



Edwardsville YMCA recipients of Allison Cassens Swimming Scholarship

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville YMCA recently announced that for the second year in a row they received a donation from the Allison Cassens Foundation, in honor and in memory of the late Allison Cassens, for her Competitive Swimming Scholarship Fund. The scholarship recognizes individuals for their commitment to the YMCA and their pursuit of competitive swimming at the collegiate level. This year there were five recipients who each received \$2,000 for their continued education.

The criteria included being a 2018 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. The two new recipients who met these criteria were seniors Hope Roderick and Emily Webb. This fall, Hope will swim for Millikin University and Emily will swim for Indiana State University.

The scholarship criteria were amended to allow for former recipients who are continuing their swimming career in college to reapply. Three of last year's recipients were once again rewarded for their hard work and dedication. They include McKendree teammates Brian Baggette and Tyler Morris, and Delta State University swimmer Victoria Brady. All three have excelled at the collegiate level and volunteered in several capacities in their community.

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. Monica Snook, Niebur Center Branch Director said, "We are very proud of these five recipients. The hours of hard work and dedication they have put in not only in the pool and at school, but also their commitment to community service is outstanding." Adding to these sentiments the Edwardsville YMCA CEO Tom Verheyen said. "These five young adults are very

impressive and we wish them continued success in their collegiate careers. The YMCA and the YMCA Foundation are also extremely grateful for the Allison Cassens Foundation and their continued support of the YMCA and the Breakers Competitive Swim Team.”

Allison Cassens and her foundation have made a huge impact on the Edwardsville YMCA. At a very young age, Allison learned how to swim at the Edwardsville YMCA and participated in YMCA programs. Years later, Allison participated in competitive swimming at a very high level and trained and competed throughout the country in National and International competitions. In addition to her love of swimming, she had a passion for education. Sadly, at the young age of 33, Allison passed away 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. In 2016, the YMCA’s Allison Cassens Early Childhood Development Center was renamed in her honor. 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 continued implementation of this scholarship program.”

For more information about the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team, please visit edwyswim.org.

Scholarship Recipients Biographies:

Hope Roderick

Hope has been a member of the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team for 9 years and a member of the Edwardsville High School Swim Team for the past four years. In addition to being a student athlete Hope has volunteered in several capacities in the community. Hope will attend Millikin University in Decatur, IL in the fall and be a member of Millikin’s Swimming and Diving Team.

Emily Webb

Emily has been a member of the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers Swim Team for 7 years and a member of the Edwardsville High School Swim Team for the past three years. In addition to being a student athlete Emily has volunteered in several capacities in the community. Emily will Indiana State University in Terre Haut, IN in the fall and be a member of Indiana State Swimming and Diving Team.

Brian Baggette

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

Victoria Brady

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

Tyler Morris

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