleventh year with Tide Swimming. Cat is one of our longest tenured coaches on the TIDE Swimming coaching staff, and does an amazing job of leading our age group program as Head Age Group Coach. Cat provides great wisdom having served as a coach at almost every level of Tide during her tenure, and we are excited to watch our age group program continue to evolve over the upcoming years. Cat is also an active member of the Virginia Swimming Age Group Committee and Governance Committee. She has recently participated in the Women Coaches in Governance Fellowship with USA Swimming and the ASCA Mentorship Program.

Executive Director Jennie Carder

is our Rock of Gibraltar! Jennie previously served as President of Tide Swimming from 2006 to 2009 when her sons, Will and Matt, swam on Tide. She started part time with us as a Team Manager in 2011 and was promoted to Full Time Executive Director in 2014. She works closely with the coaches to balance programming with pool space and staffing. Jennie oversees all aspects of the team including budgeting, payroll, programming, travel, and customer service. Her wealth of experience, judgment, intellect, and commitment to supporting our team have significantly contributed to our team's stable and solid financial position. This past year she has taken on a larger role working in collaboration with Swim School Director Amanda Letterman to continue to advance programming and seek opportunities for expansion. Jennie was also selected by USA Swimming to be part of a national test group to help develop the new SWIMS 3.0 platform and worked with head coaches and team administrators from some of the top clubs in the US.

Coach and Athlete Development Consultant Jack Roach

Has been on the staff of four US Olympic Teams, coached collegiately at the University of Texas, served as Head Coach of Longhorn Aquatics and Tide Swimming and has been on the staff of the International Swim League's LA Current. He has also served as USA Swimming's Director of the National Junior Team. There are few people in the sport who know more about the physiology and emotional aspects of athlete development than Jack Roach. He brings wisdom, experience, compassion and perspective to our team.

Jack has physically moved out of our area, but he remains connected to our team and will serve in an advisory role with occasional site visits and staff development meetings.

All of the staff members we have at Tide are dedicated professionals. When they are not on deck coaching, they are working and meeting to create the experiences that will help your child be a better swimmer and a better young person. Our coaches both understand and appreciate that the partnership is between them, their swimmers, and parents. In addition to getting your child to practice, the best way to honor the coach-parent-athlete partnership is to communicate when you have questions, concerns, or feedback. Communication can be positive too – let coaches know when things are going well!

Head Coach, Richard Hunter, emphasizes to his staff and at our Board meetings that parents need to feel comfortable and proactive communicating with coaches. If you have a concern or question, please email your child's coach and set up a time to talk outside of practice.

TEAM ACHIEVEMENTS



Each year our National Governing Body, USA Swimming, recognizes USA Swimming member clubs based on their development of strong, well-rounded age group and senior swimming programs that produce elite 18 and under athletes. For the fifth year in a row, Tide Swimming was named a Silver Medal club. The ranking put Tide Swimming 28th out of over 3000 clubs nationwide.



Tide achieved a third place finish in both the Short Course and Long Course iterations of Senior Champs, and finished second at Short Course and Long Course Age Groups. Tide also finished first at SC 12 & Under District Champs, SC 13 & Up District Champs and LC Summer Awards.

Tide placed third at both the ISCA Elite Showcase Classic - East and the ISCA Summer Senior Blast in St. Petersburg, Florida. In addition, TIDE was selected by ASCA as one of the top 100 Age Group Teams in the country, placing 29th.

Tide sent two athletes to Summer Juniors in 2023. Bobby DiNunzio had three top 8 finishes (400/800/1500 Freestyle), and achieved two new Olympic Trials cuts.



Richard coached Tide's first athlete to represent the US at the Pan American Games. Stanford Sophomore Kayla Wilson made the team that will compete in Santiago, Chile October 21-25th, qualifying at the Nationals selection meet this summer.

Tide will also have the following athletes represented at the 2024 US Olympic Trials in June: Callie Dickinson (TIDE alumna, University of Georgia), Bobby DiNunzio, Maddy Hartley (TIDE alumna, University of Arkansas), Sophia Knapp (TIDE alumna, University of Virginia), Samantha Tadder & Kayla Wilson (TIDE alumni, Stanford).



