

Since I was 8 years old, I have spent the majority of my life in the water, specifically the water of Brookside Swim and Tennis Club as a swimmer, a leader, a Bullfrog, and a friend. To be honest, I think you're crazy to ask me to fit what Brookside Swimming has meant to me in 50 to 100 words, because it has taught me the utter joy that comes from a child's smile and a "good job" from a parent. I have a safety net at Brookside. Every parent is there for every child, regardless of blood relation. Every child hopes with every particle of his being that his best will be good enough, and that his cheers will make a difference. And I have learned that those cheers do make a difference, that I can feel elation at seeing a little one finish with enthusiasm and confidence, and most importantly I have been taught that no matter how poorly I've finished or how slow my time was, there will always be an 8 and under there to hug me, tell me I'm great, and ask me to help him find his sweatshirt - since I know exactly what it looks like. I go to college with excitement and trepidation, but I also know that I can call my coaches all the way from my California coastline and cry on the phone, because they have put up with me through thick and thin, and they have helped to create the person I am today. Brookside Swimming and all those involved have made me a better person for their affection, support, and knowledge, and I, Gioia DiMicco, cannot thank them enough.