

# Temecula Swim Club



## Senior Reflections

Please join Temecula Swim Club in congratulating our High School Seniors as they graduate and move on to new endeavors! We are excited to share with you our High School Senior's reflections on their swimming career and future as long as their favorite pictures.

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### Our Seniors

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Nicole Barton  
Mitchell Colvin  
Matt Holmes  
Abby Lynch  
Amanda Martilla  
Brianna Martilla  
Samantha Sorensen  
Emma Wettlaufer

\*swimmers who have been swimming with Temecula Swim Club since they were 5 years old.

# Nicole Barton



1. I've been swimming since I was 7, so 10 years now.
2. I was taking swimming lessons at the local YMCA so I wouldn't drown or anything at the beach, and I was invited to be part of the team that practiced there. My parents had told me that I had to do at least one sport, and I fell in love with swimming. I tried tennis, softball, and basketball-which ended in a broken wrist- but didn't feel at home the same way I did in the water. It just felt right.
3. I remember that I had the most trouble with breaststroke (not much has changed in that regard!) I would try to swim the 100 IM at meets and always get DQ'd for doing one too many fly kicks on my pulldown. At least now I do it legally, but it's still my worst stroke
4. Probably the most difficulty I had with swimming was my freshman year of high school. I didn't really feel motivated, and I was overwhelmed with school stuff and my mind wasn't really in the right place. Besides that, I felt like I wasn't as fast as I used to be, and I was almost ready to age up and was terrified of competing against girls twice as strong. I thought I might quit. But



# Nicole Barton

I also loved it too much to completely leave, so I gave myself an easier practice schedule, and it wasn't long before I was ready to go back full time. To anyone feeling this way, my advice is this: do what you love. If it's not swimming, fine. But I suggest you don't make any decisions lightly. Take time to think about the consequences of either decision.

5. My first meet was when I was still with the YMCA. I was swimming the 50 fly as my first event, and I was as nervous as humanly possible. I dove really awkwardly, but still managed to finish without getting DQ'd. I'm not sure how I made it. But the excitement I had once I finished was the best feeling ever.

6. Swimming Awards:

- o Ambassador League Female Swimmer of the Year (2019)
- o 1st place at League Finals for both events (2017-19)
  - o Student Athlete (2018-20)
- o Varsity Lettering in Swimming (2017-20)

7. Academic Awards:

- o Honor Roll all four years of High School
  - o Honor Societies
  - o NHS Secretary
- o Student Athlete (2018-20)

8. I think my best time in swimming has actually been at TMEC. I've only been on this team for a year, but it's felt like home since the first day. My advice to a younger swimmer, regardless of what team you're on, is to try to remember that swimming isn't all about competing and winning. Yes, that's the main goal, so push yourself toward it. But also remember that this is for you, and it's not going to be enjoyable if you don't have fun. Get to know your coach and your teammates, and make friendships that will last. And most of all,

# Nicole Barton

enjoy it. You're not going to get these moments back, so don't stress or worry, just have fun (while beating everyone else)!

9. I would definitely like to thank my parents. They've been so supportive of everything I've wanted to do and they were the ones who had to wake up at 6 in the morning just so I could get to practice. They are truly amazing. I'd also like to thank all the coaches I've had, for helping me reach my potential as an athlete and cheering me on for my accomplishments.

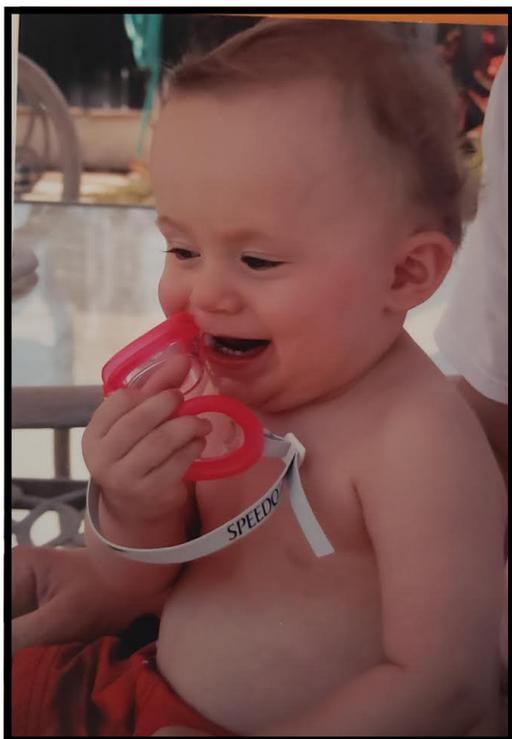
10. Yes, I do plan to swim in college. After that, I'm hoping I'll still be able to get in the pool.

