Physically Challenged Athletes Scholarship Fund
University of Southern California • Heritage Hall MC 0602 • Los Angeles, CA 90089-0602

Please check out our website at www.swimwithmike.org to learn more about our fundraising activities, or to join our team as a Campaign Director!

Swim With Mike by the NUMBERS

- Nearly $22 million raised in scholarship support since 1981
- Total scholarship dollars awarded for 2018-19: $949,949
- 2018-19 Scholarship Recipients: 50 (36 universities nationwide)
- Total number of Swim With Mike scholarship recipients: 232
- Total sports represented: 60
- Universities represented: 123

We could not have accomplished this without your help. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, July 21 - Third Annual Bike-a-thon, Draper, Utah
Saturday, September 1 - Hawai‘i Swim With Mike in conjunction with Waikiki Roughwater Swim
Saturday, November 10 - USC Homecoming, USC vs Cal. Visit the SWM booth to meet recipients / get goodies / sign up to be a Campaign Director
Friday/Saturday, April 5 & 6, 2019 - SWM Wheelchair Basketball, Lyon Center, USC
Saturday, April 6 - 39th annual Swim With Mike, USC Uytengsu Aquatics Center

Also in 2019:
Swim With Mike Rose Bowl Aquatics Center – March 30 – April 5
Swim With Mike University of California San Diego - TBA
Swim With Mike University of California Santa Barbara - TBA

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Thank you for supporting the 38th annual Swim With Mike so generously. I am proud to report that this year’s campaign raised over $1.7 million, including $400,000 in new endowment gifts.

A huge thank you to the campaign directors, volunteers and friends who contributed to our success. Together, we are enhancing the lives of our recipients as they pursue their educational and professional goals. We are also grateful for the commitment of our current scholarship recipients and their families to help ensure that future deserving physically challenged students will benefit from our program.

Generous gifts were generated from the silent auction, ads in the yearbook, and the in-kind donations like the ten billboards around Southern California. All of these “ripples” of influence contribute to the wave of support for these young student-athletes facing challenges every day as they strive to reach their full potential.

This past year we were extremely fortunate to have received four new endowed scholarship commitments. These legacy gifts will ensure the Swim With Mike Physically Challenged Athletes Scholarship Fund will be available to future generations in perpetuity.

Meaningful endowment commitments came from our 2016 Marshall MBA alum scholarship recipient, Nick Ekbatani; SWM founding partner Mara Redden’s late sister Shawna Hunter and her husband Brad Hunt; the Furniss Family and Friends endowment; and a new endowed scholarship from the Rosemary Kraemer Raitt Foundation.

With tremendous appreciation, we thank these truly great and generous friends of Swim With Mike.

We have 15 graduating scholarship recipients who are preparing for the next exciting chapter of their lives. Please enjoy a few of these graduates’ words of gratitude about the impact your gifts have made. In addition, our SWM Board of Directors has approved 14 new scholarship recipients. We will feature these outstanding young men and women in the forthcoming Fall issue.

YOU have made a difference in the lives of these extraordinary people, and none of this would happen without you.

With gratitude,

Ron Oor
Founder & Executive Director
It was a great day to celebrate our Swim With Mike scholarship recipients for their strength, courage, determination and drive, success and independence. We were all inspired to see our current recipients and alums share their accomplishments, their plans, dreams and encouragement for a future of success. The mutual respect among these individuals and their families, which was initially born by gaining strength from tragedy, continues to expand and grow. These exceptional individuals exemplify the core of Swim With Mike, and we couldn’t be more proud.

Another high point of the day was to hear from a couple of our scholarship recipients at our recognition ceremony. This year Amberley Snyder (Utah State University Masters in School Counseling Fall 2017) and Zack Wentz (USC Economics 2018) shared their thoughts about the impact that their Swim With Mike scholarships have had, and will forever have, on their personal, educational, future professional lives and, especially, their independence.

