

Rick Edwards Memorial Scholarship Committee Report - 2025

The Rick Edwards Memorial Scholarship committee is proud to award the Rick Edwards Memorial Scholarship to the following 10 swimmers and divers: **Garret Abel** (Spring Lake), **Griffin Damutgh** (Northview), **Isabella Festerling** (Allegan), **Morgan Foune** (Otsego), **Brayden Hirschman** (St. Johns), **Abrianna Quito** (Grand Blanc), **Elizabeth Saum** (North Farmington), **Eric Smaby** (Dexter), **Kara Svoboda** (Churchill), and **Evelyn Wellesen** (Holly). The scholarship committee was made up of three MISCA members. We used an objective scoring criteria that has been developed over the past 33 years.

The MISCA Scholarship was first awarded in 1992 and was re-named the Rick Edwards Memorial Scholarship in memory of Rick Edwards. Rick Edwards was high school teacher, coach, and official for 37 years and was a leader and mentor for the hundreds of swimmers, divers, and water polo players throughout his memorable career. Rick's true and unparalleled passion was for the development of his swimmers not just on a competitive level, but in their human and personal growth. Rick looked at his dedication and commitment to swimming in a way that invigorated and challenged his athletes and inspired fellow coaches. He devoted long hours to improve aquatics on the organizational level as a member local, state, and national organizations always trying to enhance the broad world of swimming and water polo. Rick had an unselfish devotion to developing not only the technical swimmer, but most importantly the character and positive attributes of the highest nature for every person he coaches or taught. Rick Edwards lost his battle with cancer in 2009, but has left a lasting impression on the entire aquatics community.

21 Student athletes from 18 different schools applied for the scholarship. There were 11 boys and 10 girls who applied. Four of the applications were incomplete. Otsego led the way with 3 applications.

This scholarship is awarded based on a student-athlete's scholarship, extra-curricular activities, community involvement and community service. Applicants write a short personal essay and submitted three letters of reference in addition to documenting their school and community involvement.

All the applicants were very deserving of the scholarship. As always, we wish that we could have awarded more. There were many gifted applicants who did not receive money. The quality of this field is a tribute to the many swimming and diving programs in the state of Michigan and the character and quality of the type of athlete that chooses to swim or dive. Many of the personal statements testified to the importance of swimming in helping them develop discipline and time management skills. Congratulations to all who applied.