

# Catch It!



## 2022 Grand National Champions:

Laney Puhalla, Women's Solo and 2-Baton; Kylie Cates, Strut; Ally Duda, Artistic Twirl; Julia Arciola, 3-Baton; and Bower Sarra, Men's Solo.

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# GOOD LUCK TEAM USA

Team USA “*going for the gold*”

Good luck to Team USA as they “go for the gold” at the **35th World Baton Twirling Championship**, Aug. 4-7 in Turin, Italy. Sponsored by the World Baton Twirling Federation (WBTF) the World Championship features 250 of the world’s best sport baton twirlers from countries around the world, including the U.S., Canada, France, Italy and Japan. These elite athletes will compete for bronze, silver and gold medals in the twirling equivalent of the Olympic Games. Go U.S.A.!

Note: *There WILL be a World Championship livestream! Check USTA’s social media for details!*

## TEAM USA MEMBERS ARE:

### Senior Women

Savannah Miller  
Laney Puhalla  
Ally Duda  
Amanda Trujillo, alternate

### Junior Women

Mikayla Schuller  
Mackenzie Bronk  
Erienne Hay  
Lila Sargent, alternate

### Youth Women

Jaida Jobe

Savannah Helton-  
Urbassik

Delilah Gallo  
Mary Moore, alternate

### Senior Men

Bower Sarra  
Austin Arellanes

### Senior Pairs

Katiana and Kirsandra  
Welsheimer

### Junior Pairs

Josie D’aquisto and

Cadence Dooms

### Team

Team Luxe  
Kylie Cates  
Savannah Helton-  
Urbassik  
Savannah Miller  
Emily Perkins  
Bower Sarra  
Sabrina Smith  
Amanda Trujillo  
Natalie Weber





# 2022 U.S. National Championships

U.S. NATIONAL BATON TWIRLING CHAMPIONSHIPS



# Wrap Up!

Days, weeks, months and years of hard work and dedication paid off for nearly 500 athletes who competed in the 2022 U.S. National Baton Twirling Championships, held July 11-16 in Stockton, Calif. During a week of fun, friendship and incredible performances, some dreams were realized and others were born. Congratulations to all of the athletes who competed and to the parents and coaches who supported them.



2022 U.S. PRETRIALS ATHLETES

Nationals week started with the U.S. PreTrials, a popular program that helps athletes develop proper body and baton technique, gives them the opportunity to express their personalities in freestyle and pairs programs, and helps prepare athletes, coaches and judges for the rigors of the U.S. Trials and international competition. Congratulations to all of our PreTrials athletes and medalists!

The U.S. Trials Medal Round featured the Youth, Junior and Senior Men and Women selected at the U.S. Trials in March competing for final placement. These elite athletes, along with Jr. and Sr. Pairs and Team athletes, will represent the U.S. at the WBTF World Baton Twirling Championship, Aug. 3-7, in Turin, Italy. Team USA received a rousing send-off at the end of nationals week. Watch USTA's social media platforms for information and results.

# 2022 U.S. National Championships



2022 ATHLETE OF THE YEAR WINNERS

Next up was the second Athlete of the Year competition, which recognized “all-around” athletes. Regional qualifiers competed in Solo, 2-Baton and Strut. In addition, beginner and intermediate athletes submitted an essay and advanced athletes competed in a live interview. Congratulations to all of our Athlete of the Year competitors and winners!

Wednesday was the first-ever IBTF Qualifier to select athletes to represent USTA in the 2023 IBTF World Baton Twirling Championship

and Nations Cup competition in Liverpool, England in August 2023. Athletes competed at either the A or Elite level in Solo, Duet, 2-Baton, 3-Baton, Artistic Twirl, Artistic Twirl Pairs, X-Strut, Artistic Team, Artistic Group, Twirling Team and Twirling Corps. Congratulations to the individuals and groups who qualified for these prestigious international competitions!

Thursday and Friday featured individual events for both Nationals and Festival of the Future, as well as an incredible Collegiate Championship. Nearly 50 of the nation’s best collegiate twirlers wowed the crowd and proudly represented their colleges and universities. Congratulations to 2022 Collegiate Champion and University of Illinois Feature Twirler Julia Arciola!