Amberley and Zack represent our 54 nationwide scholarship community as they expressed their sincere appreciation to all the volunteers, donors and fellow recipients for the support that makes it possible for them to be the beneficiaries of so much generosity.

Other highlights included the Masters Swim Workout coached by USC Swim Coach Dave Salo, the tremendous Dive Show, USC Song Girls and Spirit Squad, the Biggest Splash Contest, The Silent Auction and Raffle, the Football Player/Song Girl Inner Tube Relay, the Wheelchair Basketball, a fantastic BBQ and the presentation of the Volunteer of the Year award to Bruce Furniss.

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And of course what would Swim With Mike be without the Song Girls’ crazy diving exhibition?
Our Graduates

Congratulations to our 2018 Swim With Mike Grads! Here are selected quotes from our recipients’ Senior letters to our growing family of donors, volunteers and community.

"Today, I want to thank you for helping me achieve a very important milestone in my life. I’m graduating with my Masters degree in financial Engineering from Claremont Graduate University. I’m sure that this accomplishment will change my life for the very best, and without your support I would not have been able to achieve it."

Santos Acosta Corrales
Claremont Graduate University
M.S. Financial Engineering
(Spring 2018)

"I want to begin this letter by thanking you for your unwavering generosity and support throughout my tenure at USC. Swim With Mike has put me in the position to obtain my career objective and gave me the unparalleled opportunity to pursue both an undergraduate and Masters degree at the school of my choice."

Corben Brooks
University of Southern California
Masters in Health Administration
(Summer 2018)

"Thank you for your generous support of Swim With Mike, an organization that means the world to me. My gratitude for you is immense. The opportunities and support offered by the Swim With Mike Family cannot be quantified; the gifts of education and encouragement are priceless, and enable me to achieve success beyond my dreams."

Michael Fritchner
University of Southern California
Masters in Business Administration
(Spring 2018)

"I am writing to thank you for your support of my education at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health throughout my four years of medical school. Your support has allowed me to attend medical school and fulfill my dream of becoming a physician. For that, I am extremely grateful and humbled."

Aaron Loy
University of Wisconsin
School of Medicine
(Spring 2018)

"I would like to personally thank you for your generosity, which has allowed me to complete my undergraduate degree at the Harvard University Extension School this year. It has been an enlightening and life changing experience, which would not have been possible if it was not for Swim With Mike."

Christopher O’Brien
Harvard University Extension School
Government
(Spring 2018)

"Thank you for your generous hearts, I assure you that you are enabling great people to do great things. I cannot thank you enough for your generosity and support for myself and all the other recipients. You have changed our lives."

Jeffrey Mahlum
University of Wisconsin
School of Medicine
(Spring 2018)
Our Graduates

Continued from previous page.

My time at USC would not have been possible without the help of the board. The support and love given to the recipients is monumental and I want to continue to serve the Swim With Mike family for years to come. Thank you once again for your commitment and generosity.

Zach Pickett
University of Southern California
Business Administration
(Spring 2018)

I would like to start by thanking you for your support of my Swim With Mike Scholarship for the last four years I have been attending UCSB. I will be graduating in June and I greatly appreciate the support from Swim With Mike and feel honored to be a part of the SWM family.

Ryan Porteous
UC Santa Barbara
Mechanical Engineering
(Spring 2018)

Now I know what I want, and I know that I do not want to let down people like you who have donated time and money so that I can be successful. I am forever grateful for your charitable contributions and more importantly, your recognition of the great potential we all have in ourselves. Thank you.

Garrett Robinson
Southwestern University
School of Law
(Spring 2018)

Continued from previous page.

Your support of Swim With Mike has allowed me and the program the financial freedom to take risks, to grow as people and scholars and to develop the toolkit to become independent, contributing members of society and truly live a life beyond our disabilities.

Kevin Schallert
University of Southern California
Masters in Business Administration
(Spring 2018)

I would personally like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your gracious donation to the Swim With Mike organization. Your generosity allows future scholars, like me, the opportunity to make an impact in the world after traumatic and unforeseen circumstances.

