



Orinda Aquatics Class of 2016



“You can be comfortable or courageous, but you cannot be both. By taking a leap of faith, you find out who *you* are truly capable of becoming.” unknown

Promise Yourself -

“To be so strong that nothing
can disturb your peace of mind.
To talk health, happiness, and prosperity
to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel
that there is something in them
To look at the sunny side of everything
and make your optimism come true.

To think only the best, to work only for the best,
and to expect only the best.
To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others
as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past
and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
To wear a cheerful countenance at all times
and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself
that you have no time to criticize others.
To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear,
and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

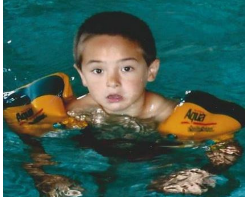
To think well of yourself and to proclaim this fact to the world,
not in loud words but great deeds.
To live in faith that the whole world is on your side
so long as you are true to the best that is in you.”

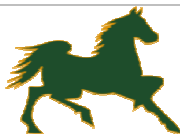
— Christian D. Larson, *Your Forces and How to Use Them*

“Know who you are, and be it. Know what you want, and go out and get it!” C. Bryant

Average GPA – Near 4.0

Name	The Beginning!	College	Mascot!	Notes
Claire Therien San Ramon		<u>Rice</u> Swimming		- Junior National Qualifier - Swimming All-American - Scholastic All-American - Academic All-American - Team Record Holder - Team Captain
Liv Baker Campolindo		<u>Claremont McKenna</u> Swimming		- Sectional Qualifier - Coaches Award (multiple) - Scholar Athlete - DFAL Finalist - Team Captain
Emily Ward Campolindo		<u>UCSB</u> Swimming		- Junior National Qualifier - All-American - Scholastic All-American - Double NCS Finalist - High School Inspirational Award - Team Captain
Cole Stevens Campolindo		<u>Columbia</u> Swimming		- Swimming All-American - Scholastic All-American - Junior National Qualifier - NCS Team Champion (Swimming & Water Polo) - High School Inspirational Award
Jio Chang Campolindo		<u>Colorado College</u> Swimming		- Scholar Athlete - Sectional Qualifier - Coaches Award Winner - DFAL Finalist
Nicky Erickson Campolindo		<u>Cal Poly</u> Swimming		- Eagle Scout - Scholastic All-American - Swimming All-American - Junior National Qualifier
Alexa Hanley Campolindo		<u>UC Davis</u> Swimming		- Futures qualifier - NCS/DFAL Finalist - Scholar Athlete - Coaches Award Winner
Noah Jacobs CPS		<u>Amherst</u> Swimming		- National Merit Finalist - 2016 CPS Athlete of the Year - Academic All-American - League Champion - Highest single-sitting SAT (OA) - Team Captain

Derek Ludwig Campolindo		Willamette Swimming		- California Scholarship Federation Lifetime Member - Sectional Qualifier - Eagle Scout - DFAL Finalist - Campo - Outstanding Vocal Music Achievement
Natalie Morlock Acalanes		LMU Swimming		- Swimming All-American - Scholar Athlete - Holds 3 Acalanes Relay Records - Recipient of the Bill Usinger Memorial Swim Scholarship & The LMU Arrupe Scholarship - <i>Ten years at OA!</i>
Claire Napier San Ramon		Redlands Swimming		- Coaches Award (multiple) - Western Zone Qualifier - Scholar Athlete
Michael Wright Campolindo		Colorado College Swimming		- Coaches Award (multiple) - Scholar Athlete - DFAL Finalist - NCS Qualifier - Team Captain
Scott Wu Miramonte		Chicago Swimming		- Double NCS Finalist - MHS Moran Inspirational Award - National AP Scholar (Highest Level) - 2-year High School Team Captain - Sectional Qualifier
Jake Simpson De La Salle		UCLA Water Polo		- Swimming All-American - Water Polo All-America - Junior National Qualifier - Scholar Athlete
Carter Chan Miramonte		UC Berkeley		- High School Team Captain - Scholar Athlete - NCS/DFAL Finalist - Sectional Qualifier
Audrey Chang Miramonte		UC Berkeley		- Swimming All-American - Scholastic All-American - High School Team Captain - Futures qualifier
Katie Erickson Campolindo		USC		- Tim McInerney Scholarship - Campo Commencement Speaker - California Scholarship Foundation - Girl Scout Gold Award - Coaches Award Winner - DFAL Finalist

Wylie Hughs Campolindo		Cal Poly		- High School Inspirational Award - Scholar Athlete - Coaches Award - DFAL Finalist
Catherine Rack Campolindo		Fort Lewis College		- Coaches Award (multiple) - Scholar Athlete - Summited Mt. Rainier
Alec Zhang Monte Vista		Columbia		- Academic All-American - 2015 Siemens Competition Semifinalist - High School Team Captain - CIF State Meet Qualifier - Sectionals Qualifier
KaiKai Chow Taiwan		DVC Swimming		- Junior National Qualifier - Top Ten Swimmer in Taiwan - Best wave on the team!
Sasha Newton Andover Academy		Pomona Swimming		- Swimming and Water Polo at Andover Academy - Academic All-American - High School Team Captain

"Live a life of purpose.

Do so by filling your mind with truth, your heart with love, and your days with genuine care and kindness." unknown



2016 Senior Letters

Noah Jacobs, Amherst

Dear Ronnie and Donnie, thank you for four great years on Orinda Aquatics. Without this program, I would not be nearly as good a swimmer or person as I am today. When I joined OA, I was one of those haughty, overconfident rec swimmers coming off a few years of breaking records. Then, in my first OA practice, we did a 100 free kick for time, and when I told Ronnie my time, he said, "Seriously?" and wrote down a time that was a few seconds faster. Then, at my first OA meet, after swimming the 200 IM and 50 free (for a combined time of around three minutes), Ronnie looked me in the eye and asked, "So, what are you actually good at?" Needless to say, that first month on OA alone was very humbling (also, I've taken 32 seconds off of my IM time since that meet).

Swimming improvements aside, the most valuable lesson I've learned from this team is that it's easy to be great. Ronnie and Donnie have taught me that being great is not some monumental task or some god given gift, but rather the amalgamation of countless everyday decisions that the average person doesn't make or isn't willing to make. Being great is just a daily commitment to do every minor thing in your life correctly and to improve the lives of those around you even if a minute amount.