The excitement continued with an amazing Finals Show, featuring the top two junior, senior and adult finalists in 2-Baton, Strut, 3-Baton, Artistic Twirl, Men’s Solo and Women’s Solo.

It was truly amazing to witness the top twirlers in our sport deliver one



incredible performance after another! Congratulations to our 2022 Grand National Champions: Laney Puhalla, Women’s Solo and 2-Baton; Kylie Cates, Strut; Ally Duda, Artistic Twirl; Julia Arciola, 3-Baton; Bower Sarra, Men’s Solo.





# 2022 U.S. National Championships



Nationals week wrapped up with National and Festival group competitions. Congratulations to all the groups that competed and those who won, including Intrepid, which received the EsTEAMed Cup for the most outstanding Twirl Team, Wheaton, which received the Ann Bittenbender Cup for the most outstanding Dance Twirl Team and the Sundancers, which received the Esprit de Corps Cup, which is presented to the most outstanding corps.

During the team retreat, two other special awards were presented. Congratulations to Shanon Barker, named Coach of the Year, and to Colleen Murphy Middleton, named Choreographer of the Year. ([See stories on pages 7 & 8.](#))

The **2023 U.S. National Baton Twirling Championships** will be held July 10-15 at the Silver Spurs Arena and Events Center at the Osceola Heritage Park in Kissimmee, Fla. Mark your calendars now!

## Coaches Department Takes Care of Coaches



Thanks to the USTA Coaches Department for providing the USTA Coaches Lounge at the Stockton Arena during nationals week. It gave coaches a place to relax between sets, catch a glimpse of the livestream and visit with other coaches from across the country.

## Generous twirlers make USTA Heart school supply drive a huge success

Thanks to the hundreds of twirlers who donated pencils, markers, crayons, rulers, notebooks and other school supplies to the USTA Heart school supply drive during nationals week. USTA Heart is an effort to give back to the communities that host our national championships.

USTA President Karen Cammer delivered

the items

to the Mary Graham Children's Foundation, which supports children in the foster care system in the Stockton area.

"As I packed up all the wonderful school supplies that our families donated through our USTA Heart initiative, I was overwhelmed by their loving generosity," Cammer said. "The joy that these supplies will bring to the foster children living at the Mary Graham Foundation's Children's Shelter is

immeasurable. This proves to us all that there is so much good in our youth and their families.

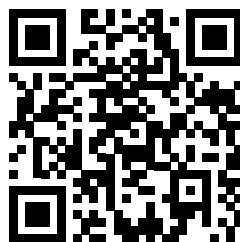
***"Thank you all for giving from your heart and touching the hearts and lives of those far less fortunate. The USTA members have HEART!"***



### Reminder

All results are posted online.

You can scan this QR code or click on this box to bring the results up on your phone.





# 2022 Choreographer of the Year

## COLLEEN MURPHY MIDDLETON

Forte Twirl and Dance Team coach Colleen Murphy Middleton received the 2022 Choreographer of the Year Award for her choreography of the Forte artistic group. The Atlanta, Georgia-based group did a high-energy, aerobics-style program that qualified for the 2023 IBTF World Championship and Nations Cup, which will be held in Liverpool, England.

The national group judges selected the winning choreography and the award was presented by Judges Department Director Kathy Butera Fanney.

“They had a lot of energy and audience appeal,” Butera Fanney said. “Costuming clearly indicated their theme and it was definitely entertaining.”

“I knew that this was an award that judges looked for, but you never really think about it during the year while you’re working with your team members and making them the best they can be,” Middleton said.

She accepted her award with the support of her Forte Twirl and Dance team family and her coach from the team she grew up with.

