

SCSC Alumni information

Name: **Sandra Soe**

School: **University California, Los Angeles (UCLA)**

Year: **Senior**

Is your college experience how you imagined it would be?

My college experience has been better than I could have imagined. Starting my freshman year, I had no idea what college classes, college athletics, or moving away from home would be like. From the day, I stepped onto the UCLA campus I have felt at home. Being a part of the swim team instantly gave me 30 new best friends and people that I could lean on and trust. My coaches taught me so much about not only swimming but about myself that I will carry on through the next chapter of my life. College may not be all rainbow and butterflies but looking back on my experiences you only remember the good times and the memories you have made throughout the years.

Did Santa Clara Swim Club prepare you for this experience?

Santa Clara could not have prepared me any better. The training we did throughout high school almost serves as a base for what you will do in college. Santa Clara also taught me to swim for not only myself because I want to and love the sport, but to swim for my teammates because that's what the sport is really about. Learning that everyone on the team has an important role and everyone is there to make each other better is something Santa Clara really taught me.

What is the best thing you have learned about yourself while at college?

The best thing I have learned about myself while in college is to trust myself and my potential. There are so many things that I have done throughout college that have really tested me emotionally and physically but staying true to myself and knowing that I have done everything I could have to be where I am today. In college swimming I really improved when I started to believe in myself and became confident in my swimming and my teammates which is something we spent a lot of time doing.

Do you have anything you have experienced that you were not prepared for?

There are always obstacles no matter what you are doing. There will be ups and downs and moments that you are just not prepared for and there is nothing you can do. There have been several meets where I have not been where I wanted to be and wished I had been faster but you just need to learn to take everything one day or one race at a time. We spent a lot of time making sure that if you have one bad race for that not to define what the rest of your meet is

going to be like. There have been several races where I wish it had gone a different way but there is just nothing I can do about it and learned to leave that bad race at the pool and focus on the next one.

If you were to give any advice to swimmers preparing for college swimming and the college experience, what would you tell them?

Not to take everything so seriously and to have fun. I swam the fastest my senior year when I had the most fun and took in every moment. College swimming is something you will never get to do again so make sure you cherish every moment. You will never be able have a group of 30 girls cheering for you and wanting the same thing I believed in my teammates, in my coaches, and in myself which lead to much success. Swim for something bigger than yourself.

Tell us about your experience swimming at NCAAs?

Swimming at NCAA is intense. It is one of the fastest meets in the nation and everyone there means business. It is really inspiring to see so many fast and motivated people all coming together and swimming fast. The team atmosphere is like nothing you will ever experience and really showed me the importance of team!