



# ORINDA AQUATICS

**SENIOR SEND-OFF 2021**



**Quote: “Your true character is revealed by the clarity of your convictions, the choices you make, and the promises you keep. Hold strongly to your principles and refuse to follow the currents of convenience. What you say and do defines who you are, and who you are... you are forever.” Unknown (senior gift)**

# ORINDA AQUATICS

## MESSAGE TO PARENTS

We would first like to acknowledge the parents. We very well know the commitments and sacrifices that you have made and will continue to make. The kids are truly fortunate.

Congratulations to you on raising the class of youth in students, athletes, and people. It truly does not get better this – in terms of academics, athletic performance, and personal integrity. Their achievement is a by-product of your love, support, and sacrifice.

You have raised and created young men and women who have profoundly impacted our team, their peers, the community, and now – the swimming world. You are true partners and the silent heroes in this success story and the “we” in “we did it”.

While the kids are recognized, they are truly an extension of the foundation, support, and opportunities that you have created.

Against the backdrop of elite academics, year-round training, and all that encompasses a teen life, they have become grounded young men and women with a healthy perspective on life. They are funny, interesting, engaging, resilient, compassionate, highly intelligent, and painfully humble, and a joy to be with.

It is people like this that define our team (to the world) and make it special and unique - leaders in the pool, on the deck, in the classroom, and in life. Thank you very much on behalf of the team and the staff. Donnie & Ronnie

*“You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.” — Kahlil Gibran*



## GRADUATE OVERVIEW

21 graduates -

- Academics Excellence
  - Athletic Excellence
  - Leadership and Character
  - Service
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- Average GPA 4.0
  - Academic All - Americans
  - Scholar Athletes
  - Merit aid recipients
  - Swimming All-Americans
  - National-level achievement
  - Leaders/Team Captains
  - Volunteers

## AGENDA

- Dinner
- General comments
- Athlete introductions and gifts
- Athlete comments
- Parent comments

