

## WELCOME:

Thank you all for joining us for our 5<sup>th</sup> annual USRP banquet. This brings to a close our 5<sup>th</sup> full year. I would like to recap our history, vision, and growth. Some of you have heard this, but we have so many new families that I want to repeat it. We wanted to place the emphasis on teaching and developing young talent in a family friendly, inclusive, and uplifting environment.

We soon earned recognition and members, and it really is worth repeating.

Coach Anne and I started with a vision of bringing another competitive swimming option to the Daytona/Ormond Beach/Port Orange area, a little more than 5 years ago. We began as a USA member club in April of 2014 and had two high school swimmers the end of our first month (Coach Caleb being one of them). We steadily grew throughout our first summer adding another 20 high school swimmers. When fall arrived and all of our high school kids were heading back to respective high school teams, we opened up our program to age group and had a hand full to start. But by the end of high school season, November, when the seniors returned, we closed out 2014 with 44 swimmers.

When we were just beginning and facing many obstacles, I can vividly remember Coach Anne saying, "I can't believe we are actually doing this. This is awesome." I couldn't agree more.

My ultimate GOAL when we began was to get to 60 members. Now I say "goal" because the word is vital, and I will get back to that later. I kept saying, if we can just get to 60 that would really be something special. By the end of year one, our 1<sup>st</sup> banquet, we were 55 strong. By the end of year two, we were at 85 members. As I stand up here today we have 126 registered USRP swimmers for 2019. I would like to now express that there is no way we could have accomplished what we have accomplished without the love, support, encouragement, and word-of-mouth praise that you have given us.

We also could not provide the level of service and excellence in coaching without our amazing coaching staff and some senior swimmers who help with the Itsy Bitsys. Coaches Roxanne, Anne, Wendy, Judy, Caleb, Kiera and most recently Dana, and of course Senior swimmers Tori, Vivian, Sophia, and Logan who at times help.

I know for many, it is out of the way to get to our facility, so your continued and unwavering support is amazing. I can't express enough how humbled, honored, and moved by your support I am. Thank you, really Thank you.

GOALS: I spoke of goals at past banquets and some of my remarks you may have heard before, but they are absolutely worth repeating.

I had a specific goal of 60 swimmers, as I mentioned earlier, I wrote it down, I repeated it to anyone who would listen. In fact it is quoted in the *News-Journal* article, the article written in December of 2014.

If you don't have a goal, how will you ever know if you have achieved it? In other words, if you don't know where you are going, how will you ever know if and when you get there? So tell me why wouldn't you have a goal, a plan, for the most important commitments in your life? Whether that be your education, your career, your relationships, and yes of course swimming.

Harvard University conducted a survey in the mid 90's of the graduating senior class, roughly 1700 students. It was a simple one-question survey: Do you have a specific written career goal? Only 3%, approximately 50 had done just that without prior knowledge of the question. Twenty years later they went back and re-interviewed all 1700. The 3% who had the written, specific career goals far exceeded the rest of the class in terms of career achievement. In fact the 3% with written goals exceeded the top 3% of the remaining 97% by a significant margin. Why??? BECAUSE THEY HAD A PLAN. If you don't have a goal, you are plodding aimlessly, without real purpose.

Now goals need to be specific, measurable, aggressive, but attainable... For example: "I want to be really good in math." That's not a goal; that's a wish. By what measure are you judging yourself? Another example: "I want to achieve 3 "A" cuts by the end of the season." That is specific and measurable, but if you are just a tenth of a second away on all 3, is it truly aggressive? No, but if you just started swimming last week, is that goal really attainable? Probably not. Goals have to be specific, measurable, aggressive, and attainable.

At the beginning of last high school season, I asked the Father Lopez swimmers to write down their goals for the season. Of the 42 on the team, 11 turned in goals. Of those 11 swimmers, 10 reached their goals. Now we must remember that we don't always reach our goals on our timetable. I believe they are achieved on God's timetable, but without a goal, you will never achieve one. I am asking each of you tonight to do the same. I'm NOT going to force it! I am simply putting it out there for those so driven to do so. Turn them in to your direct coach next week, and we will tell you what it is going to take to achieve those goals.

Can anyone tell me the difference between successful and unsuccessful people?? The answer is very simple. Successful people never give up. They never quit. You see, winning is easy, it's fun, people pat you on the back and tell you how great you are. Winning is the easy part. It's losing that is hard, but it's your ability to take a loss and get back up the next day and try even harder and keep going. In fact, the only time anyone really loses is when they give up.

