

POOL NATION

SPOTLIGHTS & INSIGHTS

RIISING LEADERS.
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JOEY GRIECO

*Inside the leadership
journey of the Co-
President & COO of
Gold Medal Pools*

JAY LAUGHREY

*Leads IPSSA Foothills
Chapter with Heart,
Healing and Hands-
On Wisdom*

BETO MACEDO

*Elevating the
Hispanic Voice in the
Pool Industry*

LYNDSEY SHOCK

*FSPA hires new CEO
from within the
industry.*

POOL NATION
WELCOMES
DOREEN KING

A NEW ERA BEGINS —
LEADERSHIP &
BUSINESS TRAINING
BUILT FOR POOL PROS

VP BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT - POOL NATION

DOREEN KING

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WELCOME LETTER

Dear Pool Nation Family,

As May rolls in and pool season kicks into full gear, there's a renewed energy rippling across the industry. Here at Pool Nation, we're feeling it too—and we're stepping into this season with purpose! Our commitment to empowering pool professionals through education, leadership, and community is stronger than ever, and this issue is a reflection of that mission.

Today, I'm thrilled to officially welcome Doreen King as our new Pool Nation VP of Business & Leadership Development. If you've met Doreen at a Pool Nation event, you've seen her passion in action. She brings the vision and experience to help take our professional development efforts to the next level and this marks a major milestone for our organization.

This Pool Nation E-Magazine issue is jam packed with content, so we encourage you to take the time to read it in its entirety. You'll meet Joey Grieco, Co-President and COO of Gold Medal Pools, who shares what it takes to lead a high-performing team. You'll also get to know Beto Granados, President of Mex Pool Techs, a growing network of Hispanic pool pros making waves through mentorship and collaboration. And we're honored to feature Jay Laughrey, a dedicated leader with IPSSA Region 3 (Foothills), whose commitment to service and industry standards is second to none.

Whether you're running routes, leading a business, or just entering the trade, there's something here for you. Thank you for being part of the Pool Nation family. Let's keep growing—together.

***With appreciation,
The Pool Nation Team***



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POOL NATION NAMES DOREEN KING AS VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pool Nation has appointed Doreen King as its new Vice President of Business and Leadership Development, marking a major step in the organization's commitment to building sustainable leadership, talent, and business education initiatives across the pool service industry.

King brings more than 35 years of experience in operations, talent development, and organizational leadership to her new role. A strategic and purpose-driven leader, King has spent decades shaping learning programs in both the hospitality and retail sectors, including global leadership roles at Hilton Hotels and JCPenney.

"This is a pivotal moment for Pool Nation," said Edgar De Jesus, CEO of Pool Nation. "Doreen brings a rare blend of industry expertise, business understanding, and a passion for people."

Her ability to design strategic development programs while connecting personally with professionals is already making a meaningful impact. She's not just joining our team—she's helping lead the future of pool education."

King's partnership with Pool Nation began in October 2023 as a featured guest on the Influence and Persuasion podcast. That conversation sparked a deeper collaboration, leading to her role facilitating business classes at Pool Nation Boot Camps, the Women's Summit, and the annual Business Matrix and Convention in Dallas.



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In her new role, King is leading the development of several key initiatives, including the organization's Learning & Development (L&D) Strategy, the Learning Journey Roadmap, the 2025 Women's Summit, and Executive Edge—a new flexible development program tailored to business owners and teams.

King's previous accomplishments include launching JCPenney's Retail Academy, designing the Inclusive Learning Portfolio, and leading the redesign of onboarding for Brand Defining Stores. At Hilton, she spearheaded major property openings, introduced revenue management processes, and developed enterprise-wide training under the company's Balanced Scorecard model.

Now at Pool Nation, her focus is on building intentional, structured education that meets the real-world needs of pool professionals at every stage of business growth.



From the beginning, I was inspired by Pool Nation's mission to lift the entire industry—not just through technical training, but by investing in business and leadership development," King said. "That commitment aligns deeply with my passion for empowering entrepreneurs and building strong, sustainable foundations for growth.



One of my proudest milestones so far has been designing Pool Nation's Leadership & Development Strategy," she said. "It's not just about offering classes. It's about creating a system that equips owners, leaders, and teams with the tools they need to thrive—today and into the future

King emphasized that pool professionals often wear many hats—technician, salesperson, business owner—and rarely have access to structured leadership or business education.