11. I'm going to Azusa Pacific University this fall (APU). I went on a recruiting visit there this year and it just felt like home. It's the perfect school for me! I'm going to be majoring in Criminal Justice with an emphasis on Criminal Prosecution.

12. I'm not 100% sure of my future plant, but I know that I want to be a lawyer. I'm probably going to join the military to pay my way through law school and give something back to my country. I think I'd like to work in a DA's office (District Attorney). I'd like to have a family someday, but I'm going to live my own life before that happens. :)



# Mitchell Colvin



I've been swimming for 4 years and started swimming at 13. I chose to swim because of water polo but stayed with swim because it was fun and learned a lot. At first fly was really hard but it is now my favorite stroke. The summer after junior year because I was on my school CIF team, but my coach took me off for no reason even though I had worked hard and earned the spot. My first meet was bad I missed 2 of my events and could barely dive. Most improved Making a lot of friends including my wonderful girlfriend. Everything was great. Coach Jenn has been the biggest help and best Coach I've had. I would like to swim in college but do not know. My life goal is to join the navy and become a Corpsman or Sniper (Navy Seal) or Marine Sniper. I want to go to RCC because I still want to swim in college and RCC is a good choice. Life Goal is to have a higher education and join a branch of military to protect my family and country.

# Matt Holmes



1. I began swimming when I was eight years old. . Since I started TMEC I've been swimming year round ever since.

2. I picked swimming because a hip injury prevented me from participating in other sports. It was the one sport that allowed me to stay active without damaging my hip. Although I played soccer and love playing basketball, swimming was always my favorite and the one I stuck with.

3. Breaststroke is the one that got me in stroke school. Although I passed the first time, Justin and I decided to stay together so I spent an extra week. Yea, Justin didn't pass breaststroke!

4. After the Speedo Grand Challenge my appendix ruptured and I had to have surgery. At that same time my family was moving to Washington D.C. When I moved I joined NCAP, but I hadn't been swimming because of the surgery and I was joining a new team. I really struggled because I wasn't swimming nearly as well as I had been and although the new team was great, it had a completely different focus then TMEC. I really questioned if this was the sport for me during that time.

# Matt Holmes



A. My advice would be to not focus on times but continue to work hard. It may just be a season where you're not dropping times but if you continue the hard work, trust your coaches, the times will eventually drop and you'll be where you want to be. Also, as hard as it is, you have to stay positive. It's really easy to get down on yourself and stop believing in what you're doing. But if your goals are to swim in college, keep working because there is a program somewhere for you.

5. My first swim meet was a TMEC meet where I swam the 50 Free in 57 seconds! I dove off the blocks but my flip turns and underwater could use some work.

6. TMEC JO team, Sectional Team, Futures Team.

Virginia State 6A State finalist 2 years, Academics: 4.6 cumulative high school GPA.

7. My best time in swimming with TMEC was beating Justin in the 200 Fly at sectionals. My best time not at TMEC was having the opportunity to travel all over the country at different swim meets.

B. If I could have teach a younger swimmer one thing with our conversation, it would be that one of the key things you need to succeed in swimming is a crazy mindset. That in order to truly succeed, you need to show up to practice everyday with the mindset of outworking every other person in the pool and when you show up to a meet be confident in the work you have put in because nobody can take the pain you were willing to embrace away from you.