Cory Sullivan
University of Southern California
Masters of Social Work
(Spring 2018)

I am writing you to express my utmost appreciation for your continuous support and belief in Swim With Mike. Swim With Mike has not only given me the opportunity to attend such a prestigious university like USC, but has laid the groundwork for me to thrive perpetually.

Zach Wentz
University of Southern California
Economics
(Summer 2018)
Each and every SWM Campaign Director is directly impacting a Swim With Mike scholarship recipient’s future success. We thank our many friends who have set up a campaign online, and all those who just dig in and do it to raise funds for our outstanding SWM recipients.

This year we had some fun-filled events, with more to come! We like to keep the fun in fundraising all year long – please join us!

Natalie and Nancy Buchoz
Natalie Buchoz and mom Nancy hosted their Third Annual Karma Ride at Gritcycle in Costa Mesa. The event was sold out hours after announced. Good friend Jake Olson addressed the group with an energizing talk about the difference Swim With Mike has made in his life thus far, and will forever.

Elizabeth Winston
Elizabeth Winston hosted her Fourth Annual Swim with EW and Walk With Annie event in Redondo Beach. Friends and family joined in Elizabeth’s one-mile ocean swim and Annie’s one-mile walk to raise funds for SWM. Following the exercise, folks gathered at Lisa Hansen’s home for a sumptuous brunch.

Paddle With Pollard
Swim With Mike scholarship recipient Josh Pollard (USC Mechanical Engineering 2020) relies on his paddle skateboard for function and fitness as he traverses the USC campus on his five-foot long skateboard and six-foot paddle with a rubber ball at the end.

As a Campaign Director, Josh took this effort to another level when he took to the road with “Paddle With Pollard.”

Josh paddled from his home town of Lake San Marcos to UC San Diego – a 27-mile trek, and just a bit more than a marathon. In the spirit of a distance runner, he calculated a time split of 9:25/mile in taking four and a quarter hours overall to complete the journey.

Thanks to Josh and to his campaign sponsors for making this such a SWM success!

Become a Campaign Director yourself! Just visit our website at swimwithmike.org and take a look at some of the other campaigns, or contact us at swimwithmike@gmail.com.

Join the Wave!

Josh Pollard says: “Swim With Mike is an incredible organization that helps disabled athletes realize their dreams of attending college. SWM has helped me attend USC and pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering and computer Programming.”
The Satellites: Spreading the SWM story

UC Santa Barbara
Kelly Walsh always puts on a great day to support Swim With Mike at her satellite event!

The fourth Annual UC Santa Barbara event was chock full of fun with well-attended activities at the pools.

A climbing wall, log rolling, swim lessons, canoe battleship competition, biggest splash contest, team relay races! AND of course a fabulous general store, raffle and silent auction for tons of desirable items.

UCSB SWM graduating recipients Ryan Porteous (Mechanical Engineering) and Aaron Loy (Economics and Accounting) were on hand to participate and greet the crowd. Both shared with us all that they were grateful to be part of the SWM family during their days at UCSB and plan to continue to actively support Swim With Mike as alums.

UC San Diego
It’s always a great day when you start with lots of sunshine at the pool and free pancakes generously provided by the UCSD Masters Swim team! Then, it just got better!

In between the synchronized swimming exhibition, the jovial relay races, hamster balls and log roll, we heard from several SWM scholarship alums and current recipients about the educational, professional and personal impact SWM has made in their lives.

Patrick Ivison (USC Cinematic Arts 2016) is currently a writer/producer at Row Five – an up-and-coming film and commercial production company.

Current recipients Blake Steineke (Cal State San Marcos, Business 2021) and Kie Fuji (UCSD Pre-Med 2018) brought us all up to date about their on-campus accomplishments, goals for the future and how SWM’s support has changed their lives.

