

Ali Skoutelas Devotional – Tri-Hampton YMCA

Good evening. There are few things more important in life than the people you share it with... and I am fortunate to share a portion of my life with my Tri-Hampton YMCA teammates . Family bonds are strong and lasting...and friends come and go but leave an impact. We experience different types of relationships with people who are family, friends, coaches, and swimmers which may last forever. But through swimming I have learned that coaches and athletes share a bond that is unlike any other. Perhaps it is the many laps we struggle through together or the goals and aspirations we share, but I think that it is more than that. In the words of my wise coach, Dave Prutow, “swimmers are special.” There is an immediate bond among swimmers that has proven to be unbreakable. We’re not just friends and we can’t exactly be considered family, there really is no single word to describe our relationship. We are supportive, open, motivated, caring, and loving. I’m living proof that teammates are the best friends you’ll ever have. Two years ago I moved to a new area. I struggled to form meaningful friendships in school, and many classmates were unwelcoming. I really did not feel like I fit in. When I joined Tri-Hampton, a few months after my move, I felt that I had found where I always belonged. I was welcomed as a new swimmer and friend on the team. My team really helped me through the process of adjusting to a new home. All of my coaches instilled a new sense of self-confidence in me that I had lacked before. My teammates have become my best friends, my coaches are wonderful people that I know I can go to for anything, and the team as a whole has become a second home and I thank them. I also want to thank my mom, dad, brothers and sister for their love and support.... Now If you will all please join hands.... and bow your heads I want to pray to the lord that everyone experiences the kind of love I have found in their own lives. Please bless our teams, our officials, our coaches, and our families. At this swim meet we will fortify the ties that hold us together so closely. I pray that everyone here has the opportunity to see just how truly special swimmers are. Amen.