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UIC Mourns The Death Of John Christie

Swimming coach, 43, loses battle with cancer.

July 5, 2000

Chicago, Ill. - The University of Illinois at Chicago Athletic Department was dealt a heartbreaking blow over the holiday weekend as [John Christie](#), 43, head coach of the UIC men's and women's swimming and diving programs died late Saturday, July 1, at Northwestern Memorial Hospital after battling cancer for the past several months.

"John dedicated his entire life to UIC swimming," commented UIC Athletic Director Jim Schmidt. "Throughout his illness he showed tremendous courage, never missing a day of workouts. He profoundly influenced many of our young athletes lives and was a model for dedication."

Christie, who came to UIC just prior to the start of the 1996-97 season, had a simple but effective plan for his student athletes as a head coach, train hard, compete against only the best team's in the country and have the best meet of your life at the conference championships. It was this creed that helped him revitalize the Flames' program as under his guidance 12 UIC swimmers and divers claimed Midwestern Collegiate Conference Championships.

A native of Cortland, N.Y., Christie fulfilled his dream of becoming a Division I swimming coach when UIC hired him in 1996, his mother, Janet, told the Chicago Tribune.

"Just recently he said he really loved what he did. He got a lot of satisfaction out of it," his mother said. "He always wanted to coach a Division I team, and he reached that goal."

Christie enjoyed a successful career in collegiate swimming prior to his arrival at UIC. A 1981 graduate of State University College at Brockport in Brockport, N.Y., he served as the assistant swimming coach at both the University of Kansas (1985-88) and the College of William and Mary (1988-89). Christie was also the head swimming and water polo coach at California State University at San Bernardino from 1989-92 before the school dropped the swimming program. While coaching at the collegiate level, Christie coached swimmers for the U.S. Open, the Olympic trials and the NCAA

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Head Swimming and Diving Coach John Christie, 43, died on Saturday, July 1, after battling cancer for several months.

Championships. Three of his swimmers at CSUSB were NCAA National Championship qualifiers.

Throughout his coaching career, Christie was associated with some of the finest coaches in the country, including 1988 U. S. Olympic coaches Richard Quick and Skip Kinney. Christie was a coach and head camp counselor at the Stanford University Swim Camp conducted by Quick and Kinney in 1989. He was a member of the National College Swimming Coaches Association, United States Swimming and the United States Swimming Sport Psychology Committee.

Christie, the oldest of six children, is survived by his mother, three sisters, Deborah Comito, Susan Tinker and Laura, and two brothers, William and Robert.

Visitation and funeral services will take place in Christie's hometown, while a memorial service will be held on the UIC campus on Wednesday, July 12, at the Newman Catholic Student Center, 700 S. Morgan, at 5:30 p.m.

Funeral Arrangements

Friday, July 7
7:00-9:00 p.m. Visitation
Bertini Riccardi Funeral Home
69 North Main Street
Cortland, N.Y. 13045
(607) 753-1053

Saturday, July 8, 2000
11:00 a.m. Mass
St. Mary's Church
44 North Main Street
Cortland, N.Y. 13045
(607) 756-9967

Burial will follow Mass

Following All Services, A Celebration of John's Life...

Home of Janet Christie (Mother)
22 Atkins Ave.
Cortland, N.Y. 13045

Cards and/or flowers may be sent to the Bertini Riccardi Funeral Home

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