



PRESS RELEASE

William L. Brooks
Communications & Marketing Manager

E: William.Brooks2@LIFE.edu 1269 Barclay Circle
P: (678) 331-4342 Marietta, GA 30060
F: (770) 218-2850 www.LIFE.edu

LIFE UNIVERSITY SWIMMING POSTS HISTORIC WEEKEND AT NAIA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Knoxville, Tennessee, March 9, 2020 – The Life University women's and men's swimming programs continued to climb in national placement this weekend at the 2020 NAIA National Championships hosted by the University of Tennessee's Allan Jones Aquatic Center. The weekend was headlined with Life U's first ever National Runner-Up in freshman Dora Reizinger.

Head Coach Patrick Sonsteng and the Running Eagles brought home a program-record nine All-American honors, with the women's team earning seven. The women's team finished with their highest national ranking in Life U history, earning fifth place with 219 points. The men's team also finished with their highest national ranking in Life U history, earning 13th place overall and finishing with 107 points.

On Wednesday's opening day, the women's 800 freestyle relay team of Greta Gonzalez, Nathalia Bento, Victoria Acosta and Reizinger earned the first ever All-American relay honor for Life University with a time of 7:53.60 for a 6th place finish. While the men qualified for the same relay event, the team of Anton Smal, Trent Dungey, Lucas Payan and Anatolii Kuzemko dropped more than 8 seconds from their qualifying time, finishing 11th overall.

On Thursday, the women's 200 freestyle relay team of Reizinger, Gonzalez, Carla Colon and Bento fell just out of All-American status, but they still helped the cause by scoring team points, finishing in 9th place with a time of 1:40.12. The men's relay of Smal, Victor Lima, Payan and Kuzemko also earned the team some points by finishing 10th overall in a time of 1:25.45.

Reizinger earned her second All-American honor of the meet and her career by finishing 8th in the 500 freestyle with a time of 5:13.20. Smal had the highest ever finish of a Life U men's swimmer at NAIA Nationals with a 3rd place finish in the 200 IM, the first All-American honor of the meet for the men's team and the first of Smal's career. Bento added another All-American honor after a 6th place finish in the 50 freestyle with a time of 24.17.

The Running Eagles opened up the Friday finals with another All-American finish in the 200 medley relay. The team of Reizinger, Lillian Thurber, Gonzalez and Bento finished 4th with a time of 1:47.24. The men's team of Payan, Lima, Dungey and Kuzemko also qualified for nationals in the event, finishing 10th. Freshman Smal earned his second All-American honor of the meet in the 400 IM, finishing 5th with a



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time of 3:57.21. Acosta, also qualifying for nationals in the 400 IM on the women's side, scored points for the Running Eagles finishing 13th overall.

In the 100 butterfly, Gonzalez scored points for the women's team by finishing 11th and Dungey scored a point by finishing 16th. In the last race for the Running Eagles on Friday, Thurber earned her second All-American honor of the meet and of her career by finishing 5th in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:05.23.

Going into Saturday's final day and racing for points in final team standings, the Running Eagles continued their strong showing. Coming in with the field's top time in the women's 200 backstroke, Reizinger finished as Life U's first ever National Runner-Up, finishing just .53 seconds behind the winner. Thurber earned her third All-American honor of the weekend with a 7th place finish in the 200 breaststroke, finishing with a time of 2:23.44.

On the men's side, Smal and Lima helped the team by earning points in the consolation finals of the 200 breaststroke, placing 13th and 15th with times of 2:09.23 and 2:11.12. Dungey finished just outside of All-American honors, but helped the team by earning 9th place in the 200 butterfly with a time of 1:52.97. In the last event of the meet, Life U's women's 4x100 freestyle relay team of Reizinger, Colon, Acosta and Bento finished in 9th place with a time of 3:36.21. The men's 4x100 team of Smal, Lima, Payan and Kuzemko finished in 10th with a time of 3:09.59.

About Life University

Founded in Marietta, Georgia in 1974, Life University is a health sciences institution most known for its chiropractic program, the largest single campus chiropractic program in the world. Life University is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, master's and Doctor of Chiropractic degrees, and also has programmatic accreditation through the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE), the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The mission of Life University is to empower students with the education, skills and values necessary for career success and life fulfillment, based on a vitalistic philosophy.

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