



Brooklyn Ratel

Age 12

To be a lifeguard isn't easy, and that's what makes me try even harder. I love swimming, and that's why I've decided to learn how to lifeguard. Other than just swimming in meets or at practice, I wanted to use my strength to do good things for others, like saving lives. I feel like this program will help me accomplish this goal and help overcome some fears that I have of the ocean.

Before coming to my first class, I didn't know what to expect. I was new to the program and I was less experienced than the other kids. Although I was new to the group, the members made me feel very welcome. Swimming farther than you've ever gone out in the ocean for the first time is terrifying, but I think after doing this a couple of times with the new friends that I've made within the program, I've learned how to be a lot more comfortable in the water.

I'm not the best, and I've learned to accept that. I've wanted to give up during swims and runs, but the determination from the kids around me inspired me. Even if the water is rough, even if their lungs are burning they keep going. This kind of attitude is what makes me want to be better, and I think it happens to everyone in the age 12 group. Everyone wants to be better than they were the day before; we all just need a small push.

Thanks to the couple of classes I've had, I now have a higher comfort level in the water, new friends, and a positive attitude that I picked up from the kids around me. Thanks to the Jones Beach Junior Lifeguarding program, I can practice for a job I really want.