# Orinda Aquatics Class of 2021

**Maggie Buckley\***

**Harvard University – swimming**

Campolindo High School  
MCC

Junior National Qualifier  
Scholastic All American



**Zach Le-Nguyen\***

**Brown University – swimming**

Campolindo High School  
Montclair

Junior National Qualifier - Summer  
Scholastic All American/Academic AA



**Isaac Kim\***

**University of Chicago – swimming**

Campolindo High School  
Blackhawk

Junior National Qualifier  
Scholastic All American



**Vincent Castillo\***

**Johns Hopkins University**

De La Salle High School  
MCC

Western Zone Qualifier  
Academic All American



**Channing Hanley**

**University of Texas, Austin  
-swimming**

Campolindo High School  
Meadow

Junior National Qualifier - Summer  
Scholastic All American/Academic AA



**Olivia Eukel**

**Oberlin College – swimming**

Miramonte High School  
MVP

Western Zone Qualifier  
Scholar Athlete



**Jalen Evans**

**MIT University - swimming**

Head Royce High School  
Tri Valley

Junior National Qualifier  
Scholastic All American



**Natalie Ung**

**University of California, Davis**

Campolindo High School  
OPP

Futures Qualifier  
Scholar Athlete

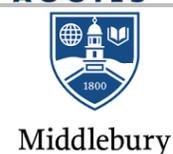


**Sophie Lurie**

**Middlebury College – swimming**

Miramonte High School  
Sun Valley

Futures Qualifier  
Scholar Athlete



**Cole Griscavage**

**Swarthmore College – swimming**

College Prep High School  
LMYA

Futures Qualifier  
Scholar Athlete



*\*OA team captain*

<b>Lindsay Hemming</b>	<b>Pepperdine University – swimming</b>	
Miramonte High School Meadow	Sectional Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Mac Follmer</b>	<b>Gap Year - swimming</b>	
Campolindo High School LMYA	Junior National Qualifier Scholastic All American	
<b>Lindsay Lew</b>	<b>Claremont McKenna College</b>	
Monte Vista High School Crow Canyon	Western Zone Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Connor Ormsby</b>	<b>Gap Year – swimming</b>	
De la Salle High School Blackhawk	Junior National Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Sophie Kessler</b>	<b>Saint Olaf College - swimming</b>	
Miramonte High School MVP	JO Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Lucia Pirone</b>	<b>Washington University in St. Louis</b>	
College Prep High School MCC	Western Zone Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Jeromy Chang</b>	<b>Santa Clara University</b>	
Miramonte High School Vallejo	Far Western Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Olga Merkadeau</b>	<b>Macalester College - swimming</b>	
College Prep Sun Valley	Western Zone Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Owen Lewis</b>	<b>Lehigh University</b>	
Miramonte High School Orinda Country Club	Western Zone Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Jennifer Fong</b>	<b>Merritt College - Nursing</b>	
Oakland Tech Montclair	Western Zone Qualifier Scholar Athlete	
<b>Haley Park</b>	<b>McGill University, Montreal</b>	
Bishop O'Dowd Montclair	Far Western Qualifier Scholar Athlete	

## Letter from a visiting coach -

Dear OA Athletes, my experience visiting you and observing your team has been an eye-opening and transformative experience. I'll say it to any and all who will listen: your swimmers are unlike any teenagers I've ever encountered in my life. Their poise, maturity, and decency would stick out in a group of grad school students, let alone high school athletes. It heartens me to see that the future can be led by such capable leaders of high integrity. And I have to live the message every day, in every aspect of *my* life. Nothing was clearer to me after meeting you. You have shown me where true personal growth needs to happen.

## From the letter written by an OA Alum -

"Character traits such as love, integrity, perseverance, respect for others and oneself, are key. These are the things that are important, as is the ability to put the team and others first, to lead by example, and to sacrifice short-term needs for the sake of long-term values. I've been shown how to see this "big picture", and that character really should come first.

## Compassion

Asked by Ronnie, to a graduating senior, "What will be the main thing you take with you?" "Compassion," responded the Senior.

## Senior Letter Excerpts

"To those who have time remaining on their OA journey, I implore you to live in the present as much as possible. Read the articles and stories that are printed out for you, and spend time soaking in their wisdom. Delight in the small moments with your teammates and find joy in the difficult sets and early mornings. They truly are the moments you will remember and cherish. No words I could write would be powerful enough to describe the way I feel for this team, and the impact it has had on me. I will carry the lessons I have learned and relationships I have built on this team with me for the rest of my life, and they will influence my every action." Olivia Eukel

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"I also learned about what it means to be a leader on this team. Ronnie and Donnie have always emphasized a character first mentality. That could mean many different things to different people, but to me it means knowing who you are and what moral values you believe in and using those principles as a guiding force for everything you do in life. Oftentimes, this requires you to be willing to go against what your peers are doing and stand up for what you believe. I believe having the courage to do this is a core component of being a good leader, and I believe that I have gained it during my time on Orinda Aquatics." Jalen Evans

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“This team taught me to be a leader both in and out of the pool; to show humility and think of others before myself; to be tough and push my limits, but to also be compassionate and enjoy the journey.” Lindsay Lew

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The atmosphere of the team taught me how important it is to have positive role models and how to be one myself. Vincent Castillo

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I am so honored to be surrounded by such caring, hardworking, and authentic people each day. Channing Hanley

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Orinda Aquatics is an entire support system in and of itself. The team cultivates an environment that encourages individuals to thrive both in and out of the pool. Jennifer Fong

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Orinda Aquatics truly has allowed me to fulfill my full potential both in the pool and as a person. Mac Follmer

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## **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***

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## **Secrets of the World Class**

- ✓ **The world class creates.**
- ✓ **The world class embraces challenge.**
- ✓ **The world class cares about others.**
- ✓ **The world class lives in reality.**
- ✓ **The world class is grateful.**
- ✓ **The world class sacrifices.**
- ✓ **The world class has vision.**



**“I don’t know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the ones among you will truly be happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.” Albert Schweitzer**

**“Today, why not go out on a limb? That’s where the fruit is. You know this. In life, if you don’t risk anything, you risk everything.” unknown**

**“Have the courage to say no. Have the courage to face the truth. Do the right thing because it is right. These are the magic keys to living your life with integrity.” W. Clement Stone**



# Humble Beginnings

Can you name them, all?





**“Life is not about warming yourself by the fire. Life is about building the fire. And generosity is the match. If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap, but if you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody”. Larry Lucchino**