

Katya was born and raised in Almaty, Kazakhstan. She is the oldest of 5 kids in the Gakhokidze family. Katya started swimming at age of 4. In her swimming career, Katya was a former member of the Kazakh National Swimming Team. Katya became an international-level athlete with multiple honors and achievements. She brought to her team a dozen medals from Asian Swimming Championships, Indoor Asian Games, and European Grand Prix. Katya is a sprinter. Her best events were 50/ 100 Freestyle, 50/100 Backstroke, and 50/100 Butterfly. In the off-season, Katya was doing Open Water swimming. In May 2014 Katya graduated with a Sports Physiology/Coach bachelor's degree at Kazakh National University named after Al-Farabi.

Before moving to the USA, she worked as an aqua instructor and private swimming coach at World Class Almaty. Katya worked on developing and improving the learning and technical swimming skills of swimmers of all ages. She also worked with special needs students. Katya had created several aqua aerobics programs, as a prenatal aqua program for pregnant women.

Back in 2015, Katya got invited to join D2 school as an international athlete student. In 2017 Katya graduated from the University of Bridgeport. She majored in Mass Communication with a concentration in Advertising. In her senior year, Katya was the captain of the University of Bridgeport Women's Swim Team. Katya was honored with Academic Merit Scholarship 2015, Dean's list Fall 2015, President's list Spring 2016. As a UB swimmer, she achieved NCAA Division II Scholar All-America Honoree and was 2-times East Coast Conference Champion.

In 2017, Katya joined Chelsea Piers Aquatic Club as a part-time assistant coach and swim teacher. In 4 years at CPAC, Katya has become an age group coach, Master's coach, and she was an assistant coach for the senior group. Katya was responsible for the development of the age group program where she led swimmers to qualify for Junior Nationals, Nationals, and Olympic trials.

Coaching philosophy: I try to make my work simple, and joyful. So, let's swim smart - and hard!

Fun Fact about coach Katya: She has a Russian accent but she is not Russian