# Matt Holmes

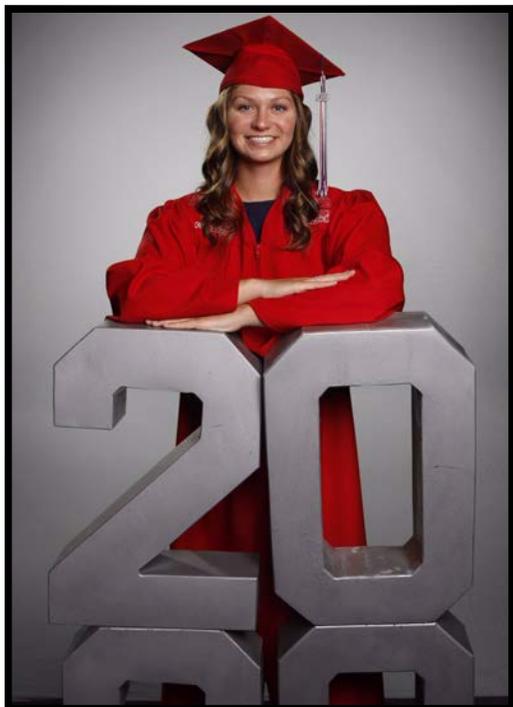
8. I would like to thank my parents for all the support they have given me throughout these past long years and I would also like to thank those I've had the pleasure of swimming with these past few years. I want to make a special shoutout to Justin Schneider for being my first friend in this sport and for staying as one of my closest friends even with all the moving I've had to go through these past 10 years. I also would like to thank the coaches and the impact they have had on my swimming career. Coach Jen has been a mentor and friend since the early days of stroke school and I appreciate the respect and care she has put into my swim career and the relationship she has built with me. Coach Reynolds has been a blessing in this strange transition for me and has opened up a new love for swimming I had lost. He changed the way both how I compete and my overall mindset after I compete and has ultimately changed how I feel about the sport and I am beyond grateful for the relationship I have developed with this amazing man. I CAN'T wait for future swimmers to experience the same change I did when Reynolds was my coach.

9. I will be continuing my swimming career throughout the next four years of college. I will be attending Biola University.

10. I chose to go to this college because I felt a greater calling attending it and that God had put this place in my path for a reason. A. I am choosing between majoring in pre-med and business with a focus on analytics. ll.

ll. My life goals are to someday open up my own training facility and to instill a new type of training into the young minds of talented athletes who are willing to push themselves to a level they didn't think was possible and show them the greatness they are all truly capable of achieving.

# \*Abby Lynch



1. I have been swimming for 8 years, since I was 10 years old.

2. I would like to believe that swimming chose me at a young age. I tried soccer until the 3rd grade and I did dance and gymnastics until 5th grade. I stuck with swimming because I loved being in the water. I love the friendships that I've made. I loved how challenging swimming was and is.

3. Thinking back to swim school, I did not have any trouble with any particular stroke. But I do remember having trouble with my open turns. I did not have to do more than one cycle of any swim school course.

4. Swimming became very difficult for me these past 2 years because I have been dealing with a shoulder injury. This was challenging for me because it was not only a physical challenge but it was also a mental challenge. Injuries are the worst, but if I was to give a younger swimmer advice on injuries it would be to ice constantly, listen to your body and lean on your friends/teammates.

5. I remember my first swim meet being at the CRC. I remember being so nervous for this meet because I liked going to practice more than I did racing. At the time I was not able to dive off the blocks, so I pushed off the wall.

# \*Abby Lynch

6. Awards/honors I have received both in the pool and academically:

Temecula Swim Club Record Breaker

IM Ready Challenge (IMR)

IM Extreme Challenge (IMX)

Junior Olympics Consolation Finalist

Varsity Water Polo Letter

Involvement Spirit Award (Waterpolo)

Scholarship Spirit Award (Waterpolo)

Varsity Swimming Letter

Teamwork Spirit Award (Swimming)

Involvement Spirit Award (Swimming)

Academic Varsity Letter

Biliteracy Cord

California Scholarship Federation Cord

California Scholarship Federation Seal on Diploma

7. The best memories I have made while swimming with TMEC are because of the friendships that I have made on and off the pool deck. I do not think that I can pinpoint one specific time in my swim career when one time drop was more memorable than others because they have all been special. There have been countless meets when my team has been there supporting me; whether it be cheering each other on at high school league prelims and finals, surviving certain painful events like the 200 fly, or helping me compete with an injured shoulder even though I shouldn't have been competing. This team has had my back countless times and I could not be more grateful.



## \*Abby Lynch

8. I would like to thank my family for supporting me through all of the highs and lows, both in and out of the pool. I would like to thank my parents specifically for taking me to so many practices, swim meets and doctors appointments for my shoulders. I would like to thank all of the coaches at TMEC for all of their dedication and life lessons that have made me the swimmer that I am today. As one of my first coaches at TMEC, Coach Jenn gave me the drive of a competitive athlete by lighting a fire under my butt. She helped transform me from a graceful ballerina into a determined swimmer. Coach Carol helped me perfect my technique in all of my strokes, my mom says she has the patience of a saint. Coach Kody taught me about eating the proper nutrition before and after practices and meets. Coach Tripp taught me that swimming is not just an individual sport but you have to work together as a team to be successful. Coach Reynolds taught me the discipline of physically swimming, but when I hit a rough spot with my injury he also taught me about the mental side of swimming.

