

Melanie Major – Level 3-5 and Advanced Recreational Program Coordinator

Pre-Competitive Coach



Mélanie started coaching in September 1999 and absolutely fell in love with it! She is fully certified Level 1& 2 in Artistic Gymnastics and Trampoline as well as Level 3 technical and theory. Mel's coaching experience also includes Women's Competitive, Invitational, Kindergym and Recreational. She is currently coaching at the Pre-Competitive level. As a coach, she wants her athletes to challenge themselves and feel proud of their accomplishments. She believes that gymnastics can teach girls to have good sportsmanship, great work habits, perseverance and a higher self-esteem.

Mélanie is the Level 3-5 and Advanced Recreational Program Coordinator. Her main goal is to help make the program successful and memorable for all level 3-5 and Advanced Recreational families. Some of her key responsibilities include; the management of the coaches and the administrative duties of the program. Keeping the lines of communication open with the parents, athletes and coaches is one of Mel's top priorities. Mel is proud to say that the girls have fun while improving their skills in a safe environment. Mel is supported by terrific coaches; Valerie Abassi, Amanda Pepin, Christie Newman, Denise Bussiere, Natalie Bisson and Shawnee Flag. Their knowledge, experience and passion help make this program a success! These two programs don't just teach gymnastics; the girls learn to have good sportsmanship, great work habits, perseverance and a higher self-esteem.

Mel can be contacted at mmajor_ogc@rogers.com or you can leave a voicemail at 613-722-6698 ext. 227

Valerie Abassi –Advanced Recreational and Level 3-5 Coach



Valerie has been employed by OGC for 4 years. She is currently coaching in the Girls Invitational (Level 3-5) Competitive and Advanced Recreational Programs. She has a degree in Recreation. Valerie is also a fully certified Level 2 Coach in Women's Artistic and Level 1 Trampoline. She comes to OGC with over 20 years of coaching experience, 10 of which were in developmental programs. Gymnastics is my passion. I believe my job as a coach is to give athletes the tools they need to accomplish their goals: whether it's through teaching the foundations that develop their strength, balance, flexibility and agility, or by guiding athletes to use problem solving understand the mechanics of a particular move. OGC has not only given me the opportunity to pursue my passion, but supports my quest with a wealth of training materials and an environment that allows me to continually grow as a coach.

Natalie Bisson – Advanced Recreational Coach



Natalie Bisson was a gymnast for 12 years. She then began coaching at the age of 12 as a way of staying involved in the sport of gymnastics. She is a fully certified Level 2 Coach in Women's Artistic Gymnastics. She also has her level 1 Trampoline, as well as her Risk management and First aid/CPR. She is currently finishing up an undergraduate degree at the University of Ottawa in Criminology and Psychology and enjoys spending much of her free time at the Ottawa Gymnastics Centre. Natalie enjoys coaching athletes of all ages and ability. She currently coaches in the Kindergym, Recreational, Adult Recreational and Advanced Recreational programs.

Shawnee Flagg – Advanced Recreational Coach, Tiny Tumbler and Kindergym Coach



I started gymnastics when I was 18 months old. When I was three, I came to the Ottawa Gymnastics Centre and a year later started in the developmental program. I was a provincial gymnast from the age of 9 until 16. I started as a coach in training when I was 14 and became a coach when I was 16. I have been coaching year round in the Kindergym program ever since, some classes that I have taught include coaching 3-6 year old classes, Tall n' Small classes and Special K classes. I am currently coaching in the developmental program as well as a Tiny Tumbler coach. My training includes Level 1 and 2 Artistic gymnastics and Level 1 trampoline. I am also trained in CPR. I am currently in my second year at the University of Ottawa working towards a Bachelor of Science degree. I am hoping to become a pediatric nurse or pediatrician. I have had many great gymnastics memories, but my biggest accomplishment was in 2004 when I became the All-Around Provincial Champion and had the opportunity to represent Ontario at The Eastern Canadian Championships. Gymnastics is not just about learning big tricks. Although that is what usually lures athletes to the sport, I believe gymnastics teaches basic life skills such as: sportsmanship, striving to perform to the best of your ability and social interaction. Some of the best friends I have, I met at gymnastics.