

Ventura College Swim Camp

Parent's Letter

Welcome to The Ventura College Swim Camp

You are involved in the largest and most comprehensive swim instruction program in Ventura County. This program was started in 1973 and has served over sixty thousand students over the years. Our instructor base centers around the athletes that participate on the Ventura College intercollegiate swim and water polo teams. As a result, your child will be taught by the best aquatic athletes that the county has to offer. All of our instructors have gone through a minimum of 54 hours of certification work through the American Red Cross's Water Safety Instructor (WSI) program. In addition, during the Swim Camp, a minimum of three lifeguards will be stationed around the pool to ensure the safety of the students. These guards hold American Red Cross certification in lifeguard training, as well as certifications in CPR, and first aid. Unlike other sport camps, swim camp will teach skills that will literally save lives, while promoting fun and fitness. The next few pages will highlight our program and answer some of your questions regarding the camp. In addition we will highlight other activities around the aquatic center. I stroll around the deck from time to time and my door is always open for you. If there is anything I can help you with please feel free to stop by. Your decision to provide your child with any early aquatic experience is a gift that will have infinite rewards. Thank you for your involvement in our outstanding program.

Sincerely,

*Larry Baratte
Aquatic Director
Ventura College*

The Ventura College Swim Camp Instruction Program

The Swim Camp is divided into two groups. The “Learn to Swim Camp”, and the “Specialty Camps.”

Learn to Swim Camp

The Learn to Swim Camp is subdivided into three groups. These groups include: the water babies, the preschool class, and the V.E.N.T.U.R.A program, which is our seven levels of swim instruction.

Purpose:

The purpose of the water babies and preschool class is to promote water safety knowledge and practices, aquatic adjustment and swimming readiness skills, and fun and enjoyment in the water. The water babies include specific parental involvement. The seven level of swim instruction are designed to give students a positive learning experience. Level I orients the student to an aquatic environment and works on basic propulsive skills. The later levels build upon the basic skills. The students will learn additional strokes that are refined as they move through the levels. Personal safety and rescue skills are included to help students meet safety goals. By the end of level VII the students will have all of the prerequisite skills and have developed the necessary fitness level for entrance into our specialty camps.

The key element of the Ventura College Learn to Swim Camp is its emphasis on learning skills while having fun. In an aquatic environment, enjoyment is essential to learning, especially for young children. Our instructors will design their classes around activities that will be stimulating, productive, enjoyable, and safe.

Description of Courses

Water Babies:

For children younger than three years of age, it is essential that a parent or trusted adult participate in the water with the child on a one-to-one basis. Our water babies class does not “drownproof,” “waterproof,” or “water safe,” children. Rather, it is an orientation program that provides water adjustment and familiarization. The instructor will be serving as a facilitator working with the parents, as they work with their child. The emphasis is on swimming readiness skills and fun.

To an onlooker, this class may resemble “free play,” with children laughing and splashing. It is a warm scene with parents and children interacting. Don’t be fooled, upon closer observation one will realize that considerable learning and skill development is taking place. For instance, a child who resists putting his or her face in the water, a skill that promotes a horizontal body position needed in swimming, can be motivated to accomplish this skill through a game of “treasure hunt,” which requires finding treasures (i.e. rings) underwater.

Because of the one-to-one approach, floatation devices are discouraged in this class. Outside of the class, floatation devices, depending on their use, can be both an asset and a liability. Parents need to be informed on how and when to use them. When used correctly, they can help build confidence and enhance teaching skills. Floatation equipment should be used for specific purposes to achieve specific goals and should never be used as a substitute for direct supervision.

Our water babies class is always 30 minutes in length. The recommended time for a class of this nature is 20 – 30 minutes. Monitor your children as to the appropriate length for them and notify the instructor if adjustment needs to be made.

The Minimum requirement for infants to participate in our program is the ability to voluntarily lift their head 90° when prone. Swim diapers are required for non-potty trained students.

Preschool Class:

Our preschool class is titled “Happy Face.” This class is our independent swimming readiness class. The students will be working along with an instructor in groups of 3. At this level, children vary widely when it comes to learning a skill. Each child’s readiness is influenced by many factors. Resist the temptation to compare the progress of children. This is a class where careful attention must be given to when and how hard to “push” a child. Our instructors try to intuitively determine this based upon cues given to them by the students.

Our “happy face” classes are conducted in a relatively structured manner, with each child attempting to accomplish a specific skill. The instructor will adapt and adjust the level of difficulty to the individual child. This way, your child will feel a part of the group, but will practice at his or her level.

This class emphasizes participation. No evaluation or testing relative to “passing” or “failing” is conducted in these classes. Your child will remain in the class until she or he has acquired the readiness necessary to progress to level I (V). Fear, as well as overconfidence, are main considerations when dealing with students at this level.