Rose Bowl Aquatics
For the past eight years the Rose Bowl Aquatics Center has hosted a week-long warm up to Swim With Mike. This year was the best ever, with Head Masters Swim Team Coach Chad Durieux leading the way.

“We have looked forward to this time of year every year,” he said. “The opportunity to help another organization, especially one that we are directly linked to has been an honor and privilege. With most of our 200-athlete team participating each year, we have been able to raise on average $6,000 a year.”

The event at the Rose Bowl starts Friday before the main Swim with Mike USC event, and is open to anyone that wishes to raise money in any way they want during their workout times. They have a huge culminating event on Friday morning, swimming a full 10,000m workout in which anyone can participate.

The next morning they go to the USC event and swim in the Masters Workout and it’s been growing in numbers every year.

Hawaii
The 14th Annual Swim With Mike Hawaii, which once again will be doing double duty as the 49th Annual Waikiki Roughwater Swim, will be held on Saturday, September 1.

The Waikiki Roughwater Swim is one of the longest-running and most iconic open water races in the world. Many Olympians and World Champions have participated in previous years in this race that served as inspiration and the original course of the Ironman Triathlon.

Swimmers raise money for and donate money to Swim With Mike. Family members work the Swim With Mike booth at the finish line and scholarship recipients help with the awards ceremony.

Until this year, no scholarship recipient has swum the race. Will this be the first?
Michael Fritschner (USC MBA 2018) was honored to be selected as the USC Marshall MBA Class of 2018 commencement speaker. What a great way to culminate his USC experience! And what an experience it has been. Mike started his undergraduate degree in 2009 as Swim With Mike scholarship recipient majoring in International Relations at USC Dornsife. He excelled in school, but in October of that year his healthy, strong, marathon-running father died unexpectedly of a heart attack. Mike decided that he would drop out of school to stay home with his mom, even though she was against it. “I just didn’t see how she could survive without Dad.” At the funeral service was a man no one knew. It was Don Ludwig, a Swim With Mike Board member, who insisted that Mike return to school on Monday, throw himself into academics and activities and make his father proud. “He assured me that the SWM family would support me every step of the way, offering anything I could possibly need.

“I took his advice and returned to school and graduated in 2013.” He even walked across the stage with leg braces and the help of a walker to receive his degree.

Mike then moved to Baltimore to work in product management for a medical device company. He became determined to increase his ability to impact corporate performance, and knew that he would get those tools at USC Marshall School of Business’ MBA program. Mike was welcomed back into both the Trojan and the Swim With Mike Families during his two-year graduate program. Mike receiving his degree from James Ellis, dean of the USC Marshall School of Business.

“Each challenge is an opportunity for growth rather than a roadblock as we Fight On!”

At USC Marshall School of Business’ MBA program, Mike was welcomed back into both the Trojan and the Swim With Mike Families during his two-year graduate program. Mike was welcomed back into both the Trojan and the Swim With Mike Families during his two-year graduate program.

Oh – and somehow he found time to marry the “woman of my dreams” one week before his graduation. Mike’s commencement message to his fellow graduates, their families, friends, and the Marshall faculty was that the valued traits of the Trojan Family are Compassion, Inspiration and, most importantly, embracing the USC motto to “Fight On!”

Amberley Snyder started her career early, riding horses at age three and starting rodeo competition when she was seven, competing in barrel racing, pole bending and breakaway roping. In 2009 as a high school junior she won the National Little Britches Rodeo Association All-Around Cowgirl World Championship. She was also active in Future Farmers of America, and was elected the UTAH FFA State President.

She was looking forward to college, finishing out her FFA office term, and competing in college rodeo. Of course, she was completely unaware of the magnitude of what was to come.

Things really changed that year. She was 19 years old when she rolled her truck in the snow and was thrown against a telephone pole. After five hours of surgery, the doctors advised that she would never regain feeling below her waist. It changed her life forever, but not her competitive spirit. Amberley was physically paralyzed – but her mental determination was stronger than ever. Her top priority was not just to walk, but to ride her horses again.

