



My name is Emma Shao, and I am a current sophomore at Emma Willard School and a member of Sharks Swim Club. I have been swimming competitively for nine years. During this time, I have been fortunate to attend Futures Swimming Championships, the USA Swimming National Diversity Select Camp, the Girls New York State High School Championships, and many other USA Swimming events. Swimming has been a cornerstone of my life. It has opened doors to travel, created new experiences, and built lifelong connections. Being part of the Adirondack swimming community is an honor. Through this sport, I have learned perseverance, dedication, hard work, and sportsmanship. To me,

swimming is not just an individual sport; it is built on a supportive team and a healthy community. Without the support of my teammates, coaches, and club, I would not be half the swimmer I am today.

Adirondack is a strong and connected Local Swimming Committee (LSC). Our clubs and swimmers often travel outside the LSC to compete at away meets, and it is at these meets that Adirondack is best represented. However, I believe there is an opportunity to better share the achievements of our swimmers, clubs, officials, and coaches within our own community. Many other LSCs maintain active social media platforms where accomplishments are celebrated, records are recognized, and important updates are easily accessible to members. If elected as Athlete Representative, I would work to make these achievements more visible—by helping to create an athlete recognition board or by collaborating with other athlete representatives to establish a plan for community updates.

In addition, the sport of swimming has not fully recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic. Both USA swimming and Adirondack Swimming have board meetings that track participation trends and other key issues. Prior to the pandemic, USA Swimming had approximately 400,000 members. While numbers briefly rebounded, it has since declined to around 375,000 athletes, and Adirondack has experienced a similar decrease, with 300–400 fewer swimmers than in pre-COVID years. As Athlete Representative, I would like to help address this by reaching out to local schools, libraries, and pools to promote club swimming and educate families about the sport. Increasing awareness can help grow participation and ensure more children gain the life skill of knowing how to swim.

If chosen as Athlete Representative, I will work to ensure that swimming in Adirondack is celebrated, recognized, and heard by the entire community—not just by individual teams. Thank you so much for your time and consideration. I hope you will vote for me!