Ronald (Sickie) Marcikic  
Student Affairs Officer III  
Student Affairs: Campus Recreation

How would you persuade someone to stare at a black line for 90 minutes a day while vigorously exercising? Each week, over 400 UCSD staff, students and community members joyfully gather on campus and stare at a black line for 90 minutes during swim practice with UC San Diego Masters Sports Program. Their motivation? Ron "Sickie" Marcikic.

Swimming is a top contender for the award as the most boring sport. However, that reputation is changed once they meet Sickie. Sickie, the Head Coach and Director of UC San Diego Masters Sports programs (Student Affairs Officer 3) is far more than just a swim coach. Sickie’s innovative programming includes a Festivus swim where swimmers have the opportunity to air their grievances and showcase their feats of strengths through games with pool equipment to the backdrop of the audio from the infamous Festivus Seinfeld episode, Midnight Madness where swimmers come to the pool to play games and drinks smoothies at midnight, Memorial Day swim where swimmers gather at the ocean for an open water swim to commemorate past swimmers, Red Carpet Sneak Previews of videos made by swimmers, Webby Claws celebration where Sickie will personally dress as a swimming morphed Santa for the holiday party, concerts at Sickie’s home and much more.

Sickie built the largest adult fitness program in San Diego which includes swimmers, runners and triathletes and is one of the largest Masters Swim teams in the United States. His programs are also one of the largest revenue contributors within the Recreation department. However, Sickie’s indicator of success is the sense of community among the swimmers which include many who have been loyal to the program for over 30 years. The UCSD Masters Sports providing a linkage for community members to become actively engaged with UCSD and has resulted in countless partnerships such as swimmers serving as advisory board members for the Career Services Center or teaching for UCSD Extension and countless others.

Sickie is also extremely involved with the community and is a leader in service. Sickie hosted the Swim 24 Challenge, which rose over $64,000 for San Diego Youth Lifeguard Foundation to give swim lessons to children who cannot afford lessons. He was able to gather over 200 members who ranged from UCSD students, staff, swim team members, professional athletes, Qualcomm and other corporate employees, etc. to swim for 24 hours for the fundraiser. Swim with Mike is the largest fundraiser for the Physically Challenged Athletes Foundation and Sickie provides and cooks food to the 100+ participants. Each holiday season, Sickie collects over 100 toys to donate to the Toys for San Diego Homelessness. He also serves as a board member of the House Foundation where they distribute funds to reputable charities. Sickie’s most recent project includes creating rehabilitative exercise programs for the members of the Wounded Warriors Project.