For Masters, we had eight swimmers representing Tide at Short Course Masters Nationals last spring and one at Long Course Nationals in July.

In addition to these specific achievements, our goal is to enhance the team as a whole by taking connection and programming flow to the next level. This will include dissemination of coaching knowledge and practices that are shared across all levels and structured from the top down and is based on research into top clubs within the US and top swim federations outside of the US. This year we welcome several coaches into new leadership roles that will help clearly define our athlete progression at specific ages and levels across our multiple sites. The following coaches will serve in new roles: Marilyn Rowell (15-18 Lead), Danny Colvin (13-14 Lead), and Morgan Denning (Developmental Lead). They will be a resource to their fellow staff members as they guide their respective components of the program. We continue to strive to bridge gaps across our multiple sites and make it a meaningful shared experience to be a part of TIDE. We're also proud to note that Danny was selected by ASCA as one of the top 50 Age Group coaches in the country, and Morgan represented TIDE as the Virginia Swimming 10U coach at LC Zones.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

While the coaching staff is focused on creating meaningful experiences and instilling behaviors that drive success, as a Board we focus our efforts on day to day, dry side support and key strategic priorities:

1. Staff Retention, Recruitment, and Development

We believe that the key to developing our athletes at Tide is by making sure our on deck coaching staff is the best in the country. To attract and retain the best, we endeavor to attractively compensate both through salary and benefits while also providing professional development to help our staff grow in their profession. Last fall we established a 401(k) Plan to provide additional benefits to our full time staff. We also continue to support ongoing work with Your Sports Resource consultants Renata Porter and Jack Roach to assist our leadership staff with professional development, organizational and operational initiatives.

Tide also sent the following coaches to the ASCA (American Swimming Coaches Association) World Clinic, September 6-9th in Dallas, TX: Richard Hunter, Danny Colvin, Marilyn Rowell, Ricky Perez and Morgan Denning. Marilyn and Ricky won an ASCA "30 Under 30" grant to attend the World Clinic.

2. Membership Support

We continue to grow every year and we strive to make sure we retain a "small team" feel and support our members despite getting quite large! One of the ways we do this is through our Parent Leadership Committee (PLC), which consists of a parent lead at the site level for all groups in our program. Board member Lyn Mannato will lead our PLC again this year. The responsibilities of this role include building camaraderie among their groups by supporting members with answers to questions and/or organizing social gatherings. Additionally, this role will act as a liaison with the Service Hours Committee and as a conduit between membership and the Board.

Board Member Jenn Strach leads our annual membership survey. We had over 300 survey responses (53% of members) and 81.4% responded they were "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their swimmer's development. Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill out a survey; it is important feedback for your Board and Coaching staff. As mentioned earlier in this document, we prefer that communication lines stay open throughout the year as opposed to waiting until the end of the year survey to express concerns or suggestions. Some high-level responses to the feedback noted in the survey include continued evaluation of the service hours requirements and streamlining of the processes, a planned enhancement of communications from Coaching Leadership and the Board, continued use of the PLC representatives to support community and communication within each practice group and between groups, increased social opportunities for parents and identification of ways to reward and incentivize officials and volunteers who go above and beyond their responsibilities. More detailed results from our survey will be sent in a separate email and posted on our website.

3. Events / Swim Meets

We host swim meets for two reasons. One, we want to provide quality competitive opportunities for our athletes and coaches. Two, swim meets are a meaningful source of revenue for our team. Other teams require parents to work Bingo or raise money through swim-a-thons. We instead ask parents to help staff our meets through volunteer Service Hours. Our reliance on parents to volunteer their time to run meets is one of things that makes swimming unique from other youth sports - there is no market to hire officials, meet marshalls or timers like baseball hires umpires and soccer hires referees. Thank you in advance for supporting your athlete and our team by working your service hours.

