

**JOSE CERDA AQUATIC FOUNDATION (JCAF)  
2026 SWIMMING / WATER POLO SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

The José Cerdá Aquatic Foundation was established to support youth swimming and water polo and to honor the life and passions of José Cerdá. José was a dedicated Sycamore High School swimmer and water polo player who passed away on his 18th birthday, October 26, 2010, during a swimming practice with the Cincinnati Marlins.

José Cerdá absolutely loved the sports of swimming and water polo! In addition to being a member of the Sycamore High School Varsity Swim and Water Polo Teams, he attended swimming and water polo camps and was a member of the Cincinnati Marlins and the Moose Water Polo Club. José used as many opportunities as possible to improve himself as a swimmer and water polo player exhibiting dedication and perseverance and supporting fellow team mates. The José Cerdá Aquatic Foundation would love to keep Jose's memory and passions alive by making it possible for other young people to seize the ever-increasing opportunities to enjoy and learn about these sports!

**Description of Scholarships:**

In addition to his love of water polo and swimming, Jose's life was characterized by integrity, sportsmanship, leadership and contagious enthusiasm. The Jose Cerda Aquatic Foundation (JCAF) has established \$500 scholarships for students ages 13-18 who best exemplify these traits of integrity, camaraderie and leadership and are highly interested in improving their skills in swimming and/or water polo. The purpose of these scholarships is to:

- 1) introduce junior / high school-aged youth to the variety of water polo / swimming opportunities available to strengthen their practice,
- 2) elevate aspirations and competitiveness of youth already participating in the sports of water polo and swimming, and
- 3) foster collaboration and friendships among youth and their families in water polo and swimming programs.

**Scholarship Categories**

There are two categories of JCAF scholarships for Ohio students ages 13-18 involved in swimming and/or water polo: 1) residing in the Cincinnati area and 2) residing outside the Cincinnati area . A scholarship can be split for swimming and water polo or used for one of these two sports exclusively. Scholarships will be awarded to Ohio students based on the ranking of their applications by the judges.

**Scholarship Distribution**

JCAF will distribute the \$500 scholarship directly to the sponsor/organization of the recipient's selected water polo and/or swimming activity to apply to associated registration fees, up to the \$500 scholarship award limit.

***Deadline for Application Receipt: May 2, 2026.***

Read and follow the instructions carefully prior to submitting your application **and three additional copies of your original application**. All winners will be notified on or before July 15, 2026.

***Please Note: If selected, you may be asked for documentation to support the data you provide. Likewise, all correspondence and award agreements will be generated from the personal information submitted in your application. So, please use proper spelling, capitalization and punctuation.***

**This scholarship application contains seven sections for applicant to complete:**

- I. Personal Data**
- II. Swimming Information\***
- III. Water Polo Information\***
- IV. Junior / High School Information**
- V. Leadership / Collaboration Information**
- VI. Essay (600-800 words)**
- VII. Prospective recipient agreements related to this non-profit organization**

**\*IMPORTANT: PLEASE complete this scholarship application in its entirety. The selection committee will consider all information in this form in selecting scholarship winners.**

<b>I. Personal Data</b>
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**Tell us about yourself.**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefix First Name Middle Name Last Name Suffix

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone.: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  
Male  
Female

**Please indicate the institution/ program to which this scholarship will be applied to and their associated annual fees.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## II. Swimming Information:

Which of the following best describe(s) your swimming experience? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

**Member of junior / high school swim team**

(Please list years as member: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Member of year-round club swim team**

(Please list years as member: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Member of summer club swim team**

(Please list years as member: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Have not been a member of a junior / high school or club swim team**

If you have been a member of a junior / high school or club swim team:

Name of junior / high school team: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach(es) of team: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of year-round club / team: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach(es) of team: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of summer club / team: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach(es) of team: \_\_\_\_\_

**Swimming Awards:** Please list any swimming awards or recognition you have received as a junior / high school and/or club team member: *(Examples: District qualifier for relays, 2021-23; Most Improved Swimmer, 2024; Team Captain, 2024-2025; Team Swimmer of the Month, 2019, 2017)*

**Awards / Recognition as a Junior / High School Swim Team Member:**

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**Awards / Recognition as a Swim Club Team Member:**

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How long have you been swimming?