Back when I was a freshman, my attendance was less than 70%, I skipped a lot of each workout, and pulled on the lane lines a lot. Now, I rarely miss a practice, and whenever the thought, "I need to take a break" pops into my head, I just ask myself, "Why?" because I've learned that we are not given sets we cannot do, and I'll only get the benefit if I do it all to the best of my ability (also, I only pull on the lane lines in warm down now). Recently, Donnie asked me if I remembered a practice a few years back where he pulled me out of the pool and told me I did everything wrong and was uncoachable (to which I responded, "Which one?"). The reason he brought it up was because the next day I thanked him for calling me out, which he thought was surprisingly mature. Until he told me that, it never occurred to me that it was mature, because after being on OA for so long, I couldn't imagine any other way to respond.

In sum, I can confidently say that without Orinda Aquatics, I would not be nearly as good a swimmer, student, or person as I am today (and I wouldn't appreciate all the sacrifices my parents make for me. Thanks Mom and Dad!). Thank you, Noah

Cole Stevens, Columbia University

As my Orinda Aquatics swimming career comes to a close, I can't help but reflect fondly upon my unforgettable time on this team. I am just now realizing how much I have grown as a person throughout the past four years. It is hard to put into words how much the people on this team have impacted my life. The coaches of Orinda Aquatics are not just coaches; they are mentors. It took time to realize how much Ronnie and Donnie care about each and every swimmer on this team. I came to OA to become a faster swimmer and propel my swimming career to the next level. Looking back I realize my naivety. My interactions outside the pool have been as important to my overall development as a person and simultaneously have helped me become a better competitor.

Ronnie and Donnie have an unmatched ability to create an environment which helps every swimmer reach both athletic excellence and high moral standard. Without a doubt, the most enduring trait that people gain from OA is a strong sense of community and teamwork. Ronnie and Donnie have created a family atmosphere amongst the swimmers.

Most people know of, or have heard about the endless handouts and pre and post-practice speeches about values and character, however, the larger contribution Ronnie and Donnie make is through their unseen actions. They hold us accountable as swimmers, as teammates, as family members, as students and as members of our community. They offer continuous support and challenge us to create and achieve our goals both inside and outside the pool. Whether they are staying an hour after a long swim meet challenging a referee call, making unsolicited phone calls to college swimming

coaches on our behalf, or simply listening to our fears and doubts, their unwavering commitment to the swimmers and the Orinda Aquatics team is unending.

I cannot thank them enough for the encouragement, guidance, and excellence they display each day on the pool deck. I now understand what it means to be a “Character First” athlete: one who displays leadership, positivity, and compassion. I will continually strive to be an athlete who personifies those three characteristics. I have no doubt that the values that Ronnie and Donnie have taught me during my time at Orinda Aquatics have provided a foundation that I will draw upon throughout my life and most certainly in my collegiate swimming career.

I encourage the current OA swimmers to embrace the amazing opportunities that Orinda Aquatics offers. We are all very fortunate to have such high-caliber and high-character coaching. Dedication is key; give all that you have, both inside the pool and outside the pool. Do not just focus on the tangible aspects of swimming - the times, the place, and the race.

What we do in the pool does not define us as people. It is the commitments we make and keep, our ability to challenge ourselves on a daily basis, and our capacity to engage with others in a meaningful way that will truly be valuable as we navigate through life. Honor and trust the process, even when it’s hard, and good things will happen. I am incredibly thankful to be a member of the Orinda Aquatics family! All my best, Cole Stevens

Claire Therien, Rice University

Honestly, I joined year-round swimming simply so I could make the varsity high school team, I wasn’t looking for a new family. But, a new family is what I found. With some very caring parents, and 150 siblings, I was in deep. Ronnie and Donnie have shown that they will reach the moon for you, as long as you ask. They are *that* dedicated. They set the standard for the family goals and ideals, and they want every kid to reach the standard. I am so thankful the bar was set so high for us. We are taught by Ronnie and Donnie that by simply believing a bunch of kids can make a difference, we actually can, and we do.

You join the team as a baby, not quite as adored as Cornelia, but still “oohed and ahed” upon arrival. The swimmer “siblings” come up, wanting to introduce themselves, and be the first to welcome you to OA. Everything is new and exciting, from the first taper meet to traveling as a team to Clovis. We travel with no chaperones, but truly there are at least twenty older siblings looking out for your every move. Making sure you buy enough snacks, and setting all the alarm clocks to make sure you are not left behind at the bus stop, the older kids are always there to help you along. They show you the ropes, how it’s not just a suggestion to cheer, but a family duty, almost a badge of honor, to see if our family reigns supreme over all those other clans cheering.

Moving up in the family line as a middle-sibling is thrilling. You’re finally learning almost every single kids name on the team. It’s comfortable, and life’s good. Now you can help the younger and older kids, and you are kind of the awkward kid in the middle. Don’t worry though, you grow up through the family lines here faster than you can blink. Your coaches become more and more a part of your life, as you are spending more waking hours of your life at the pool than at home. You are genuinely living with your siblings and growing accustomed to being in a lane with them day in and day out.

With a lot of help and a few life-changing quotes, I made it here, the oldest sibling position, top of the OA totem pole. We are the old guys now, on our way out. I never would have gotten here without this tribe by my side. And I would never be the person I am today. No challenge is too great. We’ve made it through four years of balancing school and morning practice, tackling high school choices with the mental stamina taught by our coaches, we can now take on the world. We can sing most of the top 80’ hits by heart, and have an inspirational quote at the tip of our tongues in the face of any major decision. We know now that our environment is key to our success, and if the environment isn’t perfect, it takes just one of us to start making a difference.

So thanks to every single member of this giant happy family. To Ronnie and Donnie for creating a home where we can flourish, to Marc and Matt, for looking out for and caring for kids not even in your group, and to Sophie and Kevin, for always letting me warm down during your practice, and for being the inspiration behind my family analogy. ~ Claire

Jio Chang, Colorado College

To whom it may concern: I have unearthed a cult cleverly hidden within Lamorinda as a year-round swim club. My time within it may have been brief, but the discoveries I have made are burned in my memory forever. Read on if you dare. The society consists of six cult mentors and their individual groups of members, a total of less than two hundred. These six cult mentors dedicate their lives to their group, daily molding each and every disciple to be living, breathing embodiments of what appears to be the cult motto: "Character First." Young followers have also been known to lead, holding a most honorable title of 'cult leader.' Although the institution is built for children and young adults, there have been documented cases of membership since birth, most recently Rowan Henry Lai. The group may be relatively small, but it should not be underestimated. When provoked, it can become a dangerously powerful, unified being.