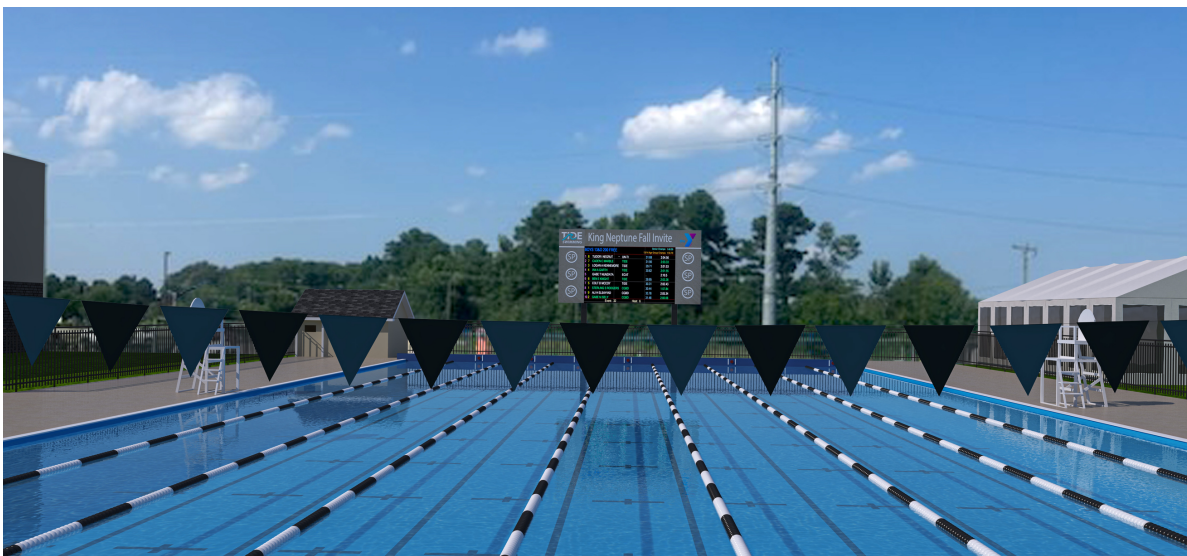
Gina Miller and Ashley Karunaratne lead our Meet Operations team and work very hard to make it manageable for our parents. Please click on this link for all of the information about 2023-24 service hours responsibilities, including a great video explaining the various opportunities - [TIDE Swimming - Service Hours \(gomotionapp.com\)](https://gomotionapp.com).

If you are interested in becoming more involved by taking on a meet hosting leadership position, we are always grateful for parents willing to fill these roles now and in future years. A new opportunity for this year - we are looking for someone with printing resources to help with heat sheets for our coaches and officials before our home meets. Please use this [TIDE Meet Teams Interest Form](#) if you are interested in this or other leadership roles.

We are in particular need of Officials and you do not need any experience! We will train you and you get the best view on the deck when you work as an Official. You also get access to Meet Hospitality and are part of a great team of parents - please contact Kate or Todd Stowell (officials@tideswimming.com) if you are interested!

In addition to meet operations, we consistently evaluate the need for maintenance and upgrades to our meet hosting equipment and facilities. Board member Chad Knapp has taken on the role of coordinating our various equipment and facility maintenance needs - if you are interested in helping with this please contact him at knappboards@gmail.com.

Along these lines, we are excited to announce a major upgrade to our Princess Anne scoreboard, which we hope to have available for our Spring 2024 meets! We will have sponsorship opportunities available, so please stay tuned. We are looking for a member with a background in non-profit fundraising or marketing who might be interested in helping us with a corporate sponsorship program - please contact me if you are interested. In the meantime, here is a rendering of what the new scoreboard will look like:



4. Swim School and Pool Space/Access – VB and Chesapeake

Growing our successful Swim School and increasing pool space for both Swim School and Swim Team remain at the forefront of our strategic priorities. We were excited to bring on Amanda Letterman as our Swim School Director in October 2021. She brought a wealth of experience from leadership positions in the YMCA as well as a refreshing injection of energy and enthusiasm for the program. Amanda has already put her personal stamp on the swim school by instituting creative ways to recognize swimmer achievement, and she continues to build a strong, cohesive team of instructors. This summer she trained and managed a crew of over 30 enthusiastic swimming instructors, many being Tide or former Tide swimmers!