What I love most about this industry is the resilience, pride, and entrepreneurial drive I see in every professional I've met," King said. "Their willingness to invest in their own growth inspires me. And when we invest in people, we don't just transform businesses—we change lives.

The 2025 Women's Summit, which King is leading, will feature keynote speakers,

dynamic leadership panels, and focused sessions on empowerment and mentorship. Looking ahead, her top priorities include expanding Pool Nation's educational platforms, scaling the Executive Edge service, and helping entrepreneurs turn development into a competitive advantage.



If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem," King added. "I'm here to be part of the solution—helping close the gap and build the future of the pool industry through practical, powerful learning.



ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Every month in Pool Nation: Spotlights & Insights Magazine, we shine a light on the leaders, learners, and trailblazers who are reshaping the pool industry from the inside out. Each month, we feature the professionals who don't just do the work—they elevate it. In this edition, we're highlighting three standout individuals who are pushing boundaries, embracing growth, and inspiring others with their bold leadership and relentless drive.

SPOTLIGHTS

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- Beto Granados, President of Mex Pool Techs – Plus, Meet the Members Behind the Movement Page 24
- Jay Laughrey, IPSSA Region 3 President Page 16

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Crystal Lengua

VP SMP Metal &
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Melissa Kieling

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hyve Security



Alicia Stephens

Director of
Education Biolab

POOL NATION WOMEN'S *Summit*

Theme

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Event Information



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POOL NATION WOMEN'S SUMMIT 2025

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The 2025 Pool Nation Women's Summit is the premier gathering for women across the pool and aquatics industry. Built around the theme "Inspire, Empower, Elevate," the summit delivers transformative leadership and personal-growth experiences through immersive sessions on strategic storytelling, brand-building, culture-driven performance, authentic networking, and turning adversity into innovation.

Attendees will gain practical, actionable frameworks from trailblazing women who've broken barriers and participate in hands-on workshops that sharpen decision-making and resilience. Whether you're looking to amplify your voice, accelerate your career, or shape the future of the industry, the Pool Nation Women's Summit 2025 equips you with the insights, connections, and confidence to lead boldly and elevate those around you—making it the must-attend event for every woman ready to write the next chapter of pool-industry success.

	Registration Cost
2-DAY COURSES Includes: 2 Days of Courses, Lunch, Networking Event and Headshots	\$199

DAY ONE - THURSDAY AUGUST 21ST - 9AM TO 5:15PM	Start Time	End Time
Turning Adversity into Innovation - Melissa Kieling - Co-founder & CEO hyve Security	9:00 AM	10:30 AM
Networking: The Power of Authentic Connection - Doreen King - VP Business & Leadership Development Pool Nation	10:45 AM	12:15 PM
LUNCH	12:15 PM	1:15 PM
Lift as you Lead: The Mentorship Effect - Panel Discussion	1:15 PM	2:15 PM
Breaking Through Barriers: Embracing Resilience & Empowerment - Crystal Lengua- Rowell - VP SMP Metal/Ultra Lift	2:30 PM	4:00 PM
Your Brand is Your Legacy - Alicia Stephens - Director of Training & Education - Biolab	4:15 PM	5:15 PM
NETWORKING EVENT	6:00 PM	8:00 PM
DAY TWO - FRIDAY AUGUST 22ND	Start Time	End Time
Strategic Leadership & Sustainable Growth - Stacey Gearhart - GM Raypak	8:30 AM	9:45 AM
Leading with a Growth Mindset - Mallory Wachowski - Regional Sales Manager - Biolab	10:00 AM	11:00 AM
Building a Culture that Performs - TBA - Heritage	11:15 AM	12:15 PM
LUNCH	12:15 PM	1:15 PM
The Power of Strategic Storytelling - Doreen King - VP Business & Leadership Development - Pool Nation	1:15 PM	2:15 PM
Summarizing Success: Final Thoughts - Missy Morgan - VP Marketing SRS Distribution	2:15 PM	2:30 PM

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION - WWW.POOLNATION.COM

JOEY GRIECO IS ENGINEERING A LEGACY AT GOLD MEDAL POOLS

FRISCO, TEXAS

Joseph “Joey” Grieco, P.E., didn’t plan on making a splash in the pool industry. In fact, if you’d asked the Chicago-born, New Mexico-raised kid what his future looked like, he would have told you he was going pro — in baseball.

