



# Edwardsville YMCA announces recipients of Allison Cassens Competitive Swimming Scholarship

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville YMCA announced Sunday night at the Annual Edwardsville Breakers Banquet the recipients of the Allison Cassens Foundation Competitive Swimming Scholarship Fund. The scholarship fund was announced for the first time at the banquet and will be administered by the YMCA.

First-time recipients this year are Breakers swimmers Brian Baggette, Victoria Brady, Tyler Morris and Callista Poiter.

The Edwardsville YMCA recently announced they have received a donation from the Allison Cassens Foundation, in honor and in memory of the late Allison Cassens, for the establishment and implementation of a Competitive Swimming Scholarship Fund.

Allison Cassens was a YMCA swimmer and also participated in many YMCA programs. At a very young age, Allison learned how to swim at the Edwardsville YMCA. Years later, Allison participated in competitive swimming at a very high level and trained and competed throughout the country in national and international competitions.

Sadly, at the young age of 33, Allison died after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Prior to her passing she established a Trust Fund that could be used to support some of the passions that she had. Larry Wehmeyer, a Trustee and representative of the Allison Cassens Foundation said, “The Trustees are honored to fulfill Allison’s dream and provide support to the YMCA for the implementation of this scholarship program.”

The scholarships recognize individuals for their commitment to the YMCA and their pursuit of competitive swimming at the collegiate level.

“The YMCA and the YMCA Foundation are extremely grateful for the continued support of the YMCA by the Allison Cassens Foundation,” Edwardsville YMCA CEO Gary Niebur said. “Competitive swimming was a passion of the Allison and she was indeed a very accomplished swimmer.”

“The recipients are exceptional young adults and in many ways they remind of me Allison. The grants given the awardees will help them achieve their goals as they pursue swimming at the collegiate level”. Once again, through Allison’s wishes the her Foundation has touch the lives of those that had passions very similar to hers.”

The four recipients met the criteria established for eligibility. This included being a 2017 graduating senior at Edwardsville High School, a member of the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team for a minimum of four years, and a member of the Edwardsville High School swim team for a minimum of two years with plans to continue their education at an accredited university or college and continue to pursue competitive swimming.

In addition, each recipient also presented a reflection essay on how YMCA competitive swimming or other YMCA programming impacted their life in the areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

## **Here is the list of scholarship recipients this year:**

### **Brian Baggette**

Brian has been a member of the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team for 13 years and a member of the Edwardsville High School Swim Team for the past four years. In addition to being a student athlete Brian has volunteered in several capacities in the community. Brian will attend McKendree University in Lebanon, IL in the fall and be a member of McKendree's Swimming and Diving Team.

### **Victoria Brady**

Victoria has been a member of the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team for 13 years and a member of the Edwardsville High School Swim Team for the past four years. In addition to being a student athlete Victoria has also volunteered in several capacities in the community. Victoria will attend Delta State University in Cleveland, MS in the fall and be a member of Delta State's Swimming and Diving Team.

### **Callista Poiter**

Callista has been a member of the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team for nine years and a member of the Edwardsville High School Swim Team for the past three years. In addition to being a student athlete Callista has also volunteered in several capacities in the community. Callista will attend Hendrix College in Conway, Ark., in the fall and will be a member of the Hendrix College Swimming and Diving Team.

### **Tyler Morris**

Tyler has been a member of the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team for 10 years and a member of the Edwardsville High School Swim Team for the past four years. In addition to being a student athlete Tyler has volunteered in several capacities in the community. Tyler will attend McKendree University in Lebanon, IL in the fall and will be a member of McKendree's Swimming and Diving Team.