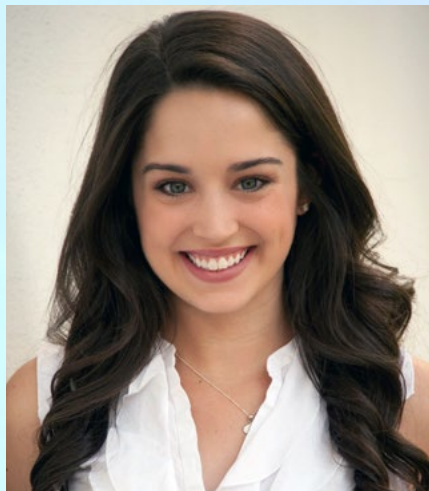
Middleton said she and her staff always try to pick a theme that tells a message. Leg warmers, sweatbands, bright blush and all, this year’s 80s-inspired workout routine was about more than physical exercise.

“Our underlying message was body positivity because we think it’s something that really resonates with the age group that we are working with – teenagers and college aged girls – but in a fun way,” she said.

The music selections enhanced the message of the artistic group. The music started with physical activity, transitioned to self-confidence and ended with Lady Gaga’s “Born This Way”.

“It’s about who you are as a person,” Middleton added. “You can’t change everything about your body, you are who you are.”

Congratulations to Choreographer of the Year Colleen Murphy Middleton!



WRITTEN BY HALEY LENA, USTA COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

# 2022 Coach of the Year

## SHANON BARKER

Self-reliance, responsibility, kindness and caring for others is at the forefront of Shanon Barker's interactive and positive teaching methods.

With athletes gathered on the competition floor and a full crowd in the arena seats, USTA honored Barker with the 2022 Coach of the Year award at the U.S. National Baton Twirling Championships in Stockton, California.

"Hundreds of coaches deserve the Coach of the Year Award, definitely not just one," Barker said. "I hope each one of you takes a moment to think good thoughts about your role in society through baton coaching. I'm sharing this award with every one of you!"

Barker has sponsored a free afterschool twirling class for many years. Her twirlers perform at rest homes, parades and other community events, and stay after to interact with the audience.

"Her priorities are exactly what we are looking for in coaches; people who are helping kids have better lives through baton twirling, and Shanon does that in a really creative and fun way," said Coaches Department Director Jackie Stewart.

Barker is part of the Oregon Baton Council, the Western Regional Council, is a frequent presenter for the USTA Coaches Network and also serves as the national awards ceremony coordinator. When Barker is not helping with USTA, she helps build athletes' twirling skills, character and confidence.

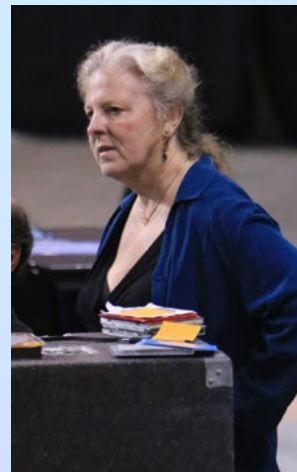
"I've often felt gratitude towards my students, who introduced me to the idiosyncrasies of coaching," Barker said.

"Thank you to USTA, the Coaches Department and congratulations to Irene Mazzini and Kathy Forsythe for their well-deserved nominations," she said.

WRITTEN BY HALEY LENA, USTA COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Shanon Barker with her first student, Carol Ostrom, Ostrom's daughter Katie, a former twirler, and Ostrom's granddaughter, Ava, who is taking classes from Barker.





# Meet USTA's New Team Members

## Meet Alyse Windsor DIRECTOR OF TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

If you are a current USTA judge, or want to become a USTA judge, you'll want to get to know Alyse Gillman Windsor. She is USTA's new director of training and certification and will be helping prospective and current judges earn and advance their judging certification.

**WHERE YOU DO YOU LIVE:** Orange Beach, Alabama

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY:** My husband Robert and I have an almost 2-year-old daughter named Isabelle.

**WHAT IS YOUR "REAL" JOB:** I am an attorney specializing in civil defense litigation

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR TWIRLING CAREER:** I grew up twirling and competing on teams with the Tennessee Twirlers. I was the 2003 U.S. Jr. Women's Bronze Medalist and competed at the WBTF World Championship in Barcelona, Spain. Then I was on the World Team in 2006 and 2007 as a member of Encore and earned bronze and silver medals in the team event at worlds in Rome, Italy and Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. I was also the feature twirler at Middle Tennessee State University from 2006-2009. I now judge USTA competitions all over the country.