“I played every day, year-round,” Grieco recalled with a laugh. “But once I hit college and realized five-foot-seven might not get me a professional contract, I started paying more attention to what else I loved — and that was math and problem-solving.”

That pivot led him to Texas Tech University, where he earned both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mechanical engineering. Grieco thought he was settling into a stable, lifelong career as an engineer. For over a decade, he worked his way through the ranks at Halliburton Energy Services. Then fate — and family — changed everything.



A CHANCE CONNECTION SPARKS TRANSFORMATION

Grieco’s entry into the world of pools started quietly — not as a business deal or career move, but as a supportive spouse attending company holiday parties. His wife, Jenny, an interior designer, had taken a leap of faith by joining Gold Medal Pools as a designer and salesperson. The Griecos’ entire future was set in motion after a chance encounter with CEO Josh Sandler.



"My wife came home one day and said, 'This guy asked if I wanted to design and sell pools,'" Grieco remembered. "It sounded crazy at the time, but we figured, why not give it a shot?"

Little did he know, years later, that same company — still a small, family-owned business at the time — would come knocking for him too.

"Josh invited me to lunch, and when Josh invites you to lunch, you know something's coming," Grieco joked. "He shared the vision of growing Gold Medal from a family-owned operation into something bigger, something lasting — and it struck a chord." The transition wasn't easy," Grieco admitted. "I was leaving a stable job with great benefits

and a clear path upward. "But I also felt this growing desire to build something more meaningful. I realized I wanted to make an impact."

That impact became personal. At Halliburton, Grieco had managed teams across the globe, including Norway and Singapore — often sacrificing sleep and family time for late-night calls. But at Gold Medal Pools, he found purpose and presence.

"There's something powerful about being part of shaping a company, its culture, and its people," he said. "It's not just about concrete and chlorine. It's about building teams, solving problems, and investing in people."

GROWTH THROUGH INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY

Grieco's passion lies at the intersection of innovation and people. Whether it's leveraging new technologies to improve technician workflow or using data to enhance the customer experience, he's always thinking ahead.

"We're not just building pools — we're modernizing an industry," he said. "The pool world has traditionally been behind the curve in technology and business structure. But that's changing fast."

He's quick to credit others, too, especially leaders like Josh Sandler and the broader Gold Medal team for embracing transformation.

"We've created a culture where it's safe to think big and challenge the norm," Grieco said. "That's rare."

That same spirit is why he champions the work of Pool Nation and its mission to unite an often fragmented industry. "It's all about community," he said. "That's the word. For so long, people in this space felt like they were on an island. What Pool Nation is doing — bringing folks together to talk, learn, and support each other — is exactly what we need. And no one's doing it better than Edgar, John and Zac."



THE FAMILY BEHIND THE TITLE

While Grieco is deeply invested in growing Gold Medal Pools, nothing matters more to him than his family. He and Jenny are parents to Jordan, 8, and Jacob, 7 — both active in sports and school activities.

“Our weekends are full of softball, soccer, baseball, and dance,” Grieco said. “It’s wild, but we love it. If we’re not cheering from the sidelines, we’re trying to sneak in a round of golf or just hang out as a family.”

That balance — between visionary leadership and hands-on parenting — is what keeps Grieco grounded. It’s also what drives his belief in the long game.

“At the end of the day, I want to help build something that lasts,” he said. “Not just for my family, but for every family whose life is touched by Gold Medal Pools — whether they work here, design here, or swim in a pool we built.”

With an engineer’s precision and a servant leader’s heart, Joey Grieco is helping redefine what it means to be a pool professional in today’s pool industry. He’s proof that sometimes, the most unexpected paths lead to the most fulfilling work — and that building pools is really about building people.