The V.E.N.T.U.R.A Program

The Ventura College Swim Camp's V.E.N.T.U.R.A. program is modeled after the American Red Cross's aquatic and safety program. All of our Water Safety Instructors (WSI's) have been trained in this and apply its' principles and objectives. This program follows a logical progression of learned skills that enables an individual to swim and be safe in and around the water. The six levels of instruction spell out the word VENTURA. Our first level is classified as our "V" level. Followed by "E," "N," and so on.

For each level there are six categories of skills. These include; water adjustment, buoyancy and breath control, water entry and exit, locomotion skills, turns, and safety skills. For the specific skills that are taught at each level please refer to the skill sheet that is provided.

"V" (Introduction to Water Skills)

At this level, students learn elementary aquatic skills, which they build on as they progress through the program. At this level, a positive attitude toward swim instruction is developed and skill acquisition is introduced.

There is no prerequisite for "V" classes.

"E" (Fundamental Aquatic Skills)

The main goal of the "E" class is to give students success with fundamental skills. Students learn to float without support and to recover to a vertical position. This level marks the beginning of true locomotion skills.

Students entering this class must have a "V" certificate or must be able to demonstrate all the completion requirements in "V".

"N" (Stroke Development)

In this level students build on "E" skills. They coordinate the front and back crawl. Elementary backstroke and the fundamentals of treading water are introduced. Students also learn the rules for safe diving.

Students entering this class must have a "E" certificate or must be able to demonstrate all the completion requirements in "E."

"T" (Stroke Improvement)

"T" students continue on improving previously learned skills, while increasing their endurance and fitness level. Breaststroke, sidestroke, and the basics of turning on a wall are introduced at this level.

Students entering this class must have a "N" certificate or must be able to demonstrate all the completion requirements in "N."

"U" / "RA." (Stroke Refinement / Personal Water Safety, Fitness Swimmer)

Our swim camp groups these two advanced classes together for logistical reason but identify individuals and work on the specific level that is appropriate for them. This is a time for the coordination and refinement of key strokes, the development of endurance and good fitness habits, and the introduction of other aquatic activities (i.e. water polo, diving, lifeguarding, etc.).

Specialty Camps

The Ventura College Swim Camp offers three specialty camps as part of our comprehensive program. These camp include: Introduction to Water Polo, Introduction to Springboard Diving, and GuardStart.

Purpose:

Upon the completion of our learn to swim camp students can continue in our program by enrolling in our specialty camps. These camps do involve students that have not fully completed the V.E.N.T.U.R.A. program, but these students must demonstrate minimum qualifications. The classes are one hour in length and provide the students a chance to learn basis components of water polo, diving, and/or lifeguarding.

Description of Camps

Water Polo

This camp will be instructed by United States Water Polo certified athletes and/or coaches. The fundamental individual and team skills will be stressed. The rules of the game as well as game strategy will be introduced. The progression for our water polo camp includes participating in an age group water polo club team, the Ventura College sponsored Gold Coast Water Polo Club.

Springboard Diving

This camp will introduce the basics of springboard diving. Stretching and conditioning will be included. The students will learn fundamentals that will enable them to perform dive safely and competitively. For springboard diving, no club program currently exists in Ventura, but the diving camp will provide the basis for continued participation on a high school diving team.

GuardStart

The American Red Cross sponsored GuardStart program introduces students to pool lifeguarding. Designed for ages 11-14 this is a class that will provide the students with a foundation for the completion of the American Red Cross Lifeguard Training course available to them after their 15th birthday. The Ventura College Swim Camp has employed graduates of our guardstart program.

The Ventura College Swim Camp Organization

The Ventura College Swim Camp is sponsored by Ventura College Aquatic Center. Swim instruction is available during the summer season, as well as the month of September

Camp Schedule

The Ventura College Summer Swim Camps are scheduled in two week sessions. Each session contains eight, thirty-five minute lessons for the “learn to swim” camp, and eight, one hour lessons for the “specialty camps.” The “learn to swim” classes are scheduled forty-five minutes apart. The instructors will work with the students for thirty-five minutes, and then provide practice/play time for @5 minutes. The HF and V level swimmers will not participate in practice/play time. For them play time should include one on one interaction which is not possible within our organization. The pool will be cleared after each class for five minutes. Students will not be allowed to enter the water before their class time.

Learn to Swim Camp classes will meet Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Classes will be offered at 9:00a, 9:45a, 10:30a, 11:15a, 12:00n, 12:45p, 1:30p, 2:15p, 3:00p, 3:45p, and 4:30p. The camp will end promptly at 5:10p each day. The Specialty Camps are offered at 10:00a, 1:30p, 2:30p, and 4:00p each day.

The School Year Swim Camps are scheduled on selected Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 3:00p, 3:30p, 4:00p, and 4:30p. There will be eight lessons each month.

