

PNA Coach of the Year 2026

CONGRATULATIONS to Coach April Cheadle of BAM, the 2026 PNA Coach of the Year!

On Sunday April 12, after the events at PNA Spring Championships the annual meeting and awards ceremony was held in the banquet building behind KCAC.

April Cheadle has been the head coach of Bainbridge Island for many years. Her program has grown to 200 swimmers. She does an incredible job and has touched countless lives of not only swimmers but others around her. She brings knowledge, experience and compassion to her team. She is her swimmer's biggest cheerleader, always watching and giving advise on how they can improve. BAM's pool has been going through some renovations last year and continues this year, yet April has found pool time at other facilities to keep her swimmers in water at all times. It is tough enough to coach at one pool, let alone several practices a week at different pools, but her team says April always has smile and is on deck at practice no matter what pool she needs to be at. Coach April has been PNA COY in 2013 & 2016 along with the very distinct honor of being National COY in 2018. As if all this wasn't enough she has served as Puget Sound Masters coach at several Nationals and helps PNA & USMS when asked.

This year we had 4 nominees; April Cheadle Bainbridge Island Masters (past winner in 2013 & 2016). Jacob Deines (Olympia Masters), Kent Slyter (San Juan Islands Masters) and AJ Burt (Blue Wave). We are thankful for all the coaches who step on deck and accept the challenge of coaching.

For those lucky enough to have their swimmers nominate them it means that you have made a good impression on those you coach and others around you. Coaching for Masters isn't all about coaching the fastest, it is about growing a club/team with a wide variety of swimmers from beginners and tri-athletes, to those swimming just to live a healthy lifestyle and of course those that want to compete. It means you are a leader in the swimming community, have a vision and have been able to communicate that vision to those around you. Whether you have a small but growing club/workout group or a large team navigating numerous pools/locations just know all of our coaches are appreciated.

As part of being awarded Coach of the Year, PNA will be sending April along with Pete Colella, last years COY to the National Coaches Convention in September of this year.

The National Coaches Convention is held every other year.

Diana Hermanson
PNA Coaches Chair