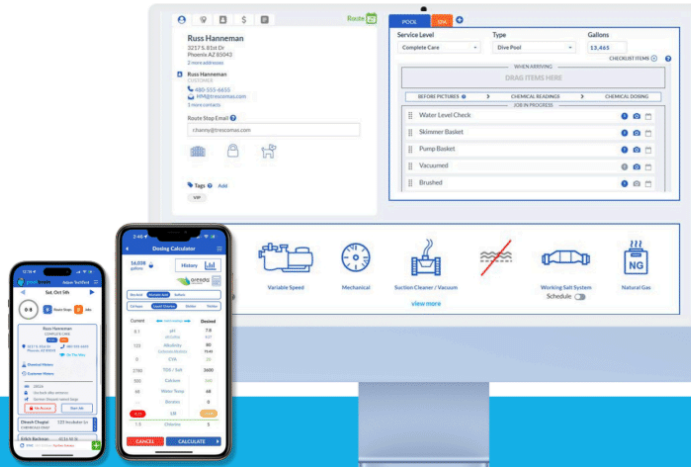
“Honestly, I thought I’d be a boring engineer forever,” Grieco said with a smile. “But God had a better blueprint. And I’m grateful every day that I get to be part of it.”





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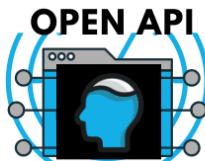
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A LEGACY THAT RUNS DEEP

Jay Laughrey Leads IPSSA Foothills Chapter with Heart, Healing and Hands-On Wisdom



LOS ANGELES — If you ask Jay Laughrey how he ended up becoming a respected leader in California's pool service community, he'll tell you it wasn't by design—but by purpose.

"I wasn't great at school, but I knew I liked working with my hands," said Laughrey, now president of IPSSA Chapter 302, Foothills Region. "I thought I needed a white-collar career, but it turns out I was built for something different. My brother saw that before I did."

That brother was Jeff Laughrey, the founder of Perfection Pools and the man Jay credits for introducing him to the industry nearly two decades ago. What started as a few shared routes quickly became a family venture. Eventually, Jay took the plunge, borrowing \$22,000 from his parents to buy a route of his own. "I freaked out," he said. "I didn't want to borrow money. But Jeff kept telling me I could do it. I wouldn't be here today without him." Their bond was unshakable—two brothers navigating

the business together, often working Fridays side by side. But everything changed in 2009, when Jeff died by suicide. Jay's world collapsed.

"It was the hardest time of my life," Laughrey said, his voice steady but reverent. "I remember a police officer sat me down and said, 'Your family is going to lean on you now. They're going to need you.'"

FROM GRIEF TO GROWTH

In the wake of that life-altering moment, Jay made what he calls "an eternal decision"—to grieve with integrity, to step up, and to live in a way that would honor Jeff's life. He took over his brother's route, even calling every client personally to share the news. During a season when wildfires scorched the Santa Clarita Valley, Jay worked tirelessly, managing both businesses and holding everything together.



We've got to speak the truth, or people stay in silence," he said. "It doesn't help anyone to hide behind vague words. I say it because someone out there might be struggling, and they need to know they're not alone—and that healing is possible.



I don't even know how I got through it," he said. "But I knew I had to do the right thing—for Jeff, for my family, and for his clients.

Over the years, Jay has also become more vocal about how his brother passed. choosing not to avoid the word "suicide." For him, there's power in putting a name to it.





That experience changed Jay, and over time, it reshaped his definition of leadership. Today, he runs a solo route in Los Angeles and has spent more than five years serving as president of the Independent Pool and Spa Service Association's (IPSSA) Foothills Chapter. That role, he said, has helped him find his voice—and his purpose.



"I never used to speak in front of people," he said. "When I first became president, I tried to be like the guy before me—Caleb Brown, who runs Living Waters Pools. He's a stud. But trying to be someone else just stressed me out."

So, Jay pivoted. He dove into leadership books and podcasts. He studied servant leadership and took notes from motivational speakers like Andy Frisella, who emphasized leading by example. "That stuck with me," he said. "Now I know the only way to lead is to be myself."

SERVING WITH HEART AND HUMILITY

Jay found his groove by doing what he does best—helping others. "I ride with new guys, coach them, show them how to talk to customers," he said.

"I even helped a guy whose pool literally slid into a canyon. I just want to be someone people can count on." Today, IPSSA Chapter 302 has 19 active members who lean on each other in good times and bad. The chapter's strong sense of camaraderie reflects the organization's broader mission: to support independent pool professionals and provide a safety net when life throws a curveball.

"We're a safety net," Jay said. "If someone's out with an injury or worse, we step in. We keep their businesses running. That's what IPSSA is about—protecting each other's livelihoods."

The organization's structure offers real-time support for solo operators, giving them a community to fall back on when

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**NATURAL
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things get tough. Jay sees that role as sacred, and he's made it his mission to mentor others the way his brother once mentored him.