9. I still would like to swim in college because I love swimming. But as of right now, I do not plan to swim because of my shoulder injury. I know that I will still continue to swim for fun every now and then, but right now it is not something I plan to do.

10. I will be attending UC Davis. I chose this college because it seemed like the best fit for me overall since I have a lot of options when it comes to my education and my athletics. As well as being far from Temecula, but not too far because I love California. While at UC Davis, I plan to study sports medicine and human biology.

11. My life goals are to graduate from college and get a job in the sports medicine field. I would love to study abroad and travel with friends for a few years.

# Amanda Martilla

My dad taught me how to swim when I was little, but I didn't start swimming competitively until the end of 6th grade, when I was 12 years old. Wow!! It's hard to believe that it's already been 6 years. Before swimming, I'd played tennis here and there since second grade, but it wasn't a major focus of mine. I was also put into ballet when I was about 5, and tried basketball in 3rd grade but, needless to say, neither of those worked out. I started swimming at Mesa Aquatics because a friend recommended it to our family and from the beginning, I really liked it. I've stuck with swimming all this time because I want to improve myself and despite anything I might complain about, swimming has become an integral part of my life. When I look back at my first few swim practices, when I was still learning how to do each stroke, I recall my struggle with breaststroke. It was difficult for me to coordinate all of the parts and I wasn't able to correctly turn my right foot out. It was extremely frustrating, especially when I was DQ'd at a meet for an "alternating kick". However, even though I am still not able to fully flex my right foot, I have been able to improve my breaststroke over the years. Actually, it's become one of my favorite strokes! So, my advice to swimmers who are struggling with any aspect of swimming, whether it be your breaststroke kick or your dive or your times..., is this: as hard as this may be, don't compare yourself to others! I used to do this a lot, and it would just make me feel hopeless about my swimming. I still catch myself comparing my times to faster swimmers sometimes, but it's important to focus on your own goals and your own progress. After all, speed is relative and the person that you're comparing yourself to is probably comparing themselves to other people too. I remember being so confused at my first meet. What's a heat? What's a lane? But thankfully, my coach and teammates helped me out. I don't remember all the events that I swam or the times that I went, but I remember getting out of the pool each time with a smile on my

# Amanda Martilla

because I was so excited to have finished my first races. Despite my initial nerves, I enjoyed my first meet because I was there with my team. Some of my swimming accomplishments include: JO and WAG cuts, "coach's award" and "team award" (Mesa Aquatics), 3 high school records, going to CIF, and winning races at league. Academically, I have earned awards such as: high honor roll, AP scholar, seal of biliteracy, and student of the month. Although I've only been a part of TMEC for a short time (I joined less than a year ago), I've been able to make many fun memories and meet new people. I am so thankful for the kindness that everyone treated me with and for how I felt like part of the team from day 1. I will never forget the Blue Black White Meet, which I joined TMEC just in time for, where I was able to swim with TMEC swimmers of all ages and experience first-hand all of the team spirit (go black team!!). When it comes to my swimming, I know that I owe a lot to the people that have helped me along the way. Most importantly THANK YOU MOM AND DAD. Thank you for driving us to and from practice every day, for spending your weekends with us at meets, for paying for all of our swim expenses ;), for volunteering at meets, for feeding us over and over...the list goes on. Here's to all of the time, energy, and love that you have put into our swimming. I also have to mention all of the other swim moms and swim dads out there. Some of you guys have become like extra parents to me, and some of you guys have never seen me before. But this is a shout out to ALL swim parents (and swim grandparents, etc), without whom we wouldn't be able to swim. Thank you for your dedication to swimming, your endless encouragement, and all of the work that you put in behind the scenes. Next, I'd like to thank each of the swim coaches that I've ever had: Coach Juleen, Coach Kim, Coach James, Coach Alex, Coach Reynolds, Coach Adrian,

# Amanda Martilla

Coach Donatelli, Coach Shore, and Coach Jenn. Whew! That was a lot, but each of them have influenced my swimming in their own way. Thank you coaches for all of the time and effort that you pour into your job, and for helping us find a balance between working hard and having fun. I can confidently say that you guys get less recognition than you deserve. Finally, a big thanks to my teammates, who make long practices bearable and who make me smile even when I'm tired. I won't list everyone, but just know that I appreciate you! Oh boy, this is getting long. I can hear the "get off the stage" music playing...so I'll make this last bit quick. My immediate plans for the future include attending the University of California San Diego, which has all of the programs that I'm looking forward to participating in, and is right on the beach! My dream has always been to become a teacher (and I just recently decided that I would like to teach elementary), so I will be majoring in Education Sciences, with plans to earn my master's in education and a multiple subject teaching credential. I do plan to continue swimming, but most likely at the club level. All in all, I'm looking forward to experiencing a lot of new things in these coming years, so we'll see what happens!