**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AS USTA'S DIRECTOR OF TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION:** I hope to continue to spread awareness about the USTA judges' certification process, grow and expand the USTA judging community and continue to develop opportunities for education and growth for existing USTA judges.



# Meet USTA's New Team Members

## Meet Ashley Swope USTA AWARDS COORDINATOR

Did you know that more than 1,500 medals, 200 plaques and 125 gold and silver cups were presented at the 2022 U.S. National Baton Twirling Championships? Someone had to order all of those awards and make sure they were correct and arrived on time so they could be presented to our deserving athletes. That someone is Ashley Swope, USTA's new awards coordinator.

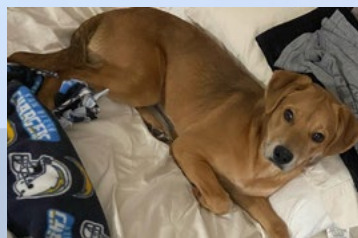
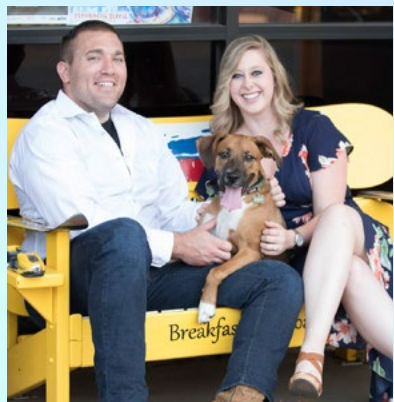
**WHERE YOU DO YOU LIVE:** Aurora, Colorado

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY:** My husband Michael and I have two puppies, Bronx and Lilli.

**WHAT IS YOUR "REAL" JOB:** I am a first grade teacher at High Plains Elementary in the Cherry Creek School District, which is the district I grew up in.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR TWIRLING CAREER:** They say I was born with a baton in my hand. My mom, Anna Dolan, and my grandma, Cheryl Osborn, are both twirlers. I grew up in their twirling organization, Colorado Twirls, and was fortunate to be coached by Michelle Dawson, and also by Koralea Slagle from Kansas. In high school and college, I was honored to work with Karen Ogden and Lori Perkins as a member of KOS teams that competed at Nationals and at the International Cup in Almere, The Netherlands. The true highlight of my twirling career was being selected as the feature twirler with the Longhorn Band at THE University of Texas in Austin. Hook 'Em! I am now proud to be a coach with Colorado Twirls and love working with our athletes.

**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AS USTA'S AWARDS COORDINATOR:** I want to make sure that our athletes receive beautiful and meaningful awards that honor and highlight the hard work and dedication they have put in to the sport of baton twirling. I also want to give a HUGE shout-out to Jeanne and Amelia DiPaola, volunteers who received, sorted, organized and transported all of the awards for this year's Nationals!





# Meet USTA's New Team Members

## Meet Kelly Randall USTA VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

They say “it takes a village” and that’s certainly true when it comes to the U.S. National Baton Twirling Championships. USTA relies on dozens of volunteers to make that complex event run smoothly, and Kelly Randall is the volunteer who recruits all the other volunteers!

**WHERE DO YOU LIVE:** Helena, Alabama

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY:** I have been married for 22 years to my husband Aaron. We have two children. Our son Joe is 19 and is a sophomore at Louisiana State University (LSU) studying biological engineering. Our daughter Madison is 14 and is a freshman at Helena High School. Madison is a majorette at her high school and competes individually and with her team, Intrepid.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR “REAL” JOB:** While coaching, chasing Madison, directing competitions and judging keeps me pretty busy, I also serve as the vice president for patient safety and regulatory services for Ascension Health. In this position, I assist our hospitals and physicians to implement systems and processes to reduce patient harm due to medical errors.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR TWIRLING CAREER:** I began competitive twirling at the age of six in Milwaukee, Wis. My mother also twirled and for a short time, I had the amazing experience of learning from the same incredible woman who coached my mother. As I reflect on that time now, I realize how special that was. In college, I was the feature twirler at the University of North Alabama and then in my senior year, I got to live my dream twirling in Jordan Hare Stadium as an Auburn University Majorette. I am affiliated with Intrepid, am an NBTA and USTA Level I judge, and serve as a contest director for various contests in Alabama. I love the sport of baton twirling and am fulfilled by the ability to give back to a sport that has given so much to me and my family.

