

**The Great Lakes Zone
Outstanding Swimmer 2026
“Atkinson Scholarship Award”**

This Award was established in 1991 by the Great Lakes Zone Swimming Committee to honor Paul Atkinson for his dedicated leadership in establishing this YMCA competitive aquatic program those years developing and promoting our Great Lakes Zone Championship, as we know it today. The intent of this award is to recognize a talented swimmer from our Zone who has represented their YMCA with distinction. This individual has been an outstanding competitive swimmer and contributor to their YMCA, as well as being a good student, active in the church and community, and all-around good citizen.

These awards are presented each year at the Zone Championship Meet based on the nominations submitted by a YMCA Swim Coach, YMCA Aquatic Director, or President of a YMCA Parents’ Club or a YMCA Executive Director. Nomination Forms along with proper documentation is to be sent to Bill Whatley and received by February 24, 2026. After that date the selection committee will meet, review all nominations, and make their choice(s) for 2026.

Continuing Education Scholarship

In 2002, the Great Lakes Zone Swim Committee added to this award a “Continuing Education Scholarship” stipend of \$1000.00 for the award winner(s), up to 3 athletes. This scholarship money will be sent to the school (trade school, 2-year college, college or university) of their choice and may be used for tuition fees, room and board (only if living on campus), or books and supplies. This is a one-time grant and cannot be renewed. Guidelines for disbursement of these Scholarship Funds will be outlined in a letter to each recipient at the 2025 Zone Championships.

PAST WINNERS:

YEAR: MALE:

1991 Jim Breen- Beavercreek Y
1992 Bryan Banzinger - Marietta Y
1993 Brad Flikkema - Grand Rapids SE Y
1994 Jason Turner Miami Co. Y Elizabeth
1995 Jeff Bell - Springfield Y
1996 Quinten Cupps -Hamilton West Y
1997 Brandon Mottice - Louisville Y
1998 Drew Fiden -Kettering Y
1999 Ben Douglas - Marietta Y
2000 Joshua Kline - Mt Vernon Y
2001 Michael Gustafson - Grand Rapids Y
2002 Steven Helmuth - Louisville Y
2003 Joshua Stephens - Hamilton West Y
2004 Derek Johnston - Macomb Y.
2005 Jacob Busch - S. Toledo Y
2006 Marcus Geer- Springfield Y
2007 no nominations
2008 Jeffery Shade - Flint Y
2009 Matthew Wilmot - Geauga Y
2010 Ian Richardson -Mt. Vernon Y
2011 Mack Biggert -Macomb Y
2012 Spenser Swanton Saginaw Y
2013 Charlie Fry - Blue Ash Y
2014 No male nominations
2015 Kameron Early - Columbus North
2016 Jake Klomp- Macomb Y, MI
2017 Mitchell Nottage
2018 Micheal Johnston - Wapakoneta OH
2019 Mitch Orozco - Miami County OH
2020 Andy Blum – Ross County, OH
2021 Evan Siberell, Ross County YMCA
2022 Matthew Mayhan, Springfield YMCA
2023 No male winner
2024 Ryan Blum, Ross County YMCA, OH
2025 Sdney Harbour – North Canton

FEMALE:

Sara Henninger - Beavercreek Y
Jennifer Crisman- Grand Rapids SE Y
Marnie Breen - Beavercreek Y
Anne Moore - Van Wert Y
Rachel Burrowbridge - Louisville Y
Mariah Butler - Marietta Y
Jill Crates - Lima Y
Noelle Bailey - Kettering Y
No Female this year.
Meredith Lynn Snook - Saginaw Y
Kelly Jones (KEY) So. Community Y
Shannon Bauer -Birmingham Y
Kyndra Huff - Hamilton West Y
Kahla Gress -Harrison County Y
Jackie Nagle - Jerry L. Garver Y
Kayla Faudree - Alliance YMCA
no nominations
Ashley Emerson - Youngstown Y
Evann Heidersbach -Vermilion Y
Calley Murphy - Birmingham Y
Chloe Meyer - Blue Ash Y
Charlotte Harris - Blue Ash Y
Kelsey Brebberman -Toledo Y
Courtney Speakman - Springfield OH
Rebecca Marra - Geauga OH
Corinne Harris - Tiffin, OH
No Female Nominations
Madison Blakesley - Riverside Y IN
Taylor Harris - Tiffin OH
Hannah Cech Lakota Y, OH
Macy May, Auglaize-Mercer YMCA
No female nominations
Marissa A Beckett, Putnam County Ottawa OH
Sydney Peterson, Green Family YMCA, OH
Reese Lucas – Coffman

Nomination Form
The Great Lakes Zone

Paul A. Atkinson YMCA Outstanding Swimmer Award

Each YMCA participating in the Great Lakes Swimming Championship is entitled and encouraged to send in nominations to receive "The Great Lakes YMCA Outstanding Swimmer Award." This form along with the summary of the individual's accomplishments and letters of recommendation must be sent to Bill Whatley, 5000 YMCA Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242-7498 (or) e-mail to Coachbill88@swimbash.com (email applications are best)
All materials must be received by February 24, 2026– applications will not be considered finalized until you get a confirmation email that the nomination has been accepted.

Please--Type or Print the information on this form:

Candidates Name:

(Last) _____ (First) _____

Age: _____ Sex: (M) ____ (F) ____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

YMCA Name: _____

YMCA Address: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: (_____) _____

School Name: _____

Church Name: _____

Nominated By: _____

Relationship: _____

YMCA Executive's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Coach's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Coach's E-Mail Address: _____

Primary phone number: (_____) _____

Age when youl started competitive swimming: _____

Number of years on your YMCA Swimming Team: _____

Number of years participated in G L Zone Championship: _____

Great Lakes Zone YMCA Outstanding Swimmer Award

Items to be included in the Candidate's recommendation summary:

YMCA Involvement (swim team, leader's club, volunteer, instructor, lifeguard, etc.). Also include - Church Involvement, School Involvement, Community Service, etc.

Nominator:

Attach a letter of recommendation covering the following by items: YMCA Executive, Physical Director, Aquatic Director, Swim Coach, Pastor, Principal, Teachers, Community Leader, or Swim Team Parents Club Officer.

I. Comments on the personal qualities of this candidate such as leadership, etc.

II. Indicate how this person has exemplified the YMCA purpose and values in daily life such as responsibility, dependability etc.

III. Why do you think this person should be considered for this award?

IV. School, Club Activities, and / or Organizations, which this person has been a member.

V. Church Involvement and Community Activities.

Please use additional pages and Nomination letters if needed to describe this candidate's qualities, values and interests.

Please keep your Nomination Packet to **6 pages or less**.

Please scan and email in **one** document to

Coachbill88@swimbash.com