Thanks for reading all the way through this monstrosity of a reflection :)

- Amanda Martilla

# Amanda & Brianna Martilla



# Brianna Martilla

My name is Brianna Martilla and I have been swimming since I was 12 years old. I started swimming on Mesa Aquatics and then joined TMEC at the beginning of my senior year of high school. Before swimming, I had been playing tennis, but I chose to take swimming more seriously, and the longer I was on the team, the more I loved it. Over time, swimming grew special to me because of the welcoming environment created by my teammates and coaches. I remember my first swim meet, which happened a few months after I had started swimming. I didn't know you had to get your heat and lane assignments before each race, so I was almost late to my 100 free. And then I disqualified my first ever race by moving my foot on the block (a mistake I made multiple times again afterward).....so that was fun. The best memories outweigh the embarrassing ones though. Over the years I remember earning my first blue time which was the 100 back, and then my first JO and Invite cuts. I remember cheering for my teammates, racing in countless relays, bonding with each other outside of the pool deck, and team cheers. I will remember dancing before hopping in the pool at morning practices, supporting each other during tough sets, and the random games we made up. Like all sports, swimming is going to come with difficulties. It is easy to compare yourself and your times to others, or you may reach a point when you feel no progress is being made. Just remember that the stopwatch doesn't tell the whole story. Improvement is hard to see and dropping time doesn't always correlate with hard work. In the end, improvement will happen. It just might not be at the time you expected. Swimming has built my mental strength, discipline, time management, and work ethic. I remember earning the Most Improved Award by Coach Reynolds at Mesa Aquatics when I was 14, which meant so much to me, among other awards. Swimming has also helped me achieve academic and personal

# Brianna Martilla

goals unrelated to swimming. I have earned awards at school such as Top 25 in my class and straight As every year, and I am one of three Valedictorians at my school. My favorite thing about being on TMEC has been the friendliness I received. Immediately after joining, everyone was so kind and helpful without knowing me. I will never forget my first practices when my group was helping me through the warm-up, or the support we always gave each other at swim meets. Although I haven't been on this team long, it feels like I have known my teammates for years and belong on this team. Despite the abrupt ending, I am grateful for the new experiences I have had and the people I have met. I would also like to thank my parents, coaches, and teammates for guiding me over the past 8 years as a swimmer. Swimming became a major part of my life and the experience has been amazing. There is no way I could express my gratitude for all the laughs, advice, and car rides. You all have shaped me into who I am today, and I will never forget the memories I've made as a swimmer. My future plans include attending UCLA in the fall, where I will be majoring in Earth and Environmental Science. I plan on continuing to swim on UCLA's club team, because I love swimming, and I hope to find the same joy I found on TMEC. My life goals are to graduate college and find an enjoyable career.

# Samantha Sorensen



1. I have been swimming for 7 years. I started competitive swimming when I was 10 but I started to learn the strokes when I was 6.
2. Before swimming, I was a dancer and gymnast. When I was about 10 I started swimming and fell in love with the sport. The teammates and the competitions make the sport amazing.
3. When I was in swim school I had the most difficulty with butterfly.
4. Most of my high school swimming was very difficult. I was injured for 3 out of the 4 years of high school. It was hard missing a lot of my high school season. My advice to others going through this is that you can always find another way to train and not feel like you are losing all the hard work you have gained.
5. I am not fully able to remember my first meet but I do remember how excited I was when I stepped up on the block. I was able to dive off of the blocks but I mostly belly flopped.
6. Student athlete, athlete of the month, C.L.A.S.S Award
7. My best time swimming with TMEC was the Auburn trip. The team was together and bonding and getting to know each other. We were cheering and helping everyone with their races. Everyone celebrated each other's successes.



# Samantha Sorensen

8. I want to thank Coach Reynolds for helping me push myself and not see the limitations of my injury. I want to thank my teammates for pushing me to try harder and to become a better swimmer.

