

Leadership Summit Report – Houston TX (April 2018)

Claudia Chang (Athlete)

A couple of weekends I had the opportunity to attend the Leadership Summit in Houston. It was an amazing opportunity that I enjoyed, as there were many activities where we learned about how to be a better person and leader in and out of the pool, and I also got to meet some amazing people.

On Friday night, after practice, we sat with our color teams - we were divided into teams (red, black, green, yellow, and blue) once we arrived at the hotel. We got to make banners and get to know the other people on our teams. This was a great icebreaker, as I, and I'm sure many others, didn't know many others.

The next morning was a little early, but once we got swimming it was fine. After practice, we got a quick breakfast and we immediately started our leadership activities. We got to learn a lot about values of leaders, peer leadership, and the different leadership types. After we learned our leadership type, we were able to talk with other athletes that shared our leadership types. I really enjoyed this, it was really nice to talk with other kids who had some of the struggles in and out of the pool, and also shared strengths with me. We talked to athletes of other leadership types, which was also valuable as we got to understand how other people think and function. We talked briefly about governance, how athlete committees work and important members in the LSC, safe sport, and a little about USA Swimming. Shortly after, we had a practice where we had a relay competition between color teams; this was really fun, and everybody seemed to enjoy it. After our practice, we went back to the hotel and had a short session on the power of reflection but then were given some free time to hang out with other athletes and relax. I appreciated this because we had been very busy throughout the day.

The next morning, we participated in a community service event with Rise Against Hunger. We packaged meals with other athlete and coaches involved with the Leadership Summit, which was a fairly easy task, but it was also important as we got to give back to the community. We learned more about service leadership, and giving back to our communities.

Overall, the Leadership Summit was an amazing experience. It was very well organized, with all the activities planned out well, and they were all interesting and relevant; I learned a ton. The practices were challenging, but they were also fun, and there were different practices for athletes of all levels. Another thing I really appreciated was that the meals were good and we were always supplied with snacks throughout the day which was thoughtful. I also enjoyed meeting the amazing people who attended the Leadership Summit, and we still talk and they recommended other opportunities and had new perspectives. The only thing that I think could be improved, was the busy schedule or how short the summit was. All the activities we had were important and I'm glad I participated in all of them. However, we didn't really have any downtime to relax or just do homework. In the future, it would be nice if the Leadership Summit was longer, or if the activities were shortened a little. However, I did truly enjoy the Leadership Summit and would recommend it to any other athletes.