



Erin Dodson Memorial Scholarship

Background Information

Erin Dodson graduated in 2004 from Altoona Area High School. She was a 3-sport student athlete. She played volleyball, basketball and softball. Although she loved all sports; her true passion was volleyball. She was a 2-time Pennsylvania Volleyball Coaches Association (PVCA) First Team All-State player. In the Fall of 2004, she attended Juniata College in Huntingdon, PA. Just two weeks into her freshman year, she was diagnosed with brain cancer.

For the next 6 ½ years, Erin battled the disease. She took on cancer every day. The cancer and the side effects from treatments played havoc on her body. She lost her hair to radiation treatments – it never grew back. She could no longer drive a car because she had problems with vision and depth perception. She struggled with short-term memory loss and she had a jerk in her left leg when she walked but she absolutely refused to use a walking cane. With all that the cancer took from her, this tall, bald and beautiful young woman continued to live her life as fully as possible with grace, a sense of humor, and a positive attitude.

She tried to return to her academic studies at Juniata College twice. The first time was just one year after her initial diagnosis. She couldn't walk and used a motorized scooter to get around the college campus, but the cancer came back and she had to leave her studies again for more treatments.

Recurrence of the cancer was the most difficult times for Erin, but she always projected a positive attitude and a true concern for others. When talking to people about her cancer, she would say, "Don't worry. I'll be okay. Are you okay?" When Erin couldn't play sports anymore, she became the ultimate team player by cheering in the stands for others, or giving them a high-five for their accomplishments. When she would be out in public and she would notice a small child staring at her, she would immediately kneel down and say "I was sick and I lost my hair. It's okay." She loved children and wanted them to be comfortable with people who looked different.

Erin did volunteer work at a local hospital and participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. She was a Buddy for the Blair County Miracle League and she was an active ambassador for childhood cancer awareness through the Brian Morden Foundation. She loved listening to music on the radio and her favorite movies were "Forrest Gump" and "The Sandlot."

The Erin Dodson Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to young men and women who participate in any high school athletics, who appreciate doing volunteer work, and have completed all parts of this application. Their higher education course of study should include either education, communications or medicine. The maximum award for an individual scholarship is \$1,000. Applicants should be US citizens and a high school graduate as of the summer of 2024.

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Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Permanent Address _____

Permanent Phone # _____ Email address _____

Current School _____

Current GPA _____ Graduation Date _____

School attending in 2024-2025 _____

Intended Major field of study _____

Intended Minor field of study _____

Extracurricular Activities (clubs, school, church or community volunteer efforts, work experience)

Awards or Honors (received during junior high and high school) _____

Additional information you'd like to have the selection committee consider

Please answer the following questions on another sheet of paper (typed or handwritten):

1. Who has been the most influential person in your life and why?
2. How would you describe to someone the experience of playing any kind of sport – what kind of life’s lessons have you learned from your teammates or your coach or even from an opponent?
3. What course of study do you plan to pursue in college? Why did you choose it?

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

With this application, please submit a letter of recommendation/support (excluding family members) that would attest to your character.

Please return the completed application to
The Guidance Office
At your high school

Application should be returned by March 31, 2024