

LMYA Volleyball teaching coaching techniques and technology



Eric Standring and Megan Go

Photo provided

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The primary responsibility for the trainers is to help the coaches with their practices. The ability of the coaches runs the gamut, and most welcome the assistance provided by the trainers, though there are some that have played in college that pass on utilizing a trainer. Understandably, there are more trainers utilized on the third- to fifth-grade teams, as they are learning the basic skills of the game.

At the coaching clinic which Standring runs for the trainers, he uses a methodology for coaching the players – IDEA which stands for Introduce, Demonstrate (technique), Explain and Attend (to individual differences). The trainers have

begun as early as eighth grade and there are also some students from Saint Mary's College.

The core staff is comprised of 10 members (marketing, tech, and crew lead roles). Most have had several years of experience playing LMYA Volleyball and will typically have good grades and play for their high school teams. It is from the trainers that have excelled that the crew leads are eventually selected from. Each year, the two crew leads are each responsible for 25 of the trainers in overseeing their training and overseeing their training, punctuality, and performance during the season.

Standring is a great supporter of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and is hoping to get more females involved in these fields. "I realized that we could offer

early opportunities for boys and particularly the girls because the volleyball program is primarily made of girls," Standring said. "It's a great way to get them an early opportunity to develop in the tech area."

The first person to get involved with the tech program for Standring was Joshua Harlev, who was an eighth-grader in Standring's wife Debbie's robotics class at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. Harlev, who is now attending Chapman College, became the lead programmer and tech teacher, initially training Hana Benko and Megan Go.

The tech people created a program to oversee and grade the performances of the trainers. Arriving at practices on time and being prepared is the one metric that is most cared about. "We have a program called The Slacker Tracker," Standring said. "It shows us which trainer hasn't given us enough notice to get a sub. We measure that and graph it in Google. Since our crew leads are overseeing this, they are best suited to know who to promote when they move on from being a crew lead."

They have also written the payroll software and other programs for an iPhone app, which will be re-launched next year. "These are the two things that I'm most proud about," Standring said. "Developing the trainer's program, getting these young people in early on pro-

fessional development opportunities and in seeing how the kids in tech have done creating programs and in putting together the video content on the iPhone app so that kids were able to view the drills at home during the pandemic. I'm just amazed at what they were able to accomplish."

The LMYA has taken the technical and training aspect of the program into the video realm. During the pandemic, Standring's tech crew created training videos that are accessible on the LMYA app.

Though overseeing his tech students, Standring felt it important to let them create the programs and videos themselves. "I wanted to give them a ton of room to do this on their own and to learn from their mistakes," Standring said. "I just let them go and get something out that we could get feedback on and do that learning cycle repeatedly. If the videos are not very good, we'll work on it. I learned the scientific method from my parents who were both science teachers: 'Test and learn. Test and learn. Test and learn. Fail fast and learn faster.' That's our mantra."

The videos are available for volleyball and basketball with the potential to have training videos for all the LMYA sports in future. It's not just creating and uploading the 30 videos they've made so far. The techs provide written directions for the

videos. "It's also the key words that go with the videos," Standring said. "If we're doing a serving video, the key words attached to it should be Toss, Step and Hit. The first week, we worked on serving, the second week passing, and the third week setting. That curriculum is considered content for the 10-week season."

Megan Go, who will be attending UCLA this fall to study computer science, set a standard of excellence that Standring is hoping his trainers will follow. "I'm establishing 'The Megan Go Award.' She has been my top crew lead out of the 30 we've had since we started the program. She has hired people without me and has done a great job. I never had anyone else that could do that."

At this point, there is space only available for the two current students, (Miles Garcia and Megan Mitchell) though Standring's team will be running a camp for kids in the fall that want to explore the tech field.

It's the respect that Standring receives from so many that have gone through the program which gives him his greatest satisfaction: "I think the success stories are the number of requests that I have received for recommendations for college and for applying for jobs which I am always happy to do. A couple of our trainers have gone into computer science and have come back and helped us with our programs."

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