Sounds amazing, but 18 months after her accident she was back in the saddle. She mounted “Power,” her beloved horse, strapped in on the saddle with her seatbelt and started her return to the professional riding circuit as the only paralyzed barrel racer in the United States.

“I was riding at a national championship, with my seatbelt secure, when USC coach John Baxter saw me and encouraged me to reach out to SWM, which I did. That changed my life forever and gave me the opportunity to live my dream.”

“We are all going to have that moment when we need help. That’s where Swim With Mike came in for me. Swim With Mike made a huge difference in my success. To have an organization that helps those with life challenges has been a huge blessing not only in my school career, but also with knowing I can plan for a broader future. I am so thankful to be a part of the Swim With Mike family and hope to give back to the people who helped me succeed.”
Swim With Mike’s Fourth Annual Wheelchair Basketball Tournament presented by UBS was spearheaded again this year by the event’s founder and SWM Scholarship Recipient Zack Wentz (USC Economics 2018). It was our biggest ever with eight teams vying for the victory.

As in the past three years, any and all USC students and Faculty are welcome to participate. This year’s teams included a Swim With Mike Team, a Lambda Chi Alpha Team, a Women’s Club Basketball Team and a Trojan Knights Team. Also involved was the USC Men’s Basketball Team, the USC Women’s Basketball Team and the Trojan Marching Band. How could this NOT be fun?!

We expanded the schedule, with the prelims on the Friday before our Swim With Mike Event and the championship match held on event day at the Lyon Recreation Center, located adjacent to the USC Uytengsu Aquatics Center. Adding to the rivalry and suspense, both Team Captains are SWM scholarship recipients and fellow Knights, Zach Pickett (Team Trojan Knights) and Zack Wentz (Team Swim With Mike). The center photo, below, shows the game’s initial tip-off with Pickett #22 and Wentz #13.

It really worked out well, allowing us to encourage all of our guests to join in the fun and cheer on the teams and players.

In a thrilling squeaker of a championship game, Team Trojan Knights outlasted the defending champions Team Swim With Mike by the score of 21-20.

Sounds like a great set-up for next year’s rematch!

Join us for the excitement, Friday, April 5th, prelims, and Saturday, April 6th for the Championship Game at the 2019 Swim With Mike event!
The Centofante Anniversary Club – $3,900
Started by Al Centofante at the 10th Anniversary of Swim With Mike to honor each anniversary with a $100 gift for every year the Fund has been in existence. As we enter our 39th year, the donation level is $3,900, and is in keeping with Al’s tradition. The Centofante Family Foundation matches all new increases and Club member gifts.

The Tod Spieker and Masters Challenge
Tod Spieker will match all monies raised from swimmers participating in the Swim With Mike Masters Challenge.

Lane Sponsor – $1,000
Sponsor a Lane at the upcoming 39th Swim With Mike event. Donations are recognized at the pool on the day of the event and in our Yearbook.

Sponsor a Lane at All Swim With Mike Satellite Events – $1,500
Sponsor a Lane at our USC Swim With Mike event and all SWM satellite events.

Swim With Mike Wheelchair Basketball 5th Annual Team Sponsor – $1,000
Be a Team Sponsor at our newly expanded Swim With Mike event.

The Miller Challenge – $390
The G. Willard Miller Foundation has contributed over $500,000 to Swim With Mike. Through the generosity of Stephen Miller and Board member Michael Thomas, the Foundation matches all $390 contributions; $10 for each year since our inception.

ENDOWMENTS
An Endowment fund may be created with a minimum $100,000 gift for either scholarship or operating funds and is payable over a five-year period.

The principal of the gift remains intact while the interest funds generated are distributed to the Physically Challenged Athletes Scholarship Fund.

The Swim With Mike Endowment Fund currently has more than $3.5 million; our goal is to reach $5-10 million to support our mission in perpetuity.

We encourage endowments gifts to current accounts, or if you are interested in establishing your own account, please let us know!
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Swim With Mike

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