The mentors of Orinda Aquatics brainwash their followers into two to four morning meetings a week, programming a wake-up call as early as 4:30 AM to arrive at the meeting spot by 5:15 AM. The disciples are forced to throw away their procrastination habits and adopt better time management skills. The varying living distance away from the meeting spot not only serves as a hiding mechanism but also highlights the importance of punctuality. It instills within the followers an undying sense of dedication, a legacy that survives the cult years after followers have graduated.

It is strengthened immensely by annual four-day long retreats to a location (so as to restrict environmental distractions) also known as Clovis, California. Cult morale is steadily boosted throughout the trip, most notably through required unifying apparel, which includes a dark, hooded robe within the monogrammed head-to-toe outfit, and cheering others on to continue their treacherous journey, to ultimately become a 'cult leader.'

It has survived through most, if not all, graduates of the program who "choose" to continue their cult leadership at prestigious undergraduate institutions across the nation, hidden within fantastic swim programs, unbeknownst to their coaches and teammates. Each graduate will slowly but surely turn every new teammate into a cult member, usually without the team's knowledge, through an indomitably steady integrity, an incredibly resilient work ethic, and most importantly, an infectiously positive attitude. Those who do not go on to other swim programs are forever branded a member of the cult. Once in, there is no escape.

The well-oiled machine that is Orinda Aquatics continues to churn out what appear to be stellar athletes and compassionate young adults. Little does the public know... I fear this cult has no intention of stopping anytime soon. Special thanks to Kevin and Sophie Lai; without them I surely would have never discovered this secret society. Jio

Scott Wu, University of Chicago

Throughout my life, I have been a part of countless teams; whether they be swimming, basketball, baseball, or debate teams, I've gained multiple perspectives on the dynamics and functionality of several groups. Whereas some of these experiences have been brief, others have defined entire segments of my life. Yet, as I reflect on the several teams that I have been on, few have come close to rivaling Orinda Aquatics. The dedication and determination of not just a few select swimmers, but rather the entire team as a whole, is unmatched. During team events or meets when I am able to observe the collective character and work ethic of Orinda Aquatics, I'm immediately impressed by the genuine support and perseverance of the team. Simply put, the team epitomizes the common saying, "You would have done the same for me."

My experience with Orinda Aquatics has been the most motivating of my life. First, I'd like to thank my parents, who have been extremely encouraging despite not realizing that I had joined the team until after my first couple weeks of practice. I'd also like to thank the countless swimmers that I trained with over my two years with the program; I would like to especially recognize Claire Therien, Michael Wright, and Alec Zhang for being extraordinary training partners that I could count on each day to motivate me. Finally, I would like to thank all of the coaches, specifically Donnie and Ronnie for guiding me through an exhilarating last couple of years. Thanks to them, my experience with Orinda Aquatics has been personal and unforgettable. Scott

The common man asks, "what's in it for me, the enlightened man asks, "how can I help."

Katie Erickson, U.C. Berkeley

OA Poem

Three short years ago, I joined Orinda Aquatics and boy did I not know
The deep impact Orinda Aquatics would have on me, Or the incredible people and community.
I was scared and nervous that first day, Unsure of what to do or what the coaches would say.
All I had heard was that the team was intense, And that caused me to waver and be on the fence.
Before I got in the pool, I was introduced to Ron and Don, But I couldn't tell the difference between each one.
The first thing they said was "This is Nicky's twin?, For the contest of the Most Adorable Twins, who knows who will win".

From then on, Orinda Aquatics has helped me grow, And shown us to never live in another's shadow.
All those talks and lessons in the meeting room, Has helped each swimmer's determination and character bloom.
I have learned to try my best and never complain, Even when pulling the icy morning covers with my hands in pain.
OA is unlike any culture I have seen, It brings together and matures over a hundred teens.
Every person cheers for each other, And treats their teammates like sisters and brothers.
Clovis bonded each group within the team, And so did river rafting and the practices with themes.

Matt and Marc - although my time in the junior group was fast, Getting to know you has been a blast.
I started senior group with Kevin in Senior 1, Despite him telling me I was a flyer, we had a lot of fun.
He pushed me to be my best and reach my full potential, Saying hard work and experience with long races were essential.
Sophie was always so sweet but full of drive too, She supported as baby number one is joined by baby number two.
They will surely be missed by all of OA, But will have amazing experiences as they go away.

From OA to Campo swimming, Ronnie -I have you to praise, For teaching us character, your values and your ways.
Although at times your shoes don't match, The win, you always seem to snatch.
My time at Campo would truly not be the same, As you taught us to have goals and have a high aim.
Donnie - I am so grateful for you inspiring me all these years, You have taught me to be a leader among my peers
As you have made me a better person and made me tough, And pushed me through hard sets even when it was rough.
You guided and instructed me to do the right thing, Even though you tell me I'm too nice and must say something that will sting.
I have learned what it means to have character from you, So thank you so much for all that you do.

Thank you mom and dad for doing so much for me, I truly appreciate it more than you see.
Nicky - thanks for swimming with me and being the best brother, Always making me laugh as we support one another.
To my teammates- I am so appreciative of you all, I have had so many smiles and laughs and have had a ball.

Wow, how the time really flies, I truly can't believe it is my time to say goodbye.
I'll always remember the amazing times, For the memories are those of a lifetime.
I know you all will go great places, Just don't forget all of our faces.

Nicky Erickson, Cal Poly

Dear Coaches, thank you so much for these past three years on Orinda Aquatics. It has been a truly unforgettable experience and something I will hold onto forever. Joining Orinda Aquatics was one of the best decisions of my life, not only because it made me a faster swimmer but also because of the friendships I made and the lessons I have learned. I would not have wanted to spend my high school swim career on any other team. Ronnie, thank you for your mentorship and guidance and believing in me. I wouldn't be where I am without you. Nicky

Catherine Rack, Fort Lewis College

My five years on Orinda Aquatics can be described as many things: fun, hard, frustrating, amazing; the list goes on. But, I think the best way to describe my time on this team is transforming.

