

Meet NC Swimmer Charlotte Mitchell

by Harry DeLong

Charlotte is one of Raleigh Area Masters' relatively new swimmers. When you first meet her and start a conversation, you realize she is bright, determined and has a good disposition. When she joined Masters, I had the pleasure of coaching her for a while and I watched her determination and desire to improve. Like all of us, she has some good days in the water and some not so good, but she has kept returning and now is becoming more consistent. She is a great lane member, enjoys the work and keeps a positive attitude during practice. I enjoy swimming with her, although I can no longer keep up. I was asked to put together a note to introduce Charlotte to members of North Carolina Masters Swimmers because she is recognized by many of us in RAM as a good addition to the swim program and is a remarkable person outside swimming.



While Charlotte may be new to Masters swimming, she is definitely not new to sports. She graduated in 1996 from St. John's School in Houston, Texas, played four years of varsity soccer, field hockey and softball in high school and played four years for The South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) Demolition Soccer Club (I still haven't figured out the Demolition part of the name). She captained all three high school teams as a senior, played on two state high school championship softball teams and was three-time all-conference in softball and soccer and once in field hockey. Her biggest fan and supporter through this was her mother who became the transporter of choice to all the practices. The one sport she did not do was swimming. Asked why, she answered, no one in the family liked the 5:00am morning practices.

After leaving Houston, she first came to the Triangle twelve years ago as a UNC-Chapel Hill Morehead Scholar and soccer player. She earned a degree in Anthropology. While she was a member of the team, UNC-CH women's Soccer won three National Championships. She left the area briefly after graduation, but she came back to earn a Masters of Environmental Management from Duke's Nicholas School of the Environment and her Juris Doctor from UNC-Chapel Hill. As if this wasn't enough, she also served as the Publication Editor of the North Carolina Law Review.

After graduation, Charlotte she began her career practicing in the environmental and land use practices at K&L Gates LLP. She is now a member of the law firm, Styers and Kemerait where she focuses her practice in the areas of administrative law, utilities regulation, zoning/land use, and environmental matters. She regularly advises clients on compliance and litigation avoidance related to federal, state and local law; represents clients before administrative, regulatory and investigative governmental agencies; and represents clients in their appeals to various tribunals. Charlotte is admitted to practice law in North Carolina and in federal court.

Charlotte was the first female attorney in North Carolina to become a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Accredited Professional and a member of the Triangle chapter of the US Green Building Council (USGBC) and the City of Raleigh's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, so I work on making Raleigh a more bicycle-friendly community. She is also a member of the North Carolina Bar Association (Natural Resources, Energy, and Environmental Law Section). Locally, she is a member of the Board of Directors of the Women's Center of Wake County and volunteers as a Wake County Guardian ad Litem.³

"I am particularly interested in the challenges we face with respect to growth and development in a carbon-constrained future and the possibilities that exist in the Triangle for re-creating our communities," says Charlotte. "TLC's efforts to create a network of open spaces – or green infrastructure – provide many environmental benefits and are a critical component to the sustainable development of the Triangle."

About a year ago Charlotte was encouraged to try Masters Swimming by her boss, Karen Kemerait who was already a Masters swimmer with Raleigh Area Masters. Since she enjoys triathlons (nothing easy for this young lady) Karen suggested the additional swim training would help Charlotte improve her overall Triathlon times. This would also help her toward current Triathlon goal of competing at a high level within her age group.

Like many Triathletes, she has found Masters swim training to be challenging and hard work, but with the coaching she is receiving, her technique and body position have improved. She enjoys the effort, finds she can train most days and will pass up sleep to get to practice. She does say she draws the line at passing up good food. I'd agree with that.. She enjoys the swimming, the stroke work and the attitude you find in Masters. She finds the effort is helping her improve her swim times and it helps her manage work related stress and burn off energy. She finds the different strokes a challenge, prefers Freestyle and she has developed the opinion that the backstroke is as painful as it looks.

When she is not working or volunteering or swimming or competing in Triathlons or eating good food, Charlotte enjoys relaxing with friends, going to live music events, and hanging out with her two golden retrievers, Boone and Biscuit.

Charlotte is definitely a good addition to the North Carolina Masters Swimming community.