

= Nicole Haislett =

Nicole Lee Haislett (born December 16 , 1972) is an American former competitive swimmer who was a three @-@ time Olympic gold medalist , a former world and American record @-@ holder , and an eight @-@ time American national college champion . During her international swimming career , Haislett won twenty @-@ two medals in major international championships , including fourteen golds .

= = Early years = =

Haislett was born in St. Petersburg , Florida in 1972 . She was a " water baby " ? she learned to swim at 18 months old . At the time , her parents merely wanted her to be comfortable in water , not intending that swimming would become her life focus . She began to train with the St. Pete Aquatics Club at the age of 6 . Haislett attended Lakewood High School in St. Petersburg , where she swam for the Lakewood Spartans high school swim team , winning four Florida high school state championships in two years . As a 16 @-@ year @-@ old high school junior , she won the 50- , 100- and 200 @-@ meter events at the U.S. Open Swimming Championships in 1989 . At the 1990 U.S. Short Course Swimming National Championships , she won the national title in the 200 @-@ yard freestyle .

= = College swimming career = =

After graduating from high school , Haislett accepted an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Florida in Gainesville , Florida , where she swam for coach Mitch Ivey and coach Chris Martin 's Florida Gators swimming and diving team in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) competition from 1991 to 1994 . As a Gator swimmer , she won NCAA national titles in the 200 @-@ yard freestyle for four consecutive years from 1991 to 1994 , the 200 @-@ yard individual medley in 1993 , and the 500 @-@ yard freestyle in 1994 , and was a member of the Gators ' NCAA @-@ winning relay teams in the 4 x 100 @-@ yard freestyle in 1993 and the 4 x 100 @-@ yard medley relay in 1994 . She received twenty @-@ eight All @-@ American honors in four years ? the maximum number possible . In four years of swimming , she was undefeated in Southeastern Conference (SEC) competition , and was recognized as the SEC Female Swimmer of the Year for four consecutive years from 1991 to 1994 , and the SEC Female Athlete of the Year (all sports) in 1993 and 1994 . She was the 1993 ? 94 recipient of the Honda Sports Award for Swimming and Diving , recognizing her as the outstanding college female swimmer of the year .

= = International swimming career = =

Haislett was the first American woman to defeat a swimmer from East Germany in the 100 @-@ meter freestyle since the 1972 Summer Olympics ; she did so at the 1990 Goodwill Games in Seattle , Washington . At the 1991 World Aquatics Championships in Perth , Western Australia , Haislett won the 100 @-@ meter freestyle , and swam the anchor legs for the winning U.S. teams in the 4 x 100 @-@ meter freestyle and the 4 x 100 @-@ meter medley relays , ending the East German women 's eighteen years of overwhelming dominance in the 100 @-@ meter freestyle at the world championships . Haislett also endured the emotional agony of disqualifying her team on an early exchange in the 4 x 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay ? a relay race that the American women won in the water .

Haislett qualified for four events at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona , Spain . After finishing a disappointing fourth in the women 's 100 @-@ meter freestyle , Haislett won the 200 @-@ meter freestyle event with a time of 1 : 57 @-@ 90 for her first Olympic gold medal . Drafting off German swimmer Franziska Van Almsick , she swam what was described as a " perfect race . " She was a member of the winning U.S. team in the 4 x 100 @-@ meter freestyle relay , together with Jenny Thompson , Dara Torres and Angel Martino , which set a new world record of 3 : 39 @-@ 46 in the

event final while winning the gold medal . Haislett swam the freestyle leg in the preliminaries of the 4 × 100 @-@ meter medley relay to earn her third Olympic gold medal .

Haislett was the first American woman to swim the 200 @-@ meter freestyle in under one minute , fifty @-@ eight seconds (1 : 58) , and held the American record until 2003 , when it was broken by Lindsay Benko . After six months in residence at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs , she announced her retirement from competition swimming in 1995 , citing her prior success and waning motivation and competitive desire .

= = Life after competition swimming = =

Haislett graduated from the University of Florida with a bachelor 's degree in telecommunications in 1996 , and served as an assistant coach for the Florida Gators women 's swim team under head coach Kevin Thornton from 1996 to 1997 . Afterward , she studied to be a chef at the Florida Culinary Institute in West Palm Beach , Florida , and subsequently worked as the dining room manager and activities director at an assisted living community for seniors . She was inducted into the University of Florida Athletic Hall of Fame as a " Gator Great " in 2004 , and the Florida Sports Hall of Fame in 2005 . Haislett and her ex @-@ husband have a daughter , Blake , who was born in 2006 .

= = World record = =

Women 's 4 × 100 @-@ meter freestyle relay

Note : Record time and location are sourced to USA Swimming 's list of world records .