

2025

Grand Island Mission Champions



**A Lifetime of
Leadership & Service to
the YMCA**



Grand Island YMCA



2025 YMCA CHAMPIONS BOOK

DALE BECKMAN

Every year we will select a person to dedicate our YEAR OF CHAMPIONS. This is the inaugural year for Grand Island. The dedication was an easy choice with Dale Beckman as our first recipient of YMCA CHAMPION BOOK in honor of **Dale Beckman!**

In 1963, just two days after graduating from college, Dale Beckman began his career with the YMCA. He received his diploma on a Saturday, and by Monday morning he was walking through the doors of the Grand Island YMCA, ready to begin his first job.

What started as a position quickly became a lifelong calling.

Dale began as the program and fitness director at the old YMCA building on 4th Street. He taught gym classes for elementary school kids, who proudly earned points and small awards for achievements such as wearing their YMCA shirts. He coached junior high basketball, led calisthenics classes, and taught countless children how to swim.

Beyond sports and fitness, Dale believed in building character and connection. He served as a leader for YMCA Indian Guides, a father-son program designed to strengthen family bonds through activities inspired by Native American themes. In 1970, Dale stepped into the role of Executive Director, a position he would hold until his retirement in 1998. During his leadership, the YMCA experienced tremendous growth, including the opening of its current location in the 1970s—a milestone that shaped the organization's future.

The YMCA was also central to his own family's life. All four of his children participated in activities there—swimming, baseball, basketball—growing up in the same halls where their father worked.



Dale developed a passion for racquetball, traveling across the country to compete in tournaments. He and his doubles partner, Craig Olson, even won a national championship in Las Vegas. They credited their success to practicing at the YMCA, where the low ceilings helped them perfect a powerful “kill shot” that gave them an edge over opponents.

Though officially retired, Dale never truly left. He continues to serve as a board member and can still be found most mornings at the YMCA sharing stories with the coffee group. After all these years, he says he has stayed because of the people. For Dale Beckman, the YMCA was never just a workplace—it was home.

**WRITTEN BY JEAN ANN FLETCHER & NATE SMITH
NOMINATED BY THE MANAGEMENT TEAM**



2025 YMCA CHAMPIONS BOOK
**YMCA AMBASSADORS & TEAM,
SERVICE, SPIRIT, & MISSION**

TEAM CHAMPIONS:

(Open to all team members who go above and beyond their duties and responsibility)

**Heidi Magana, Shawn Johnson, Ashley Ontiveros Harmon, Jennifer Terman,
Lauren Bailey, Laura Maxon, Keisha Oneill, & Dylan Geoffroy**

SPIRIT CHAMPIONS:

(Open to all team members, volunteers, donors, and friends who volunteer for an event at the YMCA and did 'a little bit extra')

Jack Miettinen, Martin Bolles, & Jessica Hoback

MISSION CHAMPIONS:

(Open to all team members, volunteers, donors, and friends who volunteer for many events and never hesitate to help. These special people 'did more than we asked')

Sherry Neid, Gary Houdek, & Live Well Therapy

SERVICE CHAMPIONS:

5 yrs: Josephine Valdez, Mary Chalupsky, Nicole Renae Michalaski

15 yrs: Linda Bruha & Amy Bomback

45 years: Jane Earnest



2025 HEALTHY HEART CHAMPIONS

41 Members

To highlight our members who exceeded 200 visits in one year to our YMCA!



Scott Kalinsky



Samaan KuKu



Jack Miettinen



Lacie Wojtalewicz



Jon Ketterling



Iver Frazeli

NO PICTURES FROM THESE MEMBERS

Jose Dominguez

Dale Papstein

Susan Schwab

Doug Herbek

Jose Molinse

Member's Name	# of Visits
Lacie Wojtalewicz	381
Iver Frazell	344
Dale Papstein	341
Jack Miettinen	291
Jon Ketterling	285
Scott Kalinski	282
Samaan KuKu	268
Susan Schwab	267
Jose Dominguez	262
Jose Molinae	262
Doug Herbek	261
Jeff Palu	256
Mark Halk	253
Marilyn Hayes	245
Michael Schenk	241
Melanie O'Boylee	239
NyaGua Choul	234
Kelly Olsufka	234
Adrienne Thomas	234
Jerry Lueth	233
James Fox	232
Derrick Gomez	230
Andrew Kyes	226
Janet Vavricek	225
Maximo Rodriguez	224
Michelle Morganflash	221
Jason Moritz	220
Jean Wenzl	218
Greg Ashby	217
Janet Novotny	217
Linda Bosard	216
Gerard Piccolo	214
Justin Shavlik	213
Devon Huebert	211
Jorge Martinez Reyes	211
Marcia Theis	208
Judy Rodriguez	206
Danny Ewoldt	205
Adrian Garcia	202
Anita Dankerta	201
Bette Pore	201



