

2017 YMCA Short Course National Championship Devotion Offered by Georgia Apostolu, Gabrielle Rudy and Oliver Yancey



Hi - We are Oliver, Georgia, and Gab, three seniors from Ridley Area YMCA.

As YMCA swimming comes to an end we started to reflect on our friendship throughout the past 13 years of training together. From collecting rubber ducks at mini meets to 3 hour intense practices during winter break, our friendship only grew stronger throughout the years. We've survived broken bones, mega viruses, and bad swims but with the support of our teammates and coaches

we've all become a second family. Recounting with our years on the team had brought up many memories that we will never forget. Some of our favorites include fake slipping on the deck to trick people out, getting out of practice early because the water heater was broken, and finally when we each made our first individual national cuts. To the first-time qualifiers, cherish the memories you have of this meet, because before you know it you'll be a senior wondering where the time has gone.

As we move on to the next chapter in our lives, the friendship we hold will last a lifetime. We would like to thank the Ridley RAYS coaching staff for putting so much time into the sport we love. They selflessly miss time with their families to help us excel in and out of the water. Erik and Jim, we are forever grateful and words cannot express what an impact you've had on our lives but this is the closest we could find "For all the places I have been, I am no place without you."

Finally as we all step upon the blocks, whether it is your first ever national swim, or your 15th top seeded prelims swim to keep in mind that everyone that makes this meet is considered a champion. Remember all that you have done individually and as a team to help your YMCAs and the fellow YMCAs at this meet. Your time and effort will reflect on a career that had an impact on your life, whether you are continuing your swim career or not. Good luck to everyone today and swim fast.

Let us now bow our heads for a moment of prayer. Lord give these swimmers strength so that they may swim to their fullest potential this week. Please help us all remember it's not just about the individual race but the journey. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.