Background Information

Brad Eldridge was born on October 9, 1971. Raised in Westerville, Ohio, Brad attended Annehurst elementary school where he quickly made it known that he was not your ordinary kid. As he excelled in academics, he was involved in a number of activities.

At the end of 6th grade, Brad moved on to Blendon Junior High School for his 7th and 8th grade years. He began to run track and found quite a passion for running. He continued to be very involved even off the field. He was part of a Mid-West Talent search where, as an 8th grader, he took the SAT and found his scores were comparable to the 12th graders taking the test. As a member of the Kiwanis Builders Club, he participated in many community programs which provided flags for every classroom and offered Teacher appreciation activities. He qualified for the advanced Spelling Bee competition and he enjoyed singing, dancing and anything outdoors.

During his years as a Westerville South Wildcat, it seemed there wasn’t anything that Brad could not do. He lettered in track, cross country and swimming all four years. He took advanced classes, was on the honor role, and maintained an academic standing at the top of his class. He engaged in other school activities, serving as a class officer and performing with the swing choir. He also found time to complete the work needed to become an Eagle Scout. Brad graduated in 1990 with honors and he started his college career at Otterbein where he once again ran cross country and began studies toward a Bachelor of Science degree.

In his second quarter of school at Otterbein, he was participating in Rush for one of the fraternities when life became very different. There was construction taking place which had made the parking lot very muddy and slippery. He and several others viewed it as a fun slip-n-slide. Due to his years of swimming, Brad tucked his chin when he dove to slide in the mud and broke his 6th cervical vertebra leaving him paralyzed. Brad was able to use his arms; however not having the use of his fingers deemed him a quadriplegic. A long road of recovery lay ahead of him and he took it on just like he did everything else. After recovery and learning his new way of life, Brad graduated a proud member of Phi Kappa Phi, with honors from Otterbein University, double majoring in Life Sciences and Psychology. He went on to The Ohio State University and began a graduate program in psychology. For two years he studied and worked in various capacities of counseling. After dealing with some medical setbacks, Brad left the graduate program and dedicated his time to helping others and giving back where and when he could.

When asked to describe his life, he would say he was an easy going minimalist who loved the outdoors. He would tell you that accepting the things in life that he could not do or with which he needed help was just part of understanding himself. It was not worth wasting time on what he couldn’t control. If you asked those who knew him, you would hear descriptions such as loving, funny, intelligent, talented, a true friend, a kind and beautiful soul. He was respected for the person he was and the belief he held in his heart that nothing was too big to handle. As an athlete, a scholar, a friend, a brother, an uncle and a son, he left a huge mark on this world in many positive ways. Brad passed away on September 9, 2014. He will be missed.
Brad Eldridge Memorial Scholarship

PART ONE

Please attach a typewritten, double-spaced essay describing an impactful moment in your life. Explain what you learned from it as well as how it will continue to influence decisions you will make in the future.

PART TWO

Please provide one letter of recommendation from a coach (track, cross country or swimming).