

My name is Caroline Bruce McAndrew born and raised Kansan and member of the 2004 US Olympic swim team. For as long as I can remember, most of my childhood and young adulthood was spent in the swimming pool. I am the third child in a family of four, all of whom were lovers of the water. My older brother and sister lead the way, and being the younger sister I wanted to be able to do anything they could do, and by the age of 7 I was on the year around competitive swim team.

My love for the water as well as my outgoing personality helped make swimming the perfect sport for me. For those of you not as familiar with the swimming world, competitive swimmers often start swimming at a young age and very quickly can become like a part time job. As my swimming career progressed and I continued to move up through the levels of the sport, my time commitment and training equally progressed. By the age of 14 I was doing two practices a day and up to 18 hours a week in the pool. Although this might seem a bit excessive to some, I loved the sport and understood the sacrifices needed to pursue my goals.

As my career continued and I am moved up in the international rankings, another sacrifice I had to make was the expectation to be drug tested. Once a swimmer breaks into the top 100 in the world in any given swimming event, they are put on the world doping list for random drug testing. Being in that list meant that I filled out paperwork every month letting the agency know my whereabouts at all times, so they would be able to drug test me whenever my name was selected. This happened many times throughout my high school career and into college. Drug testing was something that become a normal part of my life, and although it was something that many times I detested, I knew that this was one of the many ways that my sport was doing its job to keep things fair.

My career as an athlete gave me so much more than I could have ever imagined. It gave the opportunity travel the world, to be a student athlete at Stanford University, the ability to believe in myself, to set goals and do everything within my means to pursue them and it gave me a sense of belonging to a team and a sport who understood me and was there for me though all the mountains and valleys. I thank God for the amazing experiences, friendships and memories swimming provided for me.

Although my career ended when I medically retired at the age of 22, swimming has continued to provide me with incredible opportunities in the swimming world. I have had the privilege to coach, teach and mentor countless young swimmers as they embark on their own

swimming careers, and I am so grateful for everything the sport gave me and taught me that I am now able to pass onto the next generation of swimmers. Now as a mother myself, I look forward to the opportunity to share my love of sports with my kids, as they begin to explore their own love of sports, and I will be there cheering them on as they chase dreams of their own. I support the Fairness in Women's Sports Act so that other girls can chase their dreams, just like I did!