I came onto this team as a scared, awkward 8th grader, not sure why I was there, not sure if this was the place for me. But, I

remember playing the name game with the whole junior group. I was quickly introduced to a group of people that to this day are good friends of mine. So, thank you to Matt and Marc for my year in the Junior Group. For teaching me to train less like a rec swimmer and more like a year-round swimmer, and for most of all, providing an environment that made me want to stay on the team. And for making the frightening aura of year-round swimming less terrifying and more fun.

Kevin - Thank you for pushing me beyond what I thought I was capable of. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to be coached by you. My three years with you transformed my swimming and my opinion of the sport. I will forever remember your sense of humor and the way you messed with me. Thank you for cracking jokes in the middle of practice to lighten the mood and to raise our spirits. Yours and Sophie's presence will be missed next year.

Sophie- You're an awesome presence on this team and I loved being coached by you. You are an amazing coach and Orinda Aquatics was really, really lucky to have you.

Ronnie - Thank you for your attention to detail and high expectations. Thank you for coaching Campolindo Swimming and having the same drive as us to win and be better every meet.

Donnie - Thank you for being so dedicated to this team and this ideal. When I was in the Junior Group, you and Ronnie used to come and talk to us, a mini version of the Friday afternoon meetings that are custom in the Senior Group. I thought you were very intimidating, but I later learned that you are not. You're such a kind person, and I really loved being coached by you over the years.

And most important, my teammates - Honestly, I would not still be swimming if not for an amazing group of people on this team that I can call best friends. You make the 5am mornings, the impossible sets, and the freezing cold, excruciatingly long meets, completely worth it. I don't know where I'd be without you in my life and I will forever remember the fun and crazy memories we have made. Catherine

Michael Wright, Colorado College

It's quite surreal to be sitting here and writing this letter, seven years after this journey began. I remember when I first joined the team in 6th grade, I was unsure about what I was getting myself into. This concept of swimming year-round unheard of and super overwhelming, especially since I was still unconfident of my potential in the sport.

The three years in the junior group hold swimming memories that I will cherish forever. From bowling in Carson City, to outrageous games of sharks and minnows, we did it all. I want to thank Marc and Matt for making my first three years on OA such a blast. The friendships I made during my time in junior group were some of the best I've ever had, and I'll cherish those memories forever.

When it came time to make the transition into the senior group, I was terrified. These two scary coaches named Ronnie and Donnie led it. I knew little about either of them, but after four years of swimming for them, I've learned that they aren't all that scary, and get the most potential out of every swimmer they coach. But it wasn't just the coaching that made the senior group so memorable, but rather the friendships I created along the way. When I first shaved my head during sophomore year due to Alopecia, I was terrified to engage with anyone. I remember the first day at school was horrific. I don't remember making eye contact with anyone and just wanted to go home. When I went to swimming later that day, I expected the same thing. I should have known it would have been the exact opposite. Instead of being judged by my peers, I learned who my true friends were. They were the ones who embraced me for who I was, not what I looked like. I thank the culture of Orinda Aquatics for that. It's a place where you make lifelong friends, push yourself in the pool, and even attempt to shoot workout sheets into a trash can after practice.

So as my journey with Orinda Aquatics comes to an end, I'd like to thank all the people who had an impact on this adventure. To Donnie, Ronnie, Kevin, Sophie, Marc, and Matt, thank you for helping me excel as a swimmer but as a person as well.

Lastly I want to thank my parents, through all the long weekends, the early mornings, and all the other inconveniences over the past seven years. I couldn't have done it without you. I'll never take any of this journey for granted.

The impact that Orinda Aquatics has made on my life can barely be articulated with mere words on paper, but I'm sure my fellow teammates have done a fantastic job describing how character and integrity, values so foundational to the team and its mission, have made them better swimmers, but more importantly, better people. I can point to a speech I wrote about character for a school assignment that's on the team website, as testament to all the right things this team and coaches do. Therefore, I would then like to use this opportunity to express my sentiments and give a little introspection on my own personal relationship with swimming.

I can still remember my first day on the team. I was very apprehensive and scared of joining a new team, as my previous year-round experience left me alone in the slow lane, both socially and athletically isolated from everyone else. I loved the sport more than anything else, but finding the right home was hard. My experience with rec swimming was fantastic, (to this day, my crowning achievement was my second-place finish in the 50 free at the County meet at age 12. Yes, it's egotistical I know) but I craved something more, an environment where I could be the best swimmer and person that I could be. Orinda seemed to be the right choice, and I had never been more right about anything else. The moment I stepped on the pool deck, even before I had a chance to introduce myself to the group of talkative kids packed closely into the small office on a rainy Saturday morning, one guy ran out, smiled, shook my hand, and promptly introduced himself. "Hi, my name is Michael, what's yours? Come over here and let me introduce you to the guys..."

And from there, the rest is history.

I'd be lying if I said the friendships and relationships I've made on this team have been very important in my life. Why? Because they are the **single** most important aspect of my life. Orinda Aquatics IS who I am. It's, without a doubt, tantamount to my identity. I couldn't imagine a life which OA, and by extension swimming, wasn't a part of. I take comfort in knowing that whatever path I choose, I will always have the fullest support from Ronnie and Donnie, and the rest of my second family.

To Donnie: I remember last fall when I was going through the arduous rounds of college admission interviews, and for one school, the alumni and I got to talking about OA. I remember mentioning your name, telling him how you were one of the most influential people in my life, someone I looked up to as a role model, and someone who I would even go as far to call a good friend, and a shoulder to lean on. The majority of our conversation ended up being about how swimming positively impacted my life. I can only sincerely thank you for being by my side the past four years, through my lows and my highs and everything else in between.

To Ronnie: Oh Ronnie. I'm not quite sure where to start with you. Is it your sheer audacity and sense of humor that keeps workouts enjoyable? Or is it your sheer drive and passion to make each member of this team a better swimmer that truly, raises the bar each practice? I think I've had one too many laughs with you. One memory I will always treasure is your seemingly obscure fascination with the Asian culture, one that I don't think any Asian swimmer will ever help you get over. A friend, my coach, and someone who has always given me the straightest advice, even in my most trying time, you have made me into the person I am today. I will miss you immensely, but I rest easy knowing that Rishabh will never hear the end of it from you.

To Kevin and Sophie: Congratulations are in order on the new child! Whether it's Kevin making fun, or Sophie, who balances "mother" with "swim coach" perfectly, I have never had a dull moment with either of you. Even though your time on Orinda has been short, the Virginia Gators are extremely privileged to be having you on their team. I wish they could only understand the magnitude of the gift that they will be receiving. To Cornelia: I hope to see you make the 2020 Olympic team at the age of 5.