My brother helped me buy my first route. He walked with me through every fear I had," he said. "Now I do that for others. I tell new guys, 'Don't worry, I've got you.' Whether it's client communication, pool repairs, or just moral support—I'm here to serve.

That service often comes in the form of one-on-one consultations, troubleshooting technical problems, or simply being a sounding board. For Jay, it's not about the sale. It's about the person.



I just love helping people," he said with a smile. "Even if they don't become clients. I'm here to serve.

GROUNDING IN PURPOSE, DRIVEN BY LEGACY

Through all the highs and lows, Jay remains grounded by his core values: faith, family, and service. His wife, Suzanne, and daughter, Lily, are the center of his world.



"I used to have a bigger team, but scaling down lets me be more present—with clients and at home," he said. "My daughter's growing up fast. I'm not missing that."

Now two decades into his career, Jay isn't chasing titles or expansion. He's chasing meaning—one conversation, one handshake, and one relationship at a time. "I made it through things that could've broken me," he said. "But I chose healing. Through all the highs and lows, Jay remains grounded by his core values: faith, family, and service. His wife, Suzanne, and daughter, Lily, are the center of his world.

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What's next for Jay Laughrey isn't written in spreadsheets or sales forecasts. It's written in the hearts of the people he mentors, the peers he serves, and the legacy he continues to build with every pool he cleans and every hand he lifts.

I chose purpose. And I try to live in a way that honors the people who helped me get here—especially my brother." What's next for Jay Laughrey isn't written in spreadsheets or sales forecasts.

It's written in the hearts of the people he mentors, the peers he serves, and the legacy he continues to build with every pool he cleans and every hand he lifts. You can't grow if you're on an island," he said.

"You've got to network, shake hands, and show up. That's how we all get better." And every day, whether he's showing up at a chapter meeting or coaching a new tech through a tough week, that's exactly what Jay Laughrey is doing—showing up with heart, humility, and a legacy that runs deeper than the water he works in.



I just love helping people," he said with a smile. "Even if they don't become clients. I'm here to serve.



MEMBERS OF IPSSA CHAPTER 302 JOINED PRESIDENT JAY LAUGHREY AT A RECENT POOL NATION BOOT CAMP.

Members of IPSSA Chapter 302 joined President Jay Laughrey at a recent Pool Nation Boot Camp. “These events are game changers,” Laughrey said. “It’s not just about the tech side of pools—it’s the business side, the mindset, the community. Pool Nation is helping raise the standard for our whole industry—and the vibe is just different. You walk in and you feel it. Everyone’s there to grow.”

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LEADING WITH PURPOSE

HOW BETO MACEDO IS ELEVATING THE HISPANIC VOICE IN THE POOL INDUSTRY

When Beto Macedo started cleaning pools more than two decades ago, he never imagined his hands-on knowledge would one day fuel a movement. Known for his expertise in startups, automation, and high-end systems, Macedo has built more than a business—he's built a community.

Today, as the founder and president of Mex Pool Techs, Beto leads a growing network of Hispanic pool professionals committed to learning, growing, and helping each other succeed in an ever-evolving industry.

"When I started, no one taught me," Beto said. "Now, we teach each other. That's the difference."

THE BEGINNING: A TRIAL BY FIRE

Beto didn't fall in love with the pool industry right away. In fact, he resisted it. He was working in a restaurant when someone offered him a weekend gig cleaning pools.



With no training, no roadmap, and no support, he learned the hard way.

"Back then, there was no YouTube, no podcast, no Spanish instructions," he said. "You had to figure it out."

Figure it out he did. Beto earned his CPO certification, passed the National Plasterers Council startup training, and quickly became known for his ability to handle complex systems, high-end homes, and demanding automation setups. Today, he personally maintains over 65 pools—most of them premium properties with salt systems, waterfalls, and remote access.

MEX POOL TECHS: A COMMUNITY IS BORN

What began as a small WhatsApp chat between friends soon evolved into Mex Pool Techs, a brotherhood of Hispanic technicians dedicated to lifting one another up.

The idea was simple: everyone has something to teach, and everyone has something to learn. Some members are experts in plumbing. Others in automation. Some in commercial work, some in startups.

"We're not influencers. We're not trying to be famous," Beto said. "We're professionals who care."

