

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Alligator Reef Lighthouse is four miles offshore of Islamorada in the Florida Keys. The Swim for Alligator Lighthouse race was born when a world-renowned artist decided to swim alone to the lighthouse and back to shore. He noted that *"every open water swimmer should experience this"*. The Fighting Manatee Swim Club of Islamorada accepted the challenge to present a world class open water swim event, launching the first in 2013. The swim proceeds benefit student scholarships and preservation of the lighthouse; and

WHEREAS, for Seabreeze High School senior, Brody Ochipa, there has always been a special attraction to the Alligator Reef Lighthouse. Brody would snorkel the reef around the lighthouse on family trips to the Florida Keys, and was fascinated to discover there was a swim race to the lighthouse. He decided that swimming the full 8-mile race alone would be an immense undertaking and recruited an all Ormond Beach team to join him, including: Faith Partington, Delaney Kimble and Collin Alexander; and

WHEREAS, Brody has been a swimmer most of his life, participating in the Daytona Beach Speed and Seabreeze High School swim teams. Brody's love of history and preservation led him to the decision to take on this intense open water swim event. Brody is driven and very organized, traits that served him well in the planning and execution of the entire team's training, fundraising, and involvement in the event; and

WHEREAS, Faith, a senior, started swimming as a young child and was a junior lifeguard. She's been drawn to cross country running through the years and balanced that with swimming, satisfying both her love of nature and the outdoors. Faith's ability to push herself and confront challenges, along with her goals to do whatever possible to preserve the world around her, made her a perfect teammate; and

WHEREAS, Delaney, a sophomore, was the youngest participant in the entire event and is an expert rower. Her skills were critical in the team's quest to complete the swim. Delaney was part of the Swim for Speed team as a child and had recently begun swimming again. Her athletic ability and desire to spend time with her friends made her an integral part of the team; and

WHEREAS, Collin, currently a freshman at Daytona State College, was on the Seabreeze swim team all four years of high school, making regionals his last two years and being awarded "most versatile" his senior year. Collin was more than happy to participate with his friends in the competition and survived more jellyfish stings than any other team member; and

WHEREAS, the team trained at 6:30 a.m. five days a week at the Ormond Beach YMCA. They relied on a fundraiser and donations to assist in paying for all expenses. The team's goal was to swim one-mile legs, with each of them swimming one of the four miles to the lighthouse and one of the four miles back. They rented a tandem kayak and a single kayak that would trail the one person always in the water. The team faced many challenges during the race, including increasing wind gusts, strong currents, and a moon jellyfish swarm. They fought every obstacle and finished the race in 6 hours and 48 minutes. All four are proud of the results and today, the City of Ormond Beach celebrates this incredible achievement with them.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Susan Persis, Deputy Mayor of the City of Ormond Beach, Florida, on behalf of Bill Partington, Mayor of the City of Ormond Beach, Florida, do hereby proclaim December 7, 2021, as a day to recognize the

SWIM FOR ALLIGATOR LIGHTHOUSE TEAM

in the City of Ormond Beach and urge all residents to join me in congratulating these young athletes on their well-deserved accomplishment of swimming this grueling race in the Florida Keys.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of the City of Ormond Beach, Florida, to be affixed this 7th day of December in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-One.



BILL PARTINGTON
Mayor