To Marc and Matt: You guys are awesome coaches, and even cooler people. My only regret is that I started OA earlier so that I could've been coached by you two in the Junior group.

A final note to the rest of the team: "The greatest gifts in life are only fully appreciated when they have departed" -Nicky Erickson. Please do not take your time on Orinda Aquatics for granted. Treasure every moment, work your hardest every practice, laugh and hang out with your teammates every chance you get, because there will be one day, when you have to hang up your cap and goggles, and your time with this family will end. So long, but never goodbye, Alec

Natalie Morlock, Loyola Marymount University

Dear Ronnie, Donnie, Kevin, Sophie, Matt and Marc,

Words cannot begin to express my appreciation for all that you have done for me the past ten years that I have spent on Orinda Aquatics. I am thankful for the tremendous amount of support that I received from each of you during every obstacle that I faced during my swim career thus far. After my knee surgery at the beginning of sophomore year you were so accommodating and supportive during my recovery and integration back into training, in order for me to have a successful end of season meet the following year. I am equally as appreciative for the support after a complicated wrist surgery this past May. I feel lucky to have coaches that are so attentive and willing to work with me and my injuries to keep me feeling a part of the team throughout my physical ups and downs.

I feel not only prepared for college swimming, but also for all the upcoming changes in my life. Orinda Aquatics has given me not only physical strength and tools to continue growing as a swimmer, but also has shaped me as a person with the potential to be successful in all my endeavors. I cannot fully express the positive effects Orinda Aquatics has had on both my swimming and on the person I have become.

Orinda Aquatics has provided me with such an amazing and accepting community where I have found great friendships that I cherish. I hope to have added to the great atmosphere that Orinda Aquatics has so the kids coming through the program after me have just as great of an experience as I was fortunate to have.

Matt and Marc—

Thank you for a great six years in the junior group and I appreciate all the time you both spent working with me. Providing me with good training habits and making my experience fun both in and out of the pool are all aspects of the group that I fondly look back on with appreciation. I will never forget all of the travel meets to Carson City. The trips were the highlight of the season and very enjoyable every time without a doubt.

Kevin and Sophie—

I am so glad you two decided to come to Orinda Aquatics and I think you both were an extremely great addition to the family here. Kevin, I know I will especially miss our sarcastic moments during workout to always lighten the mood. It was very fun to always have Cornelia around on the pool deck and it has been exciting to watch her grow. Thanks for sharing your family with the OA family.

Ronnie and Donnie—

Thank you for providing a smooth transition to high school from the junior group. I enjoyed how inclusive the team was not only for new swimmers but also ones transitioning from one group to another. I appreciate both of your support and interest in me not only as a swimmer, but as a leader and a person. Donnie, I am extremely grateful for all the time and effort you spent with me, during workouts and also out of the water. Ronnie, I'll never forget how you showed up to a meet with two different shoes on and laughed it off with the rest of us. You both not only know how to make us laugh, but instill great leadership qualities so fluently we don't even know it's happening until we move on to other places.

The Character First morals that I have been exposed to over the past decade, have made me the person that I am today. I am grateful for the past decade I have spent on this team and it has provided me with the life skills to face whatever the future holds. In addition, I cannot thank my parents enough for their support and time commitment for me to be on this team. With love and appreciation, Natalie

Emily Ward, U.C. Santa Barbara

I can distinctly remember the fear that coursed through my body as I scurried along the gravel pathway on my way to my first Orinda Aquatics meeting. I was a couple minutes late but I wanted to make a good first impression on my teammates and coaches and I worried that getting there late would not help my cause. As I was running, I passed a tall girl in a red shirt and heard her say "Hello! Are you new to OA?" I stopped, nodded my head nervously, and asked her if she knew where the meeting was. She replied "Yes! And my name is Mary Ashby by the way," as she wrapped her friendly arm around me and walked me onto the pool deck with cheery confidence. This moment was my first experience as an Orinda Aquatics swimmer and I feel that it captures the welcoming environment that this team has always provided me.

Orinda Aquatics has taught me many things over the years, not just about swimming but also about life. Ronnie and Donnie

have always stressed the importance of not taking the path of least resistance. I have learned that this statement is not a cliché to be overlooked. Swimming for a year-round team has presented many challenges to me which often forced me to make sacrifices whether it was spending time with friends or just simply getting a few extra hours of sleep on school days. Sometimes it seemed an easier or better option to have slept in on those early morning practice days instead of swimming before the sun comes out; however, choosing to make little sacrifices like these has not only helped my swimming, but taught me the importance of perseverance through challenge in order to accomplish long-term goals. It is impossible to sum up six years of experience in one brief letter, so instead I would like to thank the people who have contributed to the person and swimmer I am today.

Thank you Kevin Lai, my first coach with Orinda Aquatics, for teaching me the importance of paying attention during practice. Although I was very young when you first coached me, I can still remember comparing your coaching intensity to that of a drill sergeant (a caring one for that matter). Thank you Sophie, for joining Orinda Aquatics and for caring for your swimmers' needs inside and out of the pool whether that entails stroke technique pointers, or massaging injured muscles. Thank you Matt and Marc for making the junior group a fun and welcoming environment. You both helped me to see how fun swimming can be through the hard work.

Thank you Donnie for teaching the senior group the importance of maintaining high character even if it goes against social norms. You have groomed your swimmers to become excellent leaders. Thank you Ronnie for showing us the importance of maintaining good work ethic and mental toughness. You have shown me what determination and discipline alone can help someone accomplish. Thank you for seeing the potential in your swimmers and helping them to accomplish their goals.

Thank you team parents for your patience and selflessness. Your care and support of swimmers other than your own and your willingness to sacrifice your schedules in order to accommodate ours shows us all what it means to truly support someone.