9. I am not sure if I will be swimming in college but I plan on getting my PhD in counseling psychology.

10. I am going to Liberty University because it has one of the best psychology programs. I am majoring in child and family psychology.

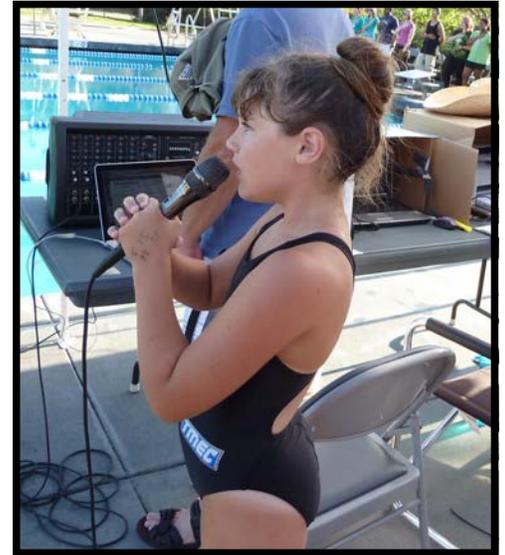
11. My life goals is to help children and families with their everyday lives and to one day travel around the world.

## \*Emma Wettlaufer



I started swimming when I was a baby. I started in mommy and me lessons, then swim lessons, then when I was in elementary school, TMEC invited all the elementary school kids to do a meet against each other. So I did the meet and realized that swimming was something I really enjoyed and my school won the meet that year. I decided to stick with swimming and join TMEC because I really didn't love any "land" sport that I had tried. I did dance, tennis, karate and I just didn't feel like those were the sports for me. I am also not very coordinated so with swimming there wasn't as much of a chance to hurt myself. I think the stroke I struggled most with during stroke school was breaststroke. I don't know what it was about it but my head just couldn't wrap around the concept of what movements you are supposed to do. The most difficult time in my swimming career was when I was 13 and made the choice to quit swimming for a year because I couldn't breathe when I was swimming or doing any exercise. This was a really hard time because leading up to me taking a break I would be trying so hard at practice to go fast but my body wasn't really working because I couldn't get any air when I would breathe. I would be asked what was wrong with me, but I didn't have an answer because I had no idea what was wrong with me.

## \*Emma Wettlaufer



It got so bad that I could barely swim a 25 without feeling like I was going to drown. I would have to swim in the end lane because my coach at the time, coach Carol, was scared that I wasn't going to make it to the other side and was always ready to jump in after me if she needed to. I did testing for a year to try to figure out what was wrong with me and after seeing doctor after doctor and all of them saying that they can't find anything wrong with me finally I was diagnosed with vocal cord dysfunction. Vocal cord dysfunction is where when you are doing any physical activity your vocal cords clamp shut making it almost impossible to breathe. After all of this I finally got back in the water and it took a while to get back into it. At first I would only practice max 30 minutes with only doing 25's so that I didn't overdo anything. Once I was fully back nothing could stop me and I was doing better than I was when I left. I guess the message of this story is to never give up and to keep going even if things aren't going the way you want them to. You will always have challenges in life, but if you don't overcome them you will never know what could have been if you would have just pushed a little harder. My first real meet with TMEC was at Claremont Club where it was freezing outside and pouring rain. Going to the blocks I was terrified and cold.

# \*Emma Wettlaufer



I was on the block shivering trying not to fall off because I wasn't very good at diving at the time. Also when I was swimming backstroke at a home meet at Great Oak and when I finished to the wall I hit my head so hard that you could hear it from the other side of the pool. Best time swimming on TMEC were the friendships I made and the people I got to meet along the way. Through the years I have found a family here and this family is one that I will never forget. I would like to thank my parents for signing me up for swim in the beginning and for being my number one supporters. Thank you to all of the coaches who I have had through the years for putting up with my craziness and teaching me so much. Also my friends who over the years have turned into family and a group of individuals who have changed my life forever in the best way possible. I will be attending Cal State East Bay where I will be swimming for their team. I am going to be majoring in Biology with a minor in ASL. I chose East Bay because it was a relatively smaller school with the major I would need to get closer to become either a vet or marine biologist later in life. My plan is to graduate East Bay and continue my education in Grad school to reach my life goal to be a vet or marine biologist. Other than that that I don't really know what else my life could have in store. Thank you TMEC for being my one and only club team for the past 10 years. Go TMEC!