The group now has more than 20 active members from across the U.S.—Texas, California, Florida, and growing. Each member brings expertise, accountability, and a shared mission: raise the standard and support each other.

"We want to be the go-to place for Spanish-speaking techs to get help, real help," Beto said. "That means experience, not just theory."



EDUCATION IN SPANISH: A MISSING LINK

One of the most powerful parts of the Mex Pool Techs movement is its emphasis on education in Spanish—something still severely lacking in the industry.

“There’s a massive gap,” Beto explained. “You can’t teach what you don’t understand. And many in our community can’t access the right resources because of language barriers.”

The group is working to change that. They share real-world lessons on Instagram, tag techs who’ve completed the job, and explain the process clearly. Each member plays a role. Beto leads. Richie handles finances. Diego manages content. Others teach, troubleshoot, or mentor.

“We’ve built something organized, structured, and united. That’s rare—and powerful,” Beto said.

Beto’s dream isn’t just about brotherhood—it’s about business. He wants Hispanic professionals to be seen, respected, and paid as professionals. That means quality work, continued education, and charging what you’re worth. “The work we do is specialized. It takes skill. We should be treated and compensated like professionals—because we are.”

Looking ahead, Beto hopes to expand Mex Pool Techs into training programs, workshops, even a Spanish-language podcast. The ultimate goal? To raise the bar for the next generation. “We’re not just doing pools,” he said. “We’re building futures.”



MEX POOL-TECHS



FSPA HIRES NEW CEO FROM WITHIN THE POOL INDUSTRY



(SARASOTA, FL) – The Florida Swimming Pool Association (FSPA) is excited to announce the hire of Lyndsey Shock as Chief Executive Officer effective May 5, 2025. A Search Committee was created by the FSPA Board to take on the task of hiring a new CEO when the position became vacant in January 2025. More than 200 resumes, numerous phone interviews, and a handful of in person interviews led the committee to its final selection.

Shock's background includes working her way through the ranks at Florida Water Product ending her time there as an owner. She managed staff, held financial responsibility, and ran new systems in her time there. She has also owned her own small business before returning to the pool industry that she loves and missed. Most recently she has worked as the FSPA Tampa Bay Chapter Coordinator while working full time as a sales representative for Gorman Company.

Shock spent years as a member of FSPA and spent time on the Board of Directors, giving her a familiarity with the dynamics of the FSPA's leadership.



She is ready to continue the work being done to follow the strategic plan already in place, to build new relationships, and lead the Association forward.

"The years of experience Lyndsey has in the pool industry gives her an understanding and leg up in entering this role. We are confident good things will come from her leadership and implementation of FSPA's goals," stated FSPA President Deidre Bedford.

POOL NATION

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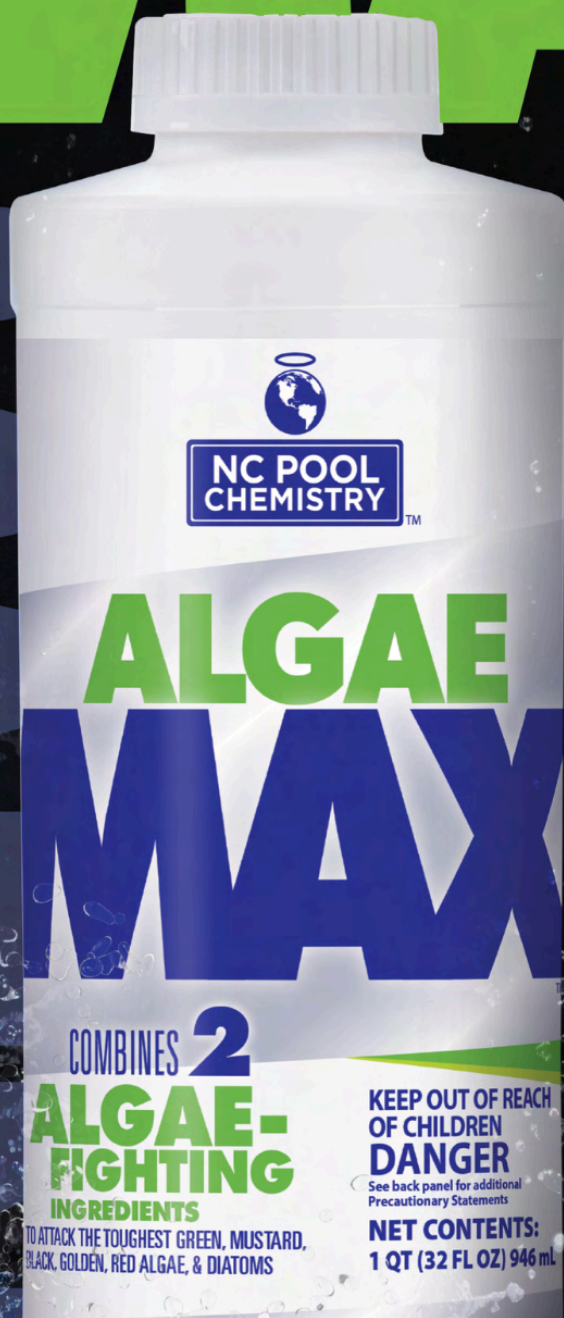