Finally, thank you swimmers for showing me what being a good teammate really means. Knowing that you all have put your emotion and intensity into the sport of swimming makes it possible to connect with you all on a deeper level. I value the friendships that I have with all of you. You all make me strive to become a better athlete and person. Without you, I would not be near the person I am today. Thank you for your love and support! Emily

Carter Chan, U.C. Berkeley

When I made the switch from water polo to year-round swimming two years ago, it was the hardest and best decision of my life. When I first joined Orinda Aquatics I wasn't quite sure what to expect. I quickly discovered that this was not like any team I've been on before. It was more than a team, it was a family; a tightly knit, supportive, caring, and loving family that I immediately fell in love with. These past few years I've smiled and laughed more than I ever had before. Parents that my mother knew when I played polo would tell her, "I saw your son at the pool today and I've never seen him that happy before", and that was the truth, I was happier than I've ever been. I had finally found a place where I could truly be myself and do what I loved with some of my closest friends.

I joined the team later than most, but after the first week I had already felt like I belonged and had been with everyone since the start. My only regret is not joining OA sooner so I could have spent more time with this wonderful team. Nevertheless, these past two years have been the greatest. I've made everlasting friendships with kids from all over who I never would've befriended or even met if it weren't for OA. I've learned work ethic, determination, focus, respect, patience, compassion, character and countless other lessons over my time on this team, all of which have made me a better swimmer, athlete, leader, and most importantly, a better person.

I'd like to thank everyone who made my experience on OA so phenomenal: my teammates and friends for all the memories and for making practice something to look forward to, my parents for supporting throughout the years and encouraging me to follow my dreams, and finally, a thank you to my coaches Ronnie, Donnie, and Kevin for guiding me on my journey throughout Orinda Aquatics, a journey that molded me into the individual I am today. Thank you all so much for making my time at Orinda Aquatics a truly amazing and life changing experience. Carter

Liv Baker, Claremont McKenna

My past seven years with Orinda Aquatics have been a blast, Now it is time to look to the past, Seemingly not too long ago because it all went so fast

We started out as little squirts, And it sure had its perks

Swimming with Coach Matt, We learned not to swim so flat

Swimming drills with Coach Marc, One arm hooked, we tried to imitate a shark

We went to the annual Carson City meet, Boy was that sweet

In the hotel playing hide and seek, Or dressed up for bowling, with our costumes on fleek

We only acted silly once in a while, But don't worry, we still did everything with a smile

We learned how to get in the pre-race "zone", Whether it was listening to music on a phone

Or visualizing before peak meets like in hypnosis, after each race we came to the tent for a synopsis

We learned to push ourselves to the max, In threshold sets you are not supposed to relax

With Marc and Matt our character was grounded fast, So that without a doubt it would last

I thank you both for the most memorable start, As all of those memories will always stay in my heart

Excited, we began the senior group transition, Eventually moving us into the leadership position

We were back to the bottom of the food chain, And pushing through more physical pain

Coming up with tricks to tell Ron and Don apart, Their identical outfits did not give us an easy start

Quickly we met many new faces, And discovered that we could hold faster paces

With Donnie we swam some easy butterfly without breathing, Getting better at breath control was relieving

DJ Ronnie blasted songs to keep us happy, Especially when we were ready for a nappy

I never had to pleasure to be coached by Kevin or Sophie at the pool, But I did make Cornelia giggle and drool

Our strokes developed more, And muscles were often sore

So we added on more morning swims, Which further strengthen our limbs

Looking up at stars during backstroke was fun, As we would wake up before the sun

Thank you teammates for bringing the team joy, And sharing light and laughter with every girl and boy

The early mornings drew us closer together, Especially during huddles in the colder weather

Whenever we set off for a meet, We were ready for a feat

We cheered for our teammates loudly, As we stood at the end of the lanes proudly

Wearing our classic red OA tee's, We were impossible to oversee

Forming a wide red wall, We supported and motivated all

The team blended together as shown, Never letting out a whine or a moan

Years passed one after another, And we continued to motivate each other

Thank you older swimmers for showing us the way, And being impeccable role models every day

Thank you younger swimmers for following our lead, As now it your turn to plant the next seed

Thank you coaches for making us who we are, Without you, we could not have come this far

In the pool you all have taught us drills, But more importantly we have learned life skills

With your delicate nurture, We have been able to grow and mature

You have constantly given us advice, Which is why a simple "thank you" does not suffice

You are the framework of the team, Such a strong base that it seems like a dream

Thank you parents for always being sweet, From timing for us at every meet

To driving us to early morning meets and prac, When you would rather hit the sack

You encourage us to hold our heads high, And your endless support is never shy

Parents, we will always look up to you, Even if we occasionally pretend not to

We thank you for all your love, And for giving us that gentle shove

When we are fearful and not daring, You are always caring

It is only when you are all in, That as a team Orinda Aquatics continues to win

Much Love, Liv

Derek Ludwig, Willamette

Dear Orinda Aquatics Teammates,

I have been swimming since I was three and a half, and every year the teammates I am surrounded by leave a lasting impact on me for years to come, and influence whether the swimming environment is a healthy one or not.

Although I have only swum on OA for two years, I am constantly amazed by all of your unconditional support, advice, cheering, friendship, and competition. It is so rare that an organization with hundreds of kids functions so exceptionally and at the high caliber that our team sets with its core values. Although it might sound a little trite, I can honestly say that there is no place I would rather be at 5:30am than at the pool with all of my teammates, and I would never give up all the hours spent swimming alongside you over the past two years. Rain or shine we swam, stretched, talked, ate bagel upon bagel, and made memories that will last a lifetime.

Of all the teams on which I have been a member, our team is the only one I have felt so passionately about, and I owe that to my teammates, to the parents and their endless support at meets, practices, and trips, and of course to all of the coaches, especially Ronnie and Donnie. The friendships I have made, I hope will last a lifetime. But more importantly, I will continue to apply the OA values, level of commitment, work ethic, and the drive to be the best that I can be to my college swim team and all my endeavors thereafter. So thank you for all that you have done to contribute to my personal growth, swimming success, and many wonderful memories. I wish all of you continued success in the years to come. Fondly, Derek

Wylie Hughs, Cal Poly

To capture how my experience at Orinda Aquatics has shaped my life is quite honestly an unfair challenge. I don't think that I can make anyone who has not been a part of the program or a similar program understand what living with such a large group of people that invest their time into your well-being is like. What I can do is give you a small window that I think epitomizes the OA experience.

Big meets are when the emotions are most potent among the team. As expected with a team of athletes who care about their performance, people are intensely focused on their races. What surpasses many people's expectations is how much people care about their teammates' performance, especially in a sport like swimming which many consider an individual sport.