2025 HEALTHY LIVING CHAMPION

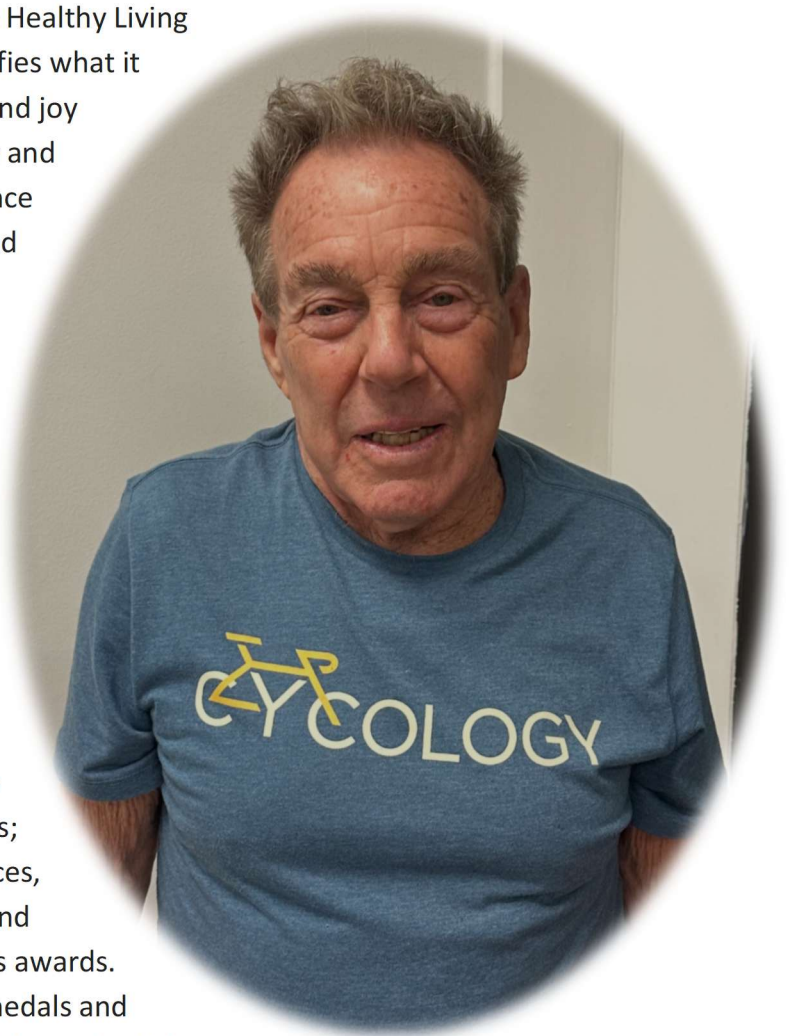
JACK MEITTINEN

To highlight one of our focus areas, this award is given to a member who demonstrated Healthy Living in her workout or commitment to the Y. This member is dedicated to her health and well-being and is living proof of their committee at the Y!

WAY TO GO JACK!

Jack Miettinen is the true definition of a Healthy Living Champion. At 83 years young, he exemplifies what it means to live with purpose, discipline, and joy through a lifelong commitment to fitness and community. A devoted YMCA member since moving to Grand Island in 1993, Jack joined to stay healthy and quickly made the Y a central part of his daily life. He believes it is the best place in town to work out and fully embraces everything it has to offer, especially the friendships he has built along the way. Most mornings, Jack arrives at 5 a.m. sharp, beginning a routine that would challenge individuals half his age. He rides the bike twice a day, and also runs and swims, demonstrating remarkable endurance, strength, and consistency. His dedication extends beyond daily workouts; his summer calendar is filled with bike races, senior games, track and field events, and triathlons, where he has earned numerous awards.

Yet Jack's impact reaches far beyond medals and milestones. He brings energy and creativity to the YMCA community by decorating the Spin Room each Christmas with recycled bike parts transformed into festive trees and wreaths. He enthusiastically dresses up for Halloween and St. Patrick's Day and is always ready with a good story for the morning coffee group. Jack is living proof that healthy living has no age limit and that dedication, positivity, and community spirit create a life well lived.



WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY LINDA BOSARD



2025 CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT CHAMPION

ANNETTE HARB

This award will recognize a youth, a counselor, or a volunteer from our Childcare Development Center who best exemplifies the YMCA values of Caring, Honesty, respect, and Responsibility.

CONGRATUALIONS ANNETTE!

Annette Harb, a member of the YMCA Childcare staff, exemplifies the YMCA's values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, & Responsibility. Annette possesses the ability to recognize what needs to be done and assumes the responsibility to make sure it is accomplished. For example, when our center adopted a new curriculum, a process that can be overwhelming to many individuals, Annette willingly took on the task so that we were ready to implement the curriculum this past fall.

Annette's caring qualities are very evident in her volunteering to organize and conduct events for families and staff such as Preschool Graduation and small thank you's to the staff for all they do. Annette has a real knack for coordinating such events and making all feel welcome. Each day, Annette's caring and love of children shines forth in her classroom where she makes learning a fun experience for students and their families.

Childcare can be a challenging job.

Often teachers are confronted with frustrating situations. Annette meets these challenges with patience and respect for whomever she is dealing with and helps formulate a positive plan moving forward. Finally, Annette is a true model of Healthy Living for us all. She gracefully balances a busy family life with work and still finds time to teach several Spin classes each week at our YMCA. Her dedication to her own personal well-being as well as the health of others in our community is an inspiration.

These qualities make Annette an excellent candidate for the Annual Champion in Character Development.

WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY ERIN MEYER





2025 VOLUNTEER CHAMPION

PEGGY JORGENSEN

This award is given to a volunteer who demonstrates outstanding service to the Y in the past year. This could be program volunteers, board member, committee person, or general volunteer activities. Volunteers are the BACKBONE to our operation! **THANK YOU PEGGY!**

Over the past 13 years, Peggy Jorgansen has dedicated countless hours to strengthening our community through tireless volunteer work, volunteer recruitment and exceptional fundraising leadership. Most notably, she has spent countless hours with the State Fair Marathon, Halfity Half, Dashing for Donuts and Hog Wild. These fundraising events have directly supported scholarships for youth programs, swimming lessons, after school care, childcare, and family wellness initiatives.

Peggy approaches the Y's fundraising donations, but by building telling the Y story as it Island and the Through personal partnerships, and she has helped donors changing impact of

Beyond supporting the Y's truly leads by example and Whether mentoring new community events, or stepping in

consistently goes above and beyond. Her positive energy and unwavering commitment inspire both staff and fellow volunteers alike.

The true measure of Peggy's impact can be seen in the families served. Because of her dedication, children have access to safe spaces after school, teens develop leadership skills, and families receive critical support regardless of their ability to pay. This is the YMCA mission in action.

For outstanding leadership, extraordinary fundraising achievement, and a heart fully committed to service, I can think of no one more deserving of the YMCA Volunteer Champion Award than Peggy!

WRITTEN BY CARA LEMBURG | NOMINATED BY CHAD KNIGHT



efforts not by simply asking for meaningful relationships and pertains to impacting Grand surrounding communities. outreach, community inspiring storytelling, understand the life-YMCA programs.

fundraising efforts, Peggy lives the Y's mission. volunteers, organizing wherever help is needed, she



2025 EMPLOYEE CHAMPION

SHAWN JOHNSON

This award is given to one of our special team members who provided outstanding leadership, great customer service, extremely dedicated to their profession or job at the YMCA. They have exemplified our core values throughout the year and GO the EXTRA MILE! **THANK YOU SHAWN!**

Shawn Johnson has been a dedicated part of the YMCA family for nearly two decades. Beginning his journey in September 2007

at just 17 years old, Shawn stepped into what would become much more than a job — it became a lifelong passion. Over the past 18 years, he has grown alongside the YMCA, building meaningful relationships and leaving a lasting impact on both members and fellow team members.

Today, Shawn proudly serves as a Team Member Champion, a role that perfectly reflects his commitment to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment. He thrives on connecting with the YMCA's morning members, starting their days with positive energy, conversation, and a friendly smile. For Shawn, these daily interactions are more than routine — they are opportunities to build community and make people feel valued.

Throughout his years of service, Shawn has witnessed growth, change, and countless memorable moments. His dedication goes beyond responsibilities; it is rooted in genuine care for the people who walk through the doors each day. The YMCA is not just where he works — it is his home away from home.