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Participate in intensive workshops and hands-on training sessions with industry experts. Engage in panel discussions, gain insider tips from top professionals, and network with like-minded business owners who share your vision of success.



EXCLUSIVE TOOL

Specialized tools to set business goals and monitor your progress. Members will also have exclusive access to videos and content designed to reinforce learning and support your business development journey. This ensures you stay aligned with your objectives and advance your skills and strategies.



MENTORSHIP & PEER SUPPORT

Connect with industry professionals, mentors, and peers to share insights, overcome challenges, and grow together. The Pool Nation Business Matrix provides valuable advice and collaborative support to drive your business success.

POOL PRO BUSINESS MATRIX

Are you ready to take your pool business to the next level? The Pool Nation Business Matrix is an exclusive program designed for ambitious pool professionals who are committed to growth, efficiency, and sustainable success. This unique mastermind group offers you the tools, insights, and connections to transform your business.

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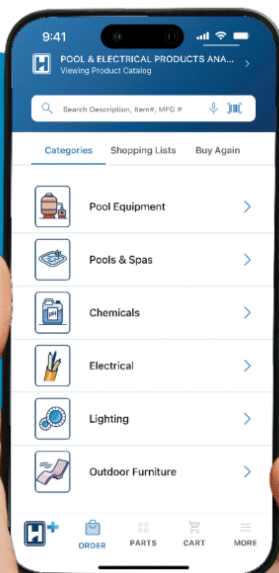
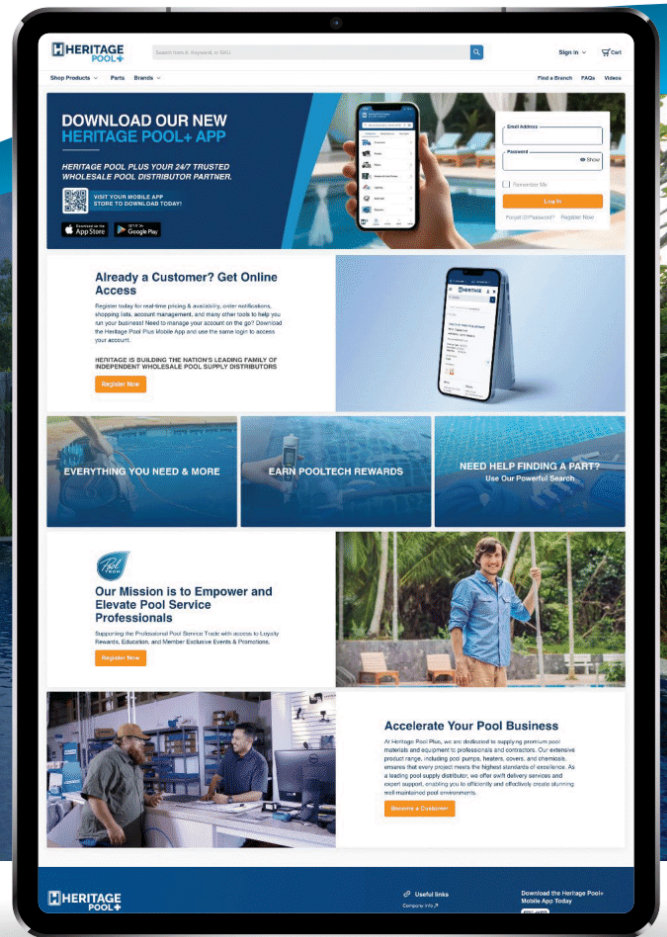
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