When an OA swimmer makes the finals, you can bet there will be a crowd of his or her teammates at both ends of the lane. Their boom across the entire pool, so much so that on occasion coaches from other teams will thank our coaches, as their swimmers benefit from our cheering. When you look into the faces of the OA teammates cheering, you see authentic investment in the race. Being a part of these cheers I can say that despite what some may think it is fun! Cheering becomes a social experience that kids want. And the more they cheer, the more rewarding it becomes. So the culture of the team has a positive feedback loop that fosters success, building life skills, and bonding.

That's the kind of genuine character that the OA program promotes. The coaches have created an environment that turns out stellar athletes and even more impressive people. OA kids are among the most solid kids you will meet around school and I know that some kids I have met through the program will be lifelong friends of mine. In being a part of OA, I have learned more than just how to swim with integrity; I have learned how to live with integrity. Thank you to all the coaches and of course a big thanks to my mom and dad, who helped make this experience possible.

Claire Napier, Redlands

I can honestly say that swimming with Orinda Aquatics has made me a better person than I was three and a half years ago. When I compare myself now to who I was then, I find that I am more humble (if I do say so myself), more caring and compassionate, and definitely more easygoing. How on earth could being in a demanding swim program make me more easygoing? The truth is I think it has something to do with the support and easy conversation I got from the coaches, and the laughter and silly things my fellow Senior 1&2 teammates did on a regular basis before getting in the pool, which somehow made the training more enjoyable. Throughout high school I have had my ups and downs, for the most part swimming has always made me feel better. Coming to practice made highlighted by my teammates and coaches and the wonderful atmosphere they created.

Swimming with Orinda Aquatics has taught me that success and greatness doesn't only come in the form of fast times, or qualifying for a certain meet. I didn't leave my mark on this team in the form of records and accolades, but more in the bonds I forged with my teammates, and the personal contribution I tried to make. I wholeheartedly believe that my impact, if any, will be in the fond memories I will leave my friends with. I never qualified for Sectionals or Juniors, instead somehow the majority of the rising sophomores affectionately refer to me as "mom" and that affection means more to me than the fastest swim in the world. The memories of smiles and joy that I leave behind are what I am proud to consider my legacy.

I could go on and on and recite memory after memory of my time here, but suffice it to say that I am eternally grateful to the entire coaching staff of Orinda Aquatics, for the way I have been shaped into a better person with greater confidence. I hope and know that this program will continue to change lives. Claire

Jake Simpson, UCLA

"Thanks so much for all of the support over the years. You two have made such an impact on Jake! Katy Simpson

KaiKai Chao, Diablo Valley College

Last year, I left my home in Taiwan and had the privilege to join the best team in the world. From day one, Orinda Aquatics felt like a family. I never thought that I would be so motivated to go to practice every day. The team atmosphere was a completely different experience for me. The first couple weeks was amazing, everyone came to introduce themselves to me, which would have never happen in my old team, and I never thought that there was a swimming team in the world that could be so friendly to a stranger. The coaching staff amazed me as well. Back in Taiwan, the coaches give out the workout to the swimmers and would just sit on the side and watch us swim. Swimming at OA was a totally different feeling; coaches walking around with the swimmers, watching every stroke the swimmers are doing, correcting the swimmers stroke right away.

Thank you to the swimmers and the coaches for giving me such a great experience, one that I will never forget. I wished that I could have come here earlier to be a part of such a caring team. KK

Shannon Campbell

My life has been a rollercoaster of change. I started swimming when I was 4 years old. My sister and I joined our neighborhood summer swim team and we instantly loved everything about it. I remember dressing up in crazy pirate outfits and charging onto the pool deck at dual meets. I remember our coaches climbing on the diving boards to lead our cheering battles against the other team. I remember making beaded necklaces in our team colors at our Friday evening pep-rallies. I remember looking down my lane and feeling the anticipation of my race building inside me. But most of all, I remember the smile that would spread across my face when my team would chant, "Little hands, little feet, our six and unders can't be beat." The jaw-rattling cheers my team would create when we won a dual meet, and the countless hugs and smiles my teammates and I would share every time we failed or succeeded.

Ten years later, I am lucky enough to call myself a swimmer on Orinda Aquatics. Coming from a military family, I have lived in six different cities, swam on six different swim teams, and have had ten different coaches – not one for more than one year. Some people may hear this and feel sorry that I have had to adjust to so much change in my life. But when I look back on everything that I have experienced, I wouldn't have wanted my life to be any different. Throughout my journey I have made the most amazing friends anyone could hope for. They are always supporting me and helping me grow in every aspect of my life, even after I move away. My many coaches and teachers have inspired me to live life to its fullest, embrace every change, and always strive to be the best that I can be in everything that I do.

When I found out my family would be moving to California, my first thought was of sandy beaches and beautiful, year-round warm weather. Although I was right about the sandy beaches, I could not have been more wrong about the weather. I still remember my first morning practice on Orinda Aquatics when I swam for Kevin in Junior 3. I came to practice dressed in shorts and a t-shirt and stood there shivering as I helped set up the lane lines. Once the lane lines were in and we had changed into our suits, the rest of the Junior 3 swimmers walked into the frigid air and waited calmly for Kevin to explain the workout to us. The only thing I could think about was the freezing gusts of wind that seemed to whip right through me. It was at that practice that I figured out why the team was called the Orinda Aquatics Polar Bears.

In my first year on OA, I attended the yearly Orinda Aquatics Character Camp. In this week long program that included practices and meetings, I finally realized how lucky I am to have joined such a special team. I learned that Orinda Aquatics is more than just a swim team. It is a group of people who strive to be the best they can be - not just in the pool but in their everyday lives. OA has inspired athletes to put "character first" in everything that they do. This is something that I have come to value greatly and will continue to apply to every aspect of my life. I cannot express how lucky I am to have found such an extraordinary swim family to spend the past two years.

Ronnie - Thank you for accepting me into your group even though you knew my time with you would be very limited. I regret not having the opportunity to receive the years of excellent coaching I have heard so much about and hoped to benefit from. I will miss your jokes and unpredictable music selections. I will do my best to make you proud and not let my "Sharon" swims move with me to Virginia.

Donnie - Thank you for teaching me what it means to be a true leader and how doing everything, even the smallest actions, with integrity can change my life, and the lives of those around me, for the better. Thank you also for the distance sets you wrote, even when I was the only distance swimmer at some of the practices (especially the 16x1000's on New Year's Eve!) Although I can't say that I will miss your challenging Converse kick sets, I will miss your inspirational stories and valuable life lessons.

