



# STINGRAYS SWIM ACADEMY SPLASH

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

December /January Newsletter

## UPDATES AND NEWS FROM OUR AQUATIC DIRECTOR

### For Best Results—Swim Year-Round!

It is a common misconception that swimming is only a summertime activity. The truth is that water emergencies can occur during any time of the year. Knowing how to survive and swim can be one of the most important skills to have. With a shiver-free 84 degree heated swimming pool, the Y is an ideal location to learn and reinforce swimming skills all year round!

Just like any activity, swim students learn more, advance faster and become stronger swimmers with continual training. The Academy is proud that over 40% of students have been promoted to the next level in the past two months. Parents have seen real time progress in their skills and confidence.

With the approach of the holidays and subsequent temporary halt in lessons, the Academy is inviting all its students to play, practice and enjoy the pool (at no additional cost) with their family from December 23 to January 3 from 1 pm to 4 pm daily. Check out our other special events on page 2.



Olivia Gras, Alexander Shaw and Brandon Sullivan enjoy a boat ride with Instructor, Christie Szymiest

## Y WELCOMES NEW SWIM ACADEMY COORDINATOR—JANET HOWARD



Challenges are nothing new to the Y's new Swim Academy Coordinator, Janet Howard. Spending summers at the Jersey Shore, Janet was the very first female ocean guard in Normandy Beach. In fact, she obtained her WSI certification over 35 years ago and taught swimming and trained lifeguards as one of her first jobs. Fast

forward to adulthood, Janet obtained her degree in Elementary Education and History at Bucknell University and then picked up Masters degrees at both Rutgers and Drew University in Literature and Social Studies.

Janet has been a swim instructor at the Y since 2001. Currently, she specializes in instructing swimmers at the Pre-team level but is comfortable working with all ages. In addition to teaching swimming, she has acted as the Volunteer Coordinator for the past ten years during the Y's Annual Special Olympics Area Swim Meet.

In her new role, Ms. Howard will work with the Aquatic Director, Flora Mannino, to assure the smooth running of the Swim Academy. She will coordinate and train staff, supervise the program and provide support and communication to the parents regarding their children

and their progress. Oh, and yes, she will still teach her Preteam classes.

Janet sums up her approach to teaching swimming and training her instructor staff as follows: "I believe that kids need to be set up in a relaxed environment and feel comfortable before they can learn (anything!) including swimming. When teaching a skill, I try to remember what it was like being a kid and would I want to do it. Is it fun?"

Recently retired from the Readington Township Middle school where she taught grades 5 through 8, Janet also coached field hockey, track and cross country. Running is a passion of hers and she completed nine marathons including the New York City Marathon (3 times!) and the Boston Marathon, When she is not at the Y,

Janet is an avid sailor, cycles, plays tennis, practices Yoga and is a member of the Choir at the Stanton Church.

"I am so excited to use my experience as an educator and coach to help make the Stingrays Swim Academy the best Swim School in the State."

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**MEET OUR SWIMMER OF THE MONTH**

Zachary Walsh's super powers are swimming and video games. An enthusiastic eight year old who attends Hampton Elementary School, he joined the Academy two months ago and has progressed from a Level II swimmer to a confident Level IV swimmer.

According to his mother, Madeline, when Zachary first started he could only swim with floaties. Even so, he loved the water. "I wanted to get him into a long term activity (not just video games) and I offered him many different options and sports. This was the only sport that excited him. Especially when he found out that the Y has a swim team. It was something he could aspire to. He just loves it."

According to Zachary, he likes swimming because it's fun, he gets to go in a pool twice a week and he knows he is getting faster. He says, "I will soon be a better swimmer than my Dad!" According to mom, "When he wakes up on the day of swim class he tells his 4 year old brother, "I'm going to my swim class today. You should learn to swim too!"

His mom says when her friends ask about his swimming she tells them. "Everyone is so friendly and helpful. I like the flexibility in times offered. I like that he can come twice a week. He loves the teachers and he has improved so well. I also love that you noticed his improvement and promoted him to higher levels before I even noticed!"

**Holiday Hours**

Pool Closed at 3:00 pm 12/24 and 12/31 and Closed Christmas Day 12/25.

No Swim Classes from 12/23 through 1/5

Academy members and their families can enjoy a free daily recreational swim from 1 to 4

**Holiday Lifeguard Course**

December 27, 28, 29

10 am to 8 pm at the Y

The holiday break is an ideal time to accomplish the Red Cross Lifeguard Certification. Students on break from High School and/or College can get certified in Lifeguarding, First Aid, AED and CPR. This certification allows you to be legally employed as a Lifeguard anywhere in the United States.

*Makes a great holiday gift!*

Register on-line or in person.

Call 908-483-4924 for more information.



**Contact Information**

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**New Year's Bubble/Balloon Drop**

Welcome in the New Year  
Monday, 12/30

From 11 am to 1 pm

Games, races, prizes and fun all lead to a countdown at 12 noon featuring a balloon drop into the pool.

Academy Members: Free

Nonmembers: \$5



**Saturday January 4, 2020**

**10 am to 1:30 pm**

Featuring Youth Program Expo—Meet program staff and participate in a variety of fun programs including Ninja Obstacle Course, Art and Nerf.

Fitness Sampler- Try a variety of Y Group Fitness classes

Meet Swim Academy Staff  
Personal Swim Assessments and Class Referrals 10-11 am  
Pool games, and family recreational swim 11 to 12:30 pm.

Camp Registration  
Secure Your Spot Now!