**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AS USTA’S VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** I am excited about the opportunity to plug individuals who love our sport into various positions to help ensure that our Nationals is a seamless experience for our athletes, judges, coaches and spectators.



# NER 50th Anniversary Celebration



The Northeast Region held its 50th anniversary celebration June 3-5 during the 2022 Northeast Regional Championships, held at Kutztown University in Pennsylvania.

We had new “all catch” bracelets for the Festival of the Future athletes and they absolutely loved them.

Athletes who did not make the top seven were all given “rising star” pins, which were another big hit. All participants received a 50th anniversary commemorative pin.



We retired our old championship cups and purchased new cups spearheaded by former Grand Champion, Catherine Ramirez. All the new cups were donated by former Grand Champions and Northeast Region Board Members. A true “gift” to our region.

Karen Cammer, the contest director, introduced all Northeast Region Baton Council members. There are three representatives from each state council. She also recognized Northeast Region members who serve on the national level, for example, members of the Board of Directors and USTA departments.



Cammer, the United States Twirling Association President, spoke on the history of the region and urged the next generation of leaders to come shadow the current regional leaders and staff.

“We are paying it forward,” Cammer said. “We were mentored and we will continue that into the next 50 years.”

## WE ARE PROUD TO INTRODUCE OUR 2022 GRAND CHAMPIONS (L TO R):

- ▶ Micah Beaudoin, Strut
- ▶ Ivorie Shelton, 3-Baton
- ▶ Ally Duda, Women’s Solo, 2-Baton and Artistic Twirl



The 50th anniversary celebration was a success. We celebrated our athletes, coaches, staff, families, USTA, the Northeast Region and our generosity of spirit.

Linda Boss, Northeast Region President





# 2022 Regional Champions

## SOUTHEAST REGION:

Ground (L to R): Julia Arciola – Sr 3-Baton; Jenny Hannah – Sr Women's Solo; Standing (L to R): Jax Scott – Jr Men's Solo; Kylee Saltsman – Jr 2-Baton, Artistic Twirl, Women's Solo; Amanda Trujillo – Sr 2-Baton, Artistic Twirl, Strut; Susan Otts – Jr Strut; Melyna Vaudrin – Jr 3-Baton



## CENTRAL REGION:

L to R: Marie Kershaw – Artistic Twirl; Makaela Anderson – Solo; Emily Perkins – 2-Baton; Alexa Leitzel – Strut; Byron Anderson – Men's Solo; Maggie Chrudimsky – 3-Baton



## MIDEAST REGION

L to R: Marla Edgecomb – 3-Baton; Mikayla Schuller – 2-Baton; Kylie Cates – Solo, Strut, Artistic Twirl; Bower Sarra – Men's Solo



## WESTERN REGION:

L to R: Katiana Welsheimer – Solo, Strut, Artistic Twirl; Brandon Ennis – Men's Solo; JaZee Griffith – 2-Baton, 3-Baton



## NORTHEAST REGION:

L to R: Micah Beaudoin – Strut; Ivorie Shelton – 3-Baton; Ally Duda – Solo, 2-Baton, Artistic Twirl



# 2023 U.S. National Baton Twirling **CHAMPIONSHIPS**

*Including the U.S. PreTrials, Athlete of the Year  
and Festival of the Future!*

**July 10-15, 2023**

**Silver Spurs Arena and Event Center  
at Osceola Heritage Center | Kissimmee, Florida**



**UNITED STATES  
TWIRLING ASSOCIATION**

Watch for hotel, schedule and entry info this fall at [www.ustwirling.com](http://www.ustwirling.com).





United States Twirling Association

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