Kevin - Thank you for welcoming me to Orinda Aquatics when I joined just two years ago. Your never-ending enthusiasm and energy made practices so much fun, there were some days I don't think any of us in Junior 3 realized how hard we were actually working. I greatly appreciate all of the times you stayed until the very end of a meet to coach my distance races, especially when I swam in the 10th heat of the 800 free during Far Westerns and my cap fell off. I am excited to compete against your team in Virginia - don't worry we will still be "frenemies!" I know you will inspire your new swimmers to work hard and have fun, just as you have done for me.

Matt, Marc, and Sophie - Unfortunately I did not have the opportunity to swim in your groups, however I was able to get to know you in the two years that I have been a part of this team. OA is very lucky to have you as coaches and I know it will be hard to lose you, Sophie.

Orinda Aquatics Teammates - Thank you for accepting me into the OA family, even if it was for far less time than I would have liked. You inspire me with your incredible work ethic and the determination you apply to our challenging sport. Your positivity motivates me to happily show up to practice each day. Please keep in touch, visit if you are ever in the Washington D.C. area, and continue to represent Orinda Aquatics with pride.

Orinda Aquatics, thanks for the great memories! I will miss you! **Shannon Campbell**

Lia Campbell

Orinda Aquatics, thank you for two incredible years. Although I am writing this letter earlier than I hoped, the number of people I want to thank makes putting my thoughts on paper absolutely necessary. When I joined OA the summer before my freshman year, I expected to stay for all four years of high school. Life as a Coast Guard brat, though, is unpredictable; circumstances changed and my family is now moving to Virginia in August.

It was a bittersweet moment when I realized I would be moving at the end of the summer. I would be returning to the childhood home I left five long years ago, but I would be leaving Orinda Aquatics. While this was a hard change to accept, I realized I could either be upset about leaving, or grateful for the amazing time I had on the team. I am trying hard to focus on the latter. Having been on many teams resulting from military relocations, I can say with certainty OA is a special team. The "Character First" culture has led to a group of competitive athletes who are not only dedicated to improving their times, but also to living with integrity in and out of the pool. I am very lucky to have been a part of this community that has inspired and continues to inspire so many athletes and coaches around the world. I am grateful and know without a doubt OA has allowed me to grow as an athlete and as a person.

I cherish many aspects of the OA culture, but two in particular stand out. When I first arrived, I was nervous about joining Senior 3, with primarily upper-class swimmers, as a rising Freshman. Rather than treating me poorly because I was young, they embraced me and took me under their wings. Seniors including Mary Ashby, Katie Erickson, Lucy Faust, and many more became great friends and role models. Their hard work and dedication to the sport inspired me to train hard, but their inclusion, compassion, and mentorship outside the pool made them truly admirable. I have fond memories of late mornings

spent at Millie's Kitchen and evenings spent scarfing down Chipotle burritos in line to enter the Walnut Creek Theater. Not only did they include me in these events, but Mary or Katie were always willing to go out of their way to drive me to and from these events just so I could join them. I was amazed by the selflessness of these Seniors to a new Freshman. I now realize on OA such acts are typical, but having experienced places where upperclassmen do not treat underclassmen as well, I appreciate them all the more. In many ways, they were like the older siblings I never had. Their friendship set the tone for my time on OA and inspired me to help other swimmers, just as they helped me.

The other aspect of the team that stands out for me is the shared accountability of the swimmers. If a coach has not arrived at practice start time, instead of hoping the coach doesn't arrive and evoking the 15 minute rule, everyone begins practice on time and starts warming up anyway. If a coach decides to leave dryland early, say, to go to a Warriors game, my teammates keep training hard and finish the workout. The coaches are motivating and inspire us to train hard, but my teammates are internally driven and will do so even when a coach isn't watching. It is this culture of personal accountability that I admire most about my OA teammates. The OA family is made up of many amazing people whom I need to take the time to thank.

Ronnie- Thank you for two years of bad jokes and constant teasing (both of which I know I will miss immensely!) And for trying to make me sassy- even though it was a mission impossible from the start. Thank you for helping me learn to train at your 100% and not mine, for your constant reminders to work on technique and to 'focus' during every minute of every practice, every day. I will miss your daily wise council, listening ear, and helpful advice on both swimming and all aspects of high school-dom and beyond. Thank you for helping me grow as an athlete, teammate, and for creating a second-to-none team atmosphere.

Donnie- Thank you also for the fantastic team you have created based on a "Character First" culture. I hope to bring the best of OA to my new team in Virginia. Please keep me on the 'to' list for your weekly articles; I value their lessons and was inspired by every one of them! I will miss your advice and compassion.

Kevin, Sophie, Matt, and Marc- Although I never swam in you groups, your enthusiasm and dedication inspire the entire team, including me. I enjoyed talking with you on the pool deck and valued your support. Kevin, Sophie, Cornelia, and Rowan, I hope our paths cross frequently in Virginia!

OA Parents- This team would not be possible without your support both on and off the pool deck. Thank you for the time and effort you put into running meets, organizing and contributing to team events, and team breakfasts! Mom and Dad, thanks for your unconditional love and support.

To the Orinda Aquatics family, thank you for an amazing two years. I will miss you and cherish the time I had with all of you. Good luck and go OA! Lia Campbell

Sasha Newton, Pomona

My swim team career has evolved from rec team to high schools teams and finally to Orinda Aquatics. Though I had swum for a fall season with the Junior Group when I was younger, I officially joined OA three summers ago. Though I joined OA a good three years ago, I have only been a part-time swimmer. (I attended boarding school, so I swam with OA during holiday breaks and over the summers.) Despite my sporadic appearances on the pool deck, my teammates and coaches on OA were always welcoming and happy to see me. Thank you especially to Kevin for always infusing humor into practice and for your hardy handshakes. Also thanks especially to Donnie for always including me. Though my time on the team has been relatively short, I am grateful to have shared in the fun of epic holiday themed-sets. It isn't often that you find a team that collectively (with the trusted help of its leaders) so values character—and that is so special and undoubtedly shapes the positive environment of the team.

For future swimmers and parents, I just want you to know that when I was meeting swim coaches at prospective colleges, Ronnie and Donnie were almost universally recognized and always greatly respected among the college swimming community. With gratitude, Sasha

"If you don't go after what you want, you could spend your entire life settling for what you can get." Stegall