We have been running waiting lists for swim team programming in Virginia Beach and Chesapeake as well as our Swim School. We have a need for more and better quality pool space to serve our growing membership, especially in Chesapeake. In addition to working closely with the YMCA, we put together an exploratory group to assess options for acquiring additional pool space in Chesapeake. Please contact me if you have any ideas or can help.

To help address our Swim School needs in Virginia Beach, we partnered with Larkspur Swim and Racquet Club this year to assist with funding for repairs to their facility so they could remain open as a community pool. In return for our contribution to the repair costs, Tide has rent-free use of the Larkspur pool during the summer months for Swim School for ten years. We also secured the opportunity to use the facility year-round with a bubble, which we continue to explore.

5. Safe Sport

Even prior to our governing body's Safe Sport requirements, we as Tide Swimming have made safe sport a priority. We comply with all of USA Swimming's requirements and we also align with an independent non profit, Safe 4 Athletes, program. Under Safe 4 Athletes, we have two parents, one male and one female, who serve as Athlete Welfare Advocates (AWA). They are required to not be Board members so that they can remain independent. If there are any Safe Sport situations related to our team, they handle the issues and work to legally and



ethically usher the situations through a process. Kristin Lineberry and Andy Van Slyke currently serve in these roles and we are grateful for their service. For contact information and more details about Safe Sport and Safe 4 Athletes, please see [TIDE Swimming - SAFE SPORT \(gomotionapp.com\)](https://gomotionapp.com).

PARENT LEADERSHIP

Our **exceptional Tide parents** over the years have consistently gone above and beyond to help support the team and coaches. The combination of exceptional coaching leadership coupled with strong parent support has launched Tide into the top echelon of teams in the country. For example, the team's Board of Directors began planning in 2010 to build or acquire more pool space. The opening of the Princess Anne YMCA 50 meter pool in October 2015 was the direct result of that Board leadership and work in the community as well as parent support. The state of the art, Olympic size pool at Princess Anne helped us attract the coaching caliber that leads Tide Swimming today.

Parents do not need to serve on the Board of Directors to take on leadership roles that help our team, and we are always in need of parents willing to help in a wide variety of ways! We are fortunate to have so many parents who continue to support our team by sharing their time and unique skill sets. Please check out the various committees that support our team - [Tide Swimming :: Board of Directors](#) - and please reach out to me or any Board member with any questions or interest.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information. If you have an additional three minutes, I recommend this short video (found on our tideswimming.com website) that really summarizes what Tide Swimming is about: <https://youtu.be/48B6qIPvLOk>.

On the subject of websites, it is important to note that we have two websites: <https://tideswimming.com/> and our Team Unify/Sports Engine team site (<https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/vatst/page/home>). Please become familiar with both of them because they offer a plethora of information from practice schedules, meet schedules, safe sport, billing, service hours, and more. Be sure you know how to log in to your Team Unify account so that you can update your contact information, change or add email addresses, view your invoices and charges, commit your swimmer to swim meets, and sign up to work service hours (Developmental Silver and above).

For families new to Tide, we also have lots of helpful information in our New Parent Welcome Booklet, located on this page on our Team Unify website: [Parents : Helpful Information](#).

Finally, we look forward to another great year in the life of Tide Swimming! We thank all of you for entrusting our coaches and team with your children and we strive to give them a positive experience in the sport of swimming that is second to none. Please be on the lookout for further email communication from coaches, staff, and parents as well as our Team Quarterly Newsletters, and please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us with questions, comments, or ideas!

Sincerely and on behalf of your Board of Directors,

Jenny

Voting Members of Board

President:	Jenny Huelsberg
Vice President:	Jenn Strach
Treasurer:	Darby Schoenfeld
Secretary:	Bridget Fickenscher
President Emeritus:	Katy Arris-Wilson
Director:	Chad Knapp
Director:	Lyn Mannato
Director:	Sara Beth Roberts
Director:	Kelly Swartz

Non Voting Members of Board

Executive Director:	Jennie Carder
Head Coach:	Richard Hunter
Associate Head Coach:	Mike Salpeter
Head Age Group Coach:	Cat Leach
Swim School Director:	Amanda Letterman
Accountant:	Mackenzie Codington