After 18 years, Shawn cannot imagine life without the YMCA. His loyalty, enthusiasm, and heart for service truly embody what it means to be a Team Member Champion. Through every greeting and every connection, Shawn continues to strengthen the spirit of community that defines the YMCA.



WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY TERESA SINNER

2025 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

JAYE MONTER



To highlight one of our focus areas, this award is given to a member, volunteer, staff person, or program participants who demonstrated Social Responsibility. It is one that focus areas on giving back to the Y and our community. As many people know, it is our responsibility to make sure good and positive things are happening! **GREAT WORK JAYE!**

In my short tenure as CEO in Grand Island, it became very apparent who had been carrying much of the operational weight for the YMCA. While Jaye Monter was serving as Board President, she was doing far more than traditional board governance. She was actively engaged with staff, helping guide decisions, advising on vendor relationships, assisting with special contracts and bids, and ensuring the YMCA remained steady and financially sound. Jaye served nine years on the Board of Directors, including three years as Board President. Even in her professional role as Controller at Chief Construction, she was deeply invested in the Grand Island YMCA. During her tenure, she worked alongside only one permanent CEO; the other leadership transitions involved Interim CEOs. This instability naturally required her to step into a broader leadership role to maintain continuity and accountability.

Like many nonprofit leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic, Jaye had to rise to significant challenges. She worked tirelessly to stabilize finances, ensure payroll and expenses were covered, and maintain operational sustainability. She leveraged community relationships to secure improvements for the facility, including coordinating with a local business to provide new rugs throughout the YMCA building. She consistently served as an advocate for the organization during some of its most challenging seasons. Beyond her governance and financial leadership, Jaye has always led by example. She has been a steady and committed aerobics instructor, modeling healthy living and service to members firsthand.

Financial oversight was one of her greatest strengths. She played a key role in leading the Finance Committee and brought a high level of diligence and accountability to the organization's financial reporting. At my first Finance Committee meeting, I quickly learned the depth of her involvement and standards. In my 30 years as a CEO, I have never witnessed a volunteer invest so much time combining multiple financial statements into one comprehensive report for clarity and transparency. It is an excellent concept—but one that requires significant time, precision, and alignment. Jaye did that consistently.

Her attention to payroll oversight was equally thorough. When I first reviewed payroll, I relied on our Payroll Manager to walk me through the details. Shortly after, Jaye followed up through an email that the payroll had been reviewed inappropriately. She then explained the established process—that the Finance Committee reviews and approves payroll. Her diligence reflected her commitment to accountability and proper governance. Jaye Monter has watched, coached, mentored, and safeguarded the financial and operational health of the Grand Island YMCA for nearly a decade. Her leadership, integrity, and unwavering commitment to social responsibility make her more than deserving of the 2025 Social Responsibility Champion

recognition. **WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY CHAD KNIGHT**





2025 MEMBER CHAMPION

JEAN WENZL

To recognize and highlight one of our members based on their workout history, relationship building within the YMCA and our community, volunteers and serves on committees. This special member demonstrates all three of our focus areas, follows our core values, and is a great advocate! **YOU ARE TOO AWESOME JEAN**

Jean Wenzl is the true definition of a YMCA Member Champion. At 82 years young, Jean has been a devoted member of the YMCA for 25 years, first encouraged to join by her daughter, Angie. What began as simple walks around the track soon grew into active participation in fitness classes and a deep connection to the Y community. A Grand Island native, Jean and her husband Mike have raised three children, and she brings that same sense of family and care to everyone she meets at the Y.



Jean's impact reaches far beyond her impressive workout history. She is a passionate advocate for the YMCA, consistently sharing its mission within the community and leading by example. She generously volunteers her time at events, provides financial support through donations and equipment purchases, and quietly helps fellow members in need—whether with a warm meal, kind encouragement, or financial assistance. Her compassion and generosity reflect the very heart of the YMCA.

Jean often shares that her favorite part of the Y is the togetherness—the workouts, the friendships, and the feeling of belonging. To her, the YMCA is more than a place to exercise; it is a community and a family. Being part of Y culture has changed her life, deepening her appreciation for connection and service, and that spirit continues to shine through in everything she does.

WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY LINDA BOSARD

2025 PARTNER IN HEALTH CHAMPION

JBS



This award honors companies for their Corporate Membership with our Partner in Health program. More importantly, this company has devoted endless time and commitment to their employees and to the YMCA to help promote healthy spirit, mind, and body in the workplace. **CONGRATULATIONS JBS!**

For more than three decades, JBS has quietly and consistently invested in something more powerful than business growth – people.

