



Serving paddlers since 1880



We are thrilled to announce the launch of our new membership platform, powered by Sport:80! This new system will provide a cleaner, easier-to-use, and mobile-friendly experience for all members, clubs, instructors, and competition athletes.

Members have received emails from our new platform to reset your password, which will allow you to access this new system. These messages from Sport:80 are not spam and it is safe to click the link! If the link has expired, you can also access your account by clicking "[Login](#)" from the ACA Paddlesports homepage and then choosing the "forgot password" option. The email to login is the email associated with your ACA Paddlesports membership (this one!). We are excited to share this new platform with you and look forward to hearing what you think!

**What we think you will love:**

- A streamlined, mobile-friendly design that makes managing your ACA Paddlesports account simple and intuitive
- Easier event registration and membership renewals
- Simplified insurance requests and waiver management for Paddle America Clubs (PACs) and Affiliates



**2025 Annual Meeting**

The 2025 ACA Paddlesports Annual Meeting is scheduled to take place Thursday, December 4 at 5PM ET. During this virtual meeting, we will discuss accomplishments achieved in 2025 and our priorities for 2026! We hope to see you there! If you are unable to attend, the meeting will be recorded and available on [ACA Paddlesports YouTube channel](#).

[Access Zoom meeting details](#)

## ACA Story Project Now Available in Paperback



Give the gift of inspiration this holiday season! The first-ever ACA Story Project featuring 28 unique and heartfelt stories from ACA members, instructors, and athletes is now available in paperback through the ACA Paddlesports Amazon Store. At just \$15, it's the perfect stocking stuffer for you or your favorite paddling partner. All proceeds support the ACA and help us continue this new annual storytelling tradition. Grab your copy today and celebrate the spirit of paddlesports!

[Purchase a copy](#)



**Instructor of the Month: Justin Barstow**



Congratulations to Justin Barstow, ACA Instructor of the Month for November! Justin is an Advanced Whitewater Kayaking Instructor and a driving force behind [Whitewater 101](#), a nonprofit that introduces the Columbia, SC community to whitewater kayaking and river stewardship. From first-time paddlers to advanced students, Justin's thoughtful instruction and humble leadership have shaped countless boaters on the Saluda River over the past 20 years. We're grateful for his dedication to safe, community-centered paddling.

[Read more about Justin](#)

If you know another great ACA instructor, [nominate them as a future Instructor of the Month!](#)

### **ACA Paddlesports' New Leader & Guide Certification Pathway**

The transformational new ACA Leader Certification Pathway equips paddlers with essential skills in leadership, trip planning, risk management, and rescue. Standing alongside the ACA's well-established Instructor Certification pathway, this streamlined program is designed to empower new leaders and guides with professional certification. With accessible entry points and a strong focus on decision-making, planning, and safety, the program empowers new leaders and guides—whether they're leading day trips on a nearby lake, taking their fellow club members down the local class II run, or guiding multi-day expeditions in remote wilderness settings.

The ACA Leader and Guide certifications are unique in that they are structured around the paddling environment, not specific paddlecraft. These pathways are designed for protected waterways, coastal, and river environments.

Check out the ACA website for answers to commonly asked questions, like:

- What's the difference between an instructor certification and a leader/guide certification?
- What's the difference between a leader and guide certification?

- What are the benefits of obtaining one of these certifications over leading trips on my own?
- How do I get certified?
- And more!

[Explore the new Leader Pathway](#)

Happy Thanksgiving and thank you for reading our monthly newsletter! Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for the latest stories and updates!

Have some news to share? We encourage you to submit your content for consideration using this [Content Submission Form](#).

Sincerely,

Kaycee Maas, Communications Manager

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