As long as I can remember

More than 5 years

Less than 5 years

### III. Water Polo Information:

Which of the following best describe(s) your water polo experience? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

**Member of junior / high school water polo team**

(Please list years as member: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Member of club water polo team**

(Please list years as member: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Have not been a member of a junior / high school or club water polo team**

If you have been a member of a **junior / high school or club water polo team**:

Name of junior / high school team: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach(es) of team: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of club / team: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach(es) of team: \_\_\_\_\_

**Water Polo Awards:** Please list any water polo awards or recognition you have received as a junior / high school and/or club team member: *(Examples: Ohio Cup All-Tournament Team, 2019; Most Improved Player, 2018; Team Captain, 2024; Team Player of the Week, 2022, 2024; 2nd Team All-Ohio, 2024)*

**Awards / Recognition as a Junior / High School Water Polo Team Member:**

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**Awards / Recognition as a Club Water Polo Team Member:**

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How long have you been playing water polo?

As long as I can remember

More than 5 years

Less than 5 years

#### IV. Junior / High School Information

Current Junior / High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of High School Graduation or GED: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your current Junior / High School class standing? (CHECK ONE.)

- Senior
- Junior
- Sophomore
- Freshman
- 8th grader
- 7th grader

Most recent cumulative GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list junior / high school activities, community activities, volunteer work, honors, offices held:

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#### V. Leadership / Collaboration Information

To the extent not already listed above, please list any activities and/or positions with which you have been involved that demonstrate leadership, collaboration, and the ability to foster friendships with others:

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What do you perceive is the value of organizations like JCAF to athletes and teams? How does this non-profit embody the personal qualities of Jose Cerdá, in memory of whom this foundation was established?

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## VI. Essay

*Your essay should be **600-800 words** and address the following:*

**Please describe 1) your goals in the sport of swimming and/or water polo, 2) how these goals reflect the drive to improve your skill and exemplify "taking it to the next level", and 3) how your character and leadership will help you attain these goals.**

*Include any academic and non-academic accomplishments, personal characteristics, or experiences that demonstrate these traits that you believe make you uniquely worthy of scholarship consideration. The essay should be in your own words and should reflect what you feel is most important in helping attain your goals in the sport of swimming or water polo.*

Essay: (this may be typed up and submitted on a separate page)

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## **VII. Prospective Scholarship recipient agreements**

If you were to become one of the recipients of a 2026 JCAF scholarship, can you attend the thirteen annual dinner JCAF gala to receive it in person? Date of the event is TBD. If not, can you commit to providing a short video of yourself explaining the meaning of this award to you and how it will help you achieve your swimming and water polo goals?

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Do you give your consent to be photographed by JCAF and for the pictures and/or video produced by JCAF or submitted by you to JCAF to be published in JCAF promotional material and/or posted on JCAF's website?

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By accepting this scholarship, you become an ambassador of JCAF. As such, we expect you to continue encouraging fellow team mates and contributing to create great camaraderie in the sport. Please indicate your agreement to abide by this code of conduct.

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## **VIII. Applicant's Signature**

*By signing your legal name in the space below, you are certifying that all information is correct and that you are the person completing this application. Please retain a copy as verification of your application.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Jose Cerda Aquatic Foundation is committed to equal opportunity in education. The Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or any other protected class.*

## **IX. Submission**

*Completed application forms- original **plus three copies**-, along with the essay if submitted on a separate page(s), should be mailed, U.S. postage prepaid, to:*

*The Jose Cerda Aquatic Foundation  
P.O. Box 1253  
Mason, OH 45040.*

*For RECEIPT by JCAF no later than May 2, 2026.*