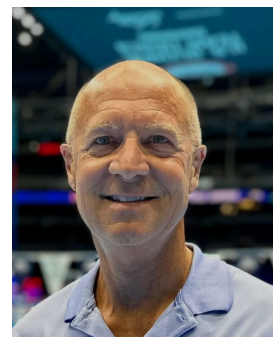


Bill Brenner Partner, Education

Bill Brenner built the system that trains Masters coaches in this country. He developed the four levels of the U.S. Masters Swimming coach certification, taught thousands of the coaches who hold it, and, on the foundation of Bill Meier's adult learn-to-swim curriculum, built the USMS Adult Learn-to-Swim instructor certification. At SwimWise he and Meier have created a new curriculum and teach every swimmer clinic, coaching workshop, and instructor training course together — two instructors in the classroom or on deck for every session.



“Over the years, he has been the driving force behind our coach certification program, USMS’s Adult Learn-to-Swim curriculum, and a leader in club development, helping to shape how we support coaches and clubs nationwide.”

— U.S. Masters Swimming, on his retirement from USMS, 2026

In 2025 the New England LMSC gave Brenner its Lifetime Appreciation Award for that work and for the coaches and swimmers he has educated across the country.

AT USMS

Brenner joined the USMS staff in 2011 and retired in 2026 as Senior Director of Club and Coach Services, having also served as chief operating officer and interim chief executive officer. He ran 20 to 30 clinics a year, and from them wrote the USMS Clinic Course for Coaches, which shows coaches how to conceptualize, organize, market, and deliver a stroke development clinic of their own. For more than a decade he and Meier taught USMS courses and clinics across the country, until USMS suspended in-person coach and instructor education in 2026.

Few people in the sport know more clubs, coaches, and swimmers firsthand. Brenner supported more than 1,500 USMS-registered clubs and workout groups, helped start programs in underserved markets, and kept up the relationships with USA Swimming, USA Triathlon, YMCA of the USA, Life Time Fitness, and the Kroc Centers that connected Masters Swimming to the wider aquatics world. He ran his own business before joining USMS, and he believes a Masters program should be a thriving business as well as a team.

COACHING

Brenner has coached age-group, college, and Masters swimmers for more than 40 years and is a USMS Level 4 certified and ASCA Level 3 coach. He has competed too: a six-time USMS relay All-American with 159 Top 10 performances. Before joining USMS he was a volunteer at the local and national levels — meet director, support team member, and coach with the Sarasota YMCA Sharks Masters.

He and his wife, Pam, split their time between Hilton Head, South Carolina, and Tucson, Arizona. They are University of North Carolina alumni, have four grown children, and endow the William E. Brenner Jr. Swimming Scholarship at their alma mater. After all his travels and everything he has accomplished, Brenner still finds joy in celebrating the adult who just learned how to swim.

Bill Meier Partner, Education

Bill Meier has trained nearly 2,000 instructors in more than 35 cities to teach adults to swim. Adult learn-to-swim in Masters Swimming began with him, and at SwimWise he and Bill Brenner have created a new curriculum and teach every swimmer clinic, coaching workshop, and instructor training course together.

USMS named Meier its national Coach of the Year in 2025, a year after the New England LMSC named him its regional Coach of the Year, and in 2026 the LMSC inducted him into its Hall of Fame. He is a USMS Level 4 certified coach, and in 2016 served as head coach of the USMS High Performance Camp. He has also received the Kerry O'Brien Coaches Award, the Dorothy Donnelly Service Award, and the USMS Fitness Award.

That track record, combined with contagious enthusiasm and a teaching style as animated as it is expert, has made Meier one of the most sought-after adult swimming trainers in the United States and beyond — he has led swim instruction in China and trained lifeguards in Montserrat.



HOW ADULT LEARN-TO-SWIM BEGAN

It all started with a week of free children's lessons at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Parents kept asking whether there was anything for them. Meier typed an 11-page manual on teaching adults and recruited his Masters swimmers to teach from it. That ignited a passion that motivated him to become chair of the New England LMSC, where, with the board's support, he trained 250 members to teach adults in their own communities and launched April as Adult Learn-to-Swim Month — proclaimed, at his urging, by the governors of five New England states.

U.S. Masters Swimming adopted his manual as the foundation of USMS Adult Learn-to-Swim, and Brenner built the instructor certification on it to complement the coaching curriculum. For more than a decade the two taught USMS courses and clinics across the country, until USMS suspended in-person coach and instructor education in 2026. Every April, Meier and his PaceMakers swimmers still teach free lessons to adults in the Berkshires.

COACHING AND WATER SAFETY

Meier has led the Simon's Rock PaceMakers Masters team for more than 20 years and has coached age-group, high school, and college swimmers. He came to coaching through the water — an ocean lifeguard on Long Island, a team captain at SUNY Albany, a New England longboard surfing champion. As founder of SwimAmerica of Western Massachusetts and later its regional and national director, he helped thousands of people learn to swim, and as a Red Cross trainer he has certified nearly 1,000 lifeguards. He also helped make tow floats standard safety equipment among New England open water swimmers.

He lives in the Berkshires, and his proudest achievements are his marriage to Maureen and their two children.

Douglas Sayles Partner, Operations & Marketing

Douglas Sayles brings SwimWise years of experience on the host's side of the table. He has served on the New England LMSC board since 2012, as its chair and registrar, as chair of the Colonies Zone and the USMS LMSC Development Committee, and as co-chair of the USMS Volunteer Relay leadership summit.

Those roles kept him close to the people at every level of Masters Swimming, and to their needs and constraints. He knows what a board weighs when it decides to spend its members' money on education, because he has weighed that decision himself, many times.

In 2024 the USMS national staff chose him for its Ted Haartz Staff Appreciation Award, and in 2025 he was inducted into the New England LMSC Hall of Fame as a Contributor.



THE EDUCATION WEEKEND MODEL

As a New England LMSC volunteer, Sayles coordinated education weekends taught by Bill Brenner and Bill Meier — finding the pools and classrooms, filling the seats, and arranging dinners where staff, volunteer leaders, instructors, coaches, and swimmers socialize and exchange ideas. The weekend became something people cherish: an opportunity to learn, have fun, and make friends. It is the model SwimWise carries forward and builds on.

AT SWIMWISE

Sayles runs everything outside the classroom — operations, host coordination, marketing, registration and payments, technology, and finance. When his schedule allows, he attends SwimWise education weekends in person and serves as a sounding board on governance challenges, membership growth, event operations, and running a swimming organization.

EVENTS AND COACHING

Sayles also directs events, including Swim Across America's Rhode Island Open Water Swim, one of the largest open water charity swims in the country, where more than 1,000 swimmers and volunteers turn out each year to fight cancer, and regional championship meets that draw hundreds of swimmers. The thread through all of it is bringing people together in a common cause.

He is a USMS Level 3 certified coach and Adult Learn-to-Swim instructor and a member of the American Swimming Coaches Association. He has competed too: a 2019 USMS Long Distance All-American with 20 Top 10 performances. For many years he helped run SwimRI, part of New England Masters Swim Club, organizing and coaching workouts and building a cohesive statewide team and social network.

BEFORE MASTERS SWIMMING

Before Masters Swimming filled his calendar, he spent 20 years in corporate communications, at Grey Healthcare Group and Cone Communications, as a director at Biopure and RISE Engineering, and as a project and communications consultant.

Earlier still, he ran a mobile disc jockey business, Special Request Entertainment — his first turn at bringing people together. He learned to swim in Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey, and was an English major and swimmer at Bucknell University.