

Efren Molina

Builders' Category



Efren Molina, better known as Coach e, was born in 1958 and was raised on Chicago's far south side. His parents emigrated from Mexico; he lived there briefly as a child and maintains close ties to his family and village in Mexico. Along with his father, Jose, Coach e has 2 brothers, Paul and Sergio, and a sister, Ninfa, not to mention many nephews and nieces. He has called Chicago's north side his home for over 30 years.

Coach e was a product of the Chicago Public School system and graduated from Sullivan elementary school, and then Bowen High School in 1976. After a brief time as a laborer at U.S. Steel's South Works 54" beam plant, he received a bachelor's degree from Northern Illinois University in Interior Architecture.

In 1982 he joined Environmental Systems Design, Inc., an internationally recognized engineering consulting firm. Today he is a Vice President at the firm and focuses his practice on corporate office headquarters and interior design, commercial type projects, as well as various types of building design projects.

Prior to hockey, Coach e had a variety of interests which included logging flight time as a student pilot, avid tennis player, studied and taught martial arts and included dedication to "running to live better" as part of his routine.

Coach e's coaching career has been focused to a great extent on diversity and grass roots hockey. His goal was providing opportunities for kids to play regardless of any obstacles. He has coached at all age levels - everything from learn to skate to travel and junior hockey. Players he has coached have enjoyed various degrees of success including travel, high school, college, junior and NHL.

His career started at the inaugural NHL Breakout In-line hockey tournament in 1995. He quickly became an AHAI volunteer as well as a USA Hockey volunteer, and focused on local in-line hockey initially. Eventually his role expanded to represent USA Hockey In-line's national coaching team as Coach-In-Chief of the Great Lakes region.

In-line hockey quickly evolved into Ice Hockey and he assumed roles as Head Coach/Assistant Coach for numerous Blackhawks Charities youth hockey events and programs for both in-line and ice hockey, including Head Coach for Blackhawks Charities Rollerhawks In-line Hockey at North Avenue Beach from 1997 to 2012. He also served as a USA Hockey In-line coaching certification instructor from 1999 through 2006 and on the USA Hockey National Junior Festival In-line Hockey Program Selection Committee from 1999 through 2006. He coached the Southeast Region Gold Medal Team at the USA Hockey National Junior In-line Hockey Festival in 2003.

Coach e has been involved in many programs and AHAI initiatives including: AHAI In-line Hockey Chair, AHAI Diversity Hockey Committee, AHAI Special Needs Hockey Committee, Head Coach for NHL Diversity Hockey Task Force (Hockey Is for everyone), and Head Coach/Assistant Coach for Tomahawks Special Needs Hockey.

Some of his other resume initiatives include Head Coach for Johnny's Jets mite and squirt hockey from 1999 through 2006, Head Coach for the Learn to Skate Program and Skills and Drills Youth Hockey Camp at Johnny's Ice House from 1999 through 2005, Board of Directors for the Inner City Education Program (ICE) from 2006 through 2012, Assistant Coach for Evanston House mite/squirt development league from 2008 through 2010.

He has been recognized for the following over the years: AHAI Youth Hockey Coach of the Year in 2000, Northwest Hockey League Coach of the Year 2001, Terry Beacom Award Recipient in 2007 and BMO Harris Bank Chicago Blackhawks Coach of the Month in November of 2009.

He has also had the good fortune of continued and active involvement in the hockey community and also coaches and plays defenseman for the Chicago Medicine Hat Hockey team.

The hockey community salutes Efren for his many years of service and dedication to the development of today's youth here in Illinois.

Question:

Coach e, what is the most important thing about coaching hockey?

Response:

Hockey has been an incredible friend to me. Teaching kids to play hockey properly includes mentoring. Mentoring has always been a big part of my life. So, having the opportunity to teach and help young boys and girls both on and off the ice is first and foremost. We have to care about the off the ice part.

Question:

What is your most memorable hockey moment?

Response:

The first time I heard a kid call me "Coach e". That was the best thing I ever heard.