In 2026, that commitment shines brighter than ever as JBS is recognized as the Grand Island YMCA “Partner in Health Champion.”



For over 30 years, JBS has stood side-by-side with the YMCA as a dedicated Partner in Health, believing that strong employees build strong families, and strong families build a strong community. What began as a partnership rooted in wellness has grown into a culture of care that reaches far beyond the workplace.

Today, 82 JBS employees and their families hold memberships at the Grand Island YMCA – a powerful reflection of JBS’s commitment to supporting healthy lifestyles. But those numbers only tell part of the story. Behind each membership is a parent finding energy after a long shift to play with their kids. A team member training for their first 5K. A family discovering healthy habits together. A coworker manages stress through group fitness classes or finding community on the basketball court. JBS doesn’t just encourage wellness – they make it accessible. By investing in YMCA memberships, JBS removes barriers and sends a clear message to their employees. Your health matters. Your well-being matters. You matter.

Their 30-year legacy as a Partner in Health demonstrates consistency, leadership, and vision. While many partnerships come and go, JBS has remained steadfast – supporting programs, strengthening workforce wellness, and uplifting the broader Grand Island community year after year.

In 2026, being named “Partner in Health Champion” is more than a title. It’s a celebration of decades of impact. It’s recognition of a company that understands that true success isn’t measured only in production, but in people. JBS continues to lead by example – championing health, empowering employees, and investing in a healthier Grand Island for generations to come.

WRITEN & NOMINATED BY BROOKE FRIES



2025 COURAGE CHAMPION

JON KETTERLING

This award will be given to a YMCA member, program participant, donor, or volunteer who demonstrates courage in their activities at the YMCA. Whether it be a person who has severe arthritis, a blind kid playing basketball, or a member who defies and beats all the odds for his/her dedication and commitment to health. **KEEP IT UP JON!**

Jon Ketterling first came to the Grand Island YMCA as an avid racquetball player. His job took him away from the courts for many years, until he returned in 2019. At a Trace Adkins concert, he noticed that he struggled to go upstairs. His doctor informed him that he had cancer that he had eaten away at his right femur. Jon fell and broke that leg and was hospitalized for 4 days until it was amputated. As he lay in the hospital recovering, he had 2 thoughts: 1) I am getting out of this bed. 2) What steps do I take? Jon credits many, many people with his recovery, starting with his doctors and Travis and Bill at GO PT.

He tells of keeping a diary, not for the good days, but to mentally track the bad days. Jon said looking back over the weeks, months and years reveals the progress he has made. This pushes back against impatience with perceived lack of progress.

Jon first started his recovery before getting his prosthetic leg, using a walker to hop a mile in 35 minutes. His personal record last week had him at 1 mile in 19 minutes and 58 seconds. He has a goal of keeping up with Marilyn and Jean soon!

Research shows that 90-95% of upper leg amputees will not be able to use a prosthetic or choose to go without. He was cautioned by the rehab and prosthetic techs to not compare himself to others. Jon took that to heart and has set new goals for himself. As a history buff, he is working to see and experience more!



At the Grand Island YMCA, Jon sees himself as just another guy working out. From the perspective of others upstairs, Jon is the guy who plays great 80s hard rock and often throws tennis balls at the wall to help with his balance. Jon had a lot of praise for fellow Y members, including Jerry Sinner for his kind & encouraging words, Stacy Karr for her grace and endurance, and Tammy Kay for perseverance. Jon shared a sweet memory of a 3-yr old girl asking about his leg, and saying, "You can have one of mine if you want."

Jon adds positivity to the atmosphere; his can-do attitude inspires many to put off self-pity and forge ahead.

WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY SONYA BEYE

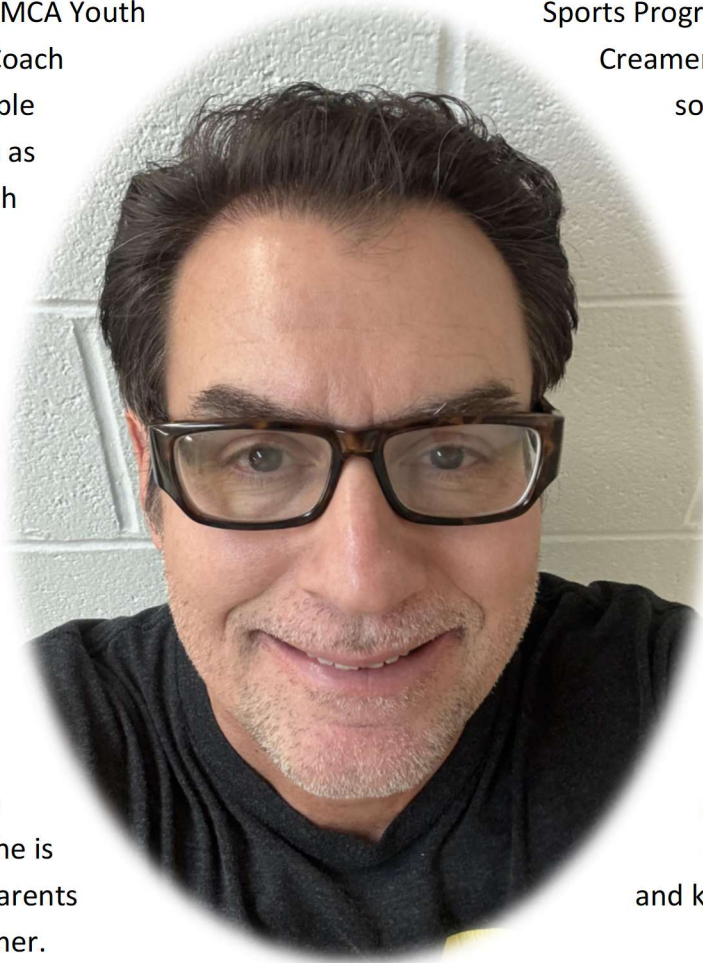
2025 Coach of the YEAR CHAMPION

GEORGE KRAMER



To recognize and highlight one of our volunteer coaches who demonstrated our core values in everything he did while coaching the youth. His focus was about sportsmanship, development of the team and players, and more importantly leading them in spirit, mind, and body! **CONGRATS GEORGE!!**

This year's volunteer Coach of the year is George Creamer. George serves as a local Chaplain at the VA Hospital here in Grand Island. George was born in Honduras but claims Houston, TX as his hometown. Coach Creamer has become one of our most reliable and requested coaches in several different YMCA Youth Sports Programs. In our fall and spring seasons, Coach Creamer volunteers his time to Coaching multiple soccer teams in two different age groups as he has multiple children involved with our YMCA Sports Programs. Also, during our fall and winter seasons, Coach Creamer coaches' basketball as well. I love watching his practices as he is so detailed and organized based on which age group he is coaching. When I was approached by a local Elementary school to start an after-school soccer club for them, Coach Creamer was the first person I reached out to in joining me in that effort. He has the patience of a saint, which explains why he is also such a good Chaplain as well. Parents and kids love playing for Coach Creamer.



In his own words, Coach Creamer explains..." Some of my best memories with my kids have come through coaching at the YMCA. I respect how the program seeks to instill faith values beyond the court or field. There is a culture which strives to encourage and build their self-worth."

WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY NATE SMITH



2025 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CHAMPION

NATE SMITH

To highlight one of our focus areas, the Youth Development Champion is given to a member, donor, volunteer, program participant or instructor who help guide and develop our youth into their own champion! **GREAT WORK NATE!**

Nate Smith is a true example of what youth development looks like at its very best. A lifelong “Y kid,” Nate practically grew up in the halls and gyms of the YMCA, spending his childhood playing sports in both Lincoln and Hastings. Those early years shaped not only his love for athletics, but also his understanding of teamwork, leadership, and community. The YMCA was more than a place to play — it was where he learned the values that would guide him for life.

When his daughter began playing basketball through the YMCA and later with the Jr. Islanders, Nate stepped naturally into a coaching role. What began as simply supporting his child quickly became a deeper calling to invest in every young athlete he encounters.

As shown in the photo, Nate doesn’t just coach from the sidelines — he kneels in the circle, meeting kids at their level, teaching lessons that go far beyond the game.

His philosophy is best captured in his own words:

“It’s not about perfect. It’s about effort. And when you bring that effort every day, that’s where transformation happens. That’s how change occurs.”

Nate focuses on building confidence, resilience, and character, reminding kids that growth comes through consistent effort and belief in themselves. This award recognizes not just a coach, but a mentor committed to shaping stronger players, stronger teammates, and stronger people.



WRITTEN & NOMINATED BY TERESA SINER

“God has made you just the way you are to impact others right where he has placed you.”

~ Tim Hiller