Thomas Edison, inventor of the light bulb, was unsuccessful in more than 1000 attempts at inventing a working light bulb. Did he get discouraged? Perhaps. Did he quit? Thankfully no. In fact, two of his most famous quotes are, "I have not failed. I have discovered more than 1000 ways that don't work." And "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is to try just one more time."

Dave Salo, head swimming coach at USC and an Olympic coach, is widely respected as one the world's best swim coaches. He trains his swimmers with a sprint based/ race pace

philosophy. He calls the Mile “a long sprint.” We frequently use some of his workouts at our practices. This next story relates to an interaction between Ous Mellouli, a Tunisian swimmer whose goal was to win Gold in the 1500 at the 2008 Olympics. He swam for USC, graduating in 2007, Dave Salo’s first year at USC. Salo had started a post-grad group, and as Salo recounts,

“Ous wanted to train with us a little bit, but not really train. He was in and out, and gone, here and there, everywhere. He would come in and swim three days, gone for two, and swim for a day, and gone for four. [Senior Racers, does any of this sound familiar?] He was about ready to get in one day for practice and I said ‘Stop.’ He goes, ‘What?’ I say, ‘Come here.’ He goes, ‘What?’ I said, ‘Okay look, I would love to coach you. You are really good, you are really good. I would love to coach you, but if you are going to swim here, it is going to be my way. It means you are going to be at every practice, you are going to do what I ask you to do, and you’ve got to trust me... Look you just have to trust what we do. It will look different, but you’ve just got to trust me.’ So Ous left and comes back the next day, and he goes, ‘You are serious, aren’t you?’ I said, ‘Darn truth, do it my way or do not stay here.’ He stayed, and he won the [2008 Olympic] gold medal in the 1500 free.”

Now I’m not up here threatening any swimmer not to come back. But if your goal is to compete at the State championships, or to swim at the next level and beyond, trust us and show up. This is a necessary ingredient if you truly want to succeed. There is no substitute for time in the water. Weight lifting, running, yoga are all good but **MUST** be in addition to, not in place of, practice. I believe with all my heart that you have access to an amazing coaching staff with a plan and program to get you to your goal. **If that is your goal.** If not that’s ok, too. But please be fair to us and to yourself and don’t compare your progression to that of a competitor who is more focused, more driven, and more committed.

There is a parable of the Chinese Bamboo Tree. When the seedling is planted, it is required to nurture and fertilize and water it every day. One year, two, three and even four, and there is no growth, nothing.. but, magically about five years after seeing no results, the patience and perseverance, attention to detail and faith that results will happen, over the course of a 6 week period the Chinese BambooTree grows to a height of 80 feet. Now did that tree grow 80 feet in 6 weeks or 5 years? Obviously 5 years, but without the attention to detail, even without seeing any results, that tree would never have grown, had there not been the perseverance.

We live in a fast-paced era. We want instant gratification and results. We want what we want, and we want it **NOW**. Sorry, swimming doesn’t work that way. Swimming is much like the Chinese Bamboo Tree. It takes years of consistent and dedicated hard work to reach maximum potential. There is no shortcut.

Each and every one of you progresses at a different pace. You have different body types and differing skill sets. Some are more physically gifted than others. This may be unfair, but that’s life. But I can promise you this, eventually hard work and dedication will beat talent when talent refuses to work hard.

I know, to the Senior group, I am a broken record with this, but once you stop growing and have reached a certain level of expertise, the ONLY way to improve is through consistent hard work both in and out of the pool. It has been physiologically studied/proven that elite swimmers fall backwards 1.5 days for every one day of missed training. So based on a six-day training week, practicing 4 days is virtually break even. Every top level, collegiate, or even state-level high school swimmer is someone who is full time, dedicated, and committed. There just is no short cut to great success.

I had a high school swimmer this past year who experienced amazing success, dropping time at virtually every meet throughout the season, culminating with an amazing performance at Regions. However, after the high-school season ended, he took two weeks off in November, then came back roughly 3 days a week, then took 2 more weeks off in December and swam part time the rest of the month. This continued into January. We went to a meet in mid January, and his times blew up, nowhere near his high school times. He was very upset and wanted to know what was wrong.

What was wrong was, he went from a minimum of 5 days a week for 3 straight months back to part-time at best. There is NO substitute for time in the water.

All of your goals are possible, but it is up to you!

Thank you, and thanks again to all for attending tonight's USRP banquet.