Class Sizes

We do not offer private lessons. With our learn to swim camp group lessons, the rule of thumb that we apply is to limit class sizes to the number that corresponds with the average age of the participants. With a class filled with three year olds we try to limit classes to 3 participants. With five year olds, 5 in a class is our limit, and so on. With the lower levels (V.E.N.), regardless of age, we will attempt to stay at five participants or below. With the higher levels (T.U.R.A.), larger classes can be used. We will never have a class, at any level, that exceeds eight students per instructor. We understand that the closer the student to instructor ratio is, the better the class will be for both.

All Specialty Camps will be closed once fifteen participants register.

Parental Involvement

A parent or a trusted adult is required to participate in the water babies class. Parents are encouraged to observe the lessons for the preschool and V.E.N.T.U.R.A. programs. Their observation however should not, in any way, interfere with the instruction of the class. Communication with the teachers should be reserved for the break time following lessons. In addition, comments or suggestion can be brought to the Camp Director at anytime. Except for the water babies classes, parents are not permitted in the water during class time.

Registration

We try to make the registration process as easy as possible. Registration can be completed three ways. The first option is registering in person at the Aquatic Center. This type of registration is open when the camp is in session or during the assigned pre-registration hours. Returning students will always have a one week head start on summer swim camp registration. If you choose to register in person you may pay with cash, with a check, or with a credit card. The second option is to register over the phone. The swim camp's registration direct line is (805) 654-6400x2259. If no one is available a message may be left at this number. In addition, (805)654-6400x1346 can be used if you are having trouble with the direct line. The third registration option is to complete the process on line. The swim camp's e-mail address is.....vcaquaticcenter@vcccd.net. Please provide all required registration information. This information includes, students name, session (1,2,or 3) or month, class time, and class level. In addition, please include your Visa or MasterCard #, expiration date, name on the card, and home telephone #. For a new student we will also need, full address, home phone#, and date of birth.

The Ventura College Swim Camp Also at the Aquatic Center

Instructional Classes

Ventura College offers instructional classes at the aquatic center throughout the year. Swimming instruction class will meet the needs of non-swimmers to advanced swimmers. Workout oriented classes are also available for those that have specific fitness goals. Our popular water exercise courses are aimed at the individuals that want a great workout with their face above the water. These classes offer water resistance, less stress on the bones and joints, and a cool medium to workout in. A comprehensive SCUBA program sponsored by NUIAI is offered to serve the needs of beginners through dive masters. Specialty courses such as springboard diving, introduction to water polo, and ocean lifeguarding are also offered. In addition, American Red Cross sponsored courses in Lifeguard Training, Water Safety Instruction, and First Aid/CPR are offered. For additional information on registration for college credit classes offered at the Aquatic Center please call 654-6400.

The Ventura College Pirates Intercollegiate Men's and Women's Swimming & Diving, and Water Polo Teams.

Ventura College sponsors Men's and Women's Water Polo in the fall semester and Men's and Women's Swimming & Diving during the spring semester. The Pirates compete as part of the seven team Western State Conference. Competition extends to include all of the community colleges in California. The Pirates are generally regarded as one of the top three programs in the state. Currently, Larry Baratte coaches the Men's and Women Swimming & Diving Teams, Mary Giles coaches the Women's Water Polo Team, and Mark Schmidt coaches the Men's Water Polo Team.

Community Swim

The Aquatic Center is open for Community Lap Swimming from 12:00n – 1:00p and 5:30p – 7:00p Monday through Thursday throughout the school year. We do offer our noon swim on Fridays as well during the school year. There is a per visit fee. Sign-in each day and pay at the lifeguard stand.

Gold Coast Water Polo Club

Headed by the Ventura College Water Polo coaches, the Gold Coast Water Polo Club is a USWP sponsored water polo club. For information contact coach Mary Giles.

Community Groups

Arranged through the Aquatic Director, community groups may use the Ventura College for events. Availability is limited and is subject to fees assigned by the community service department. For information contact Larry Baratte, Aquatic Director.

Important Contacts at the Aquatic Center

phone

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| Ventura College | 654-6400 | The Pool Deck | 654-6400x1346 |
| The Aquatic Center Hotline | 654-6446 | SCUBA Office | 654-6400x1347 |
| Larry Baratte, Director/Coach | 648-8934 | Women's Office | 654-6400x3242 |
| Aquatic Center Fax | 648-8986 | Men's Office | 654-6400x3122 |
| Bob Anderson, Technician | 654-6400x1345 | Swim Camp Office | 654-6400x2259 |

e-mail

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| Aquatic Center | vcaquaticcenter@vcccd.net |
| Larry Baratte | lbaratte@vcccd.net |
| Bob Anderson | banderson@vcccd.net |
| Mary Giles | mmcdonough@vcccd.net |