

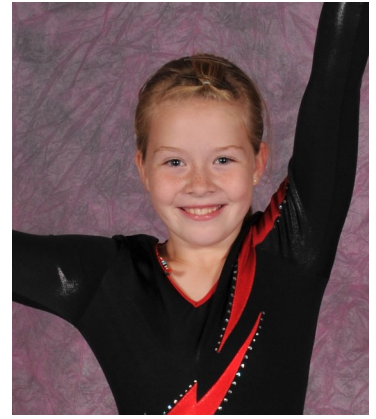


# Kari McCloskey

## "Kare Bear"

### Memorial

### Scholarship



Kari McCloskey - July 2nd, 2001 - July 17th, 2014 - Age 13

Dear Potential Scholarship Recipient,

Thank you for taking an interest in this Scholarship opportunity. My name is Douglas Pershun. I wear many hats, I am President of Team Lightning Inc. dba / aka Erie Gymnastics Center. I am also the Head Coach of Team Lightning Optional Team. I am also Meet Director for the Annual Stars & Stripes Coed Gymnastics Competition.

I have been involved in Gymnastics & Coaching for over 30 years. Over my 3 decade career now, I've worked now with literally thousands of gymnasts. Almost every person you meet in any significant capacity leaves a mark on you. Some... Parents, Relatives, a Special Teacher, a Special Friend, a Coach have more of an impact that others. Some people that come into your life leave a impression that lasts forever or forever changes your direction of perspective on life. Kari (Kare Bear) McCloskey left a lasting impression on mine. It is my Honor & Privilege to Introduce this unique Scholarship Award. It is by no means all my doing, and there are many people to thank, Kari in her short time here left a lasting impact on a lot of people. By creating this Fund, we are merely continuing that special touch and impact Kari left on our lives.

The following packet will introduce Kari to you. Who she was, what she meant to us & the gymnastics community, her Spirit & loving nature..., will be briefly explained. To be eligible, you will need to be a High School Senior planning on continuing your education. You will need to be entered as a Competitive Gymnast (any Level) at the Stars & Stripes Gymnastics Invitational. You will need to submit a short application & essay prior to the deadline. You will also need to be in attendance when the Scholarship is Awarded. We are planning on Awarding Three Scholarships for the purpose of continuing education at an accredited College, University, or Trade school ~ Gold \$1,250.00 // Silver \$1,000.00 // Bronze \$750.00. The following packet will include all that you need to complete the application.

The Scholarship Awards will be Presented at the Stars & Stripes Coed Gymnastics Invitational prior to the Awards Ceremonies at the Main Event. A series of questions framed in the way of brief essays will be necessary on your part to show us how you can have a meaningful impact on those around you as you pursue your dreams. The essays will be evaluated by the McCloskey Family, the EGCPA Board & the Meet Directors. The Scholarship Winners will be notified prior to the event.

All of the information needed is provided in this packet. The deadline for receiving the application and the essays will be postmarked / emailed - Jan. 2nd 2019. We also require a recent photo of you for our Program.

Thank You & Good Luck

Douglas Pershun

Stars & Stripes Meet Director

## About Kari McCloskey from Doug & Tina Pershun's Perspective as Gym Coaches / Owners -

Kari started gymnastics like many other little gymnasts. However, Kari didn't start Gymnastics here at Erie Gymnastics, but rather Starfire Gymnastics in Greenville, PA. Kari lived in rural Hadley, PA. The Greenville area, small quaint farming town had a small gymnastics center in town. The gym was owned by Ron & Linda Cooper, great coaches and great friends of ours & EGC. Kari's Parents - Melissa & Jerry - signed their son up for Gymnastics lessons. Kari liked it so much she used to play in the gym until she was 3 and old enough to sign up for lessons herself. Kari loved it and immediately excelled toward the Competitive Team.

Ron Cooper would come up every summer and help Erie Gymnastics out with our Summer Team Camps. Many of his Team Members would attend the camp. Tina remembers Kari coming to the Camp. She was probably age 6 or 7 at the time, just a little thing. When she arrived at the gym, she was really shy & nervous about coming in. Tina softly spoke to her and coaxed her into the gym. By the end of the 1st Day, Kari was life of the Party. She survived the first day and now was a big girl!

Shortly thereafter, the Coopers retired & sold the gym. The new management changed things up. They canceled programs, made coaching changes.... Kari still wanted to continue her competitive gymnastics career.

From where they lived, the nearest gyms with competitive programs were all at least an hour drive away in any given direction. They went on a gym search to the feasible gyms in their area. I still remember the day they came in for a 'try-out'. When Kari's Mom called the gym, I was flattered that they would consider our gym, however it was over 1:15 minutes away (on a good day), and in the heart of winter in the snow belt - much longer if even possible. I didn't think it likely that Kari would stay with us, but was willing to let her to try-out.

My wife Tina was the Compulsory Coach at the time. Kari was a little nervous, but by the end of the tryout on her first day, she made friends with all the team and they were laughing and joking like long time buddies. We got a call a few days later from her Mom requesting that Kari join the team. I had pointed out that there were a few quality gyms a little closer, less snow, easier drive.... Her mom said that Kari indicated that she loved the Team Lightning kids and staff, and that's where she belonged. I did my best to be "real" with her Mom. Kari was starting as a Level 4. I warned her though that as Kari gets better, she is going to be required more days and more time for the higher levels. That's 2.5 hours round trip drive 4 or 5 days a week. They said as a family they considered it, and if this is her dream, they would make the sacrifices to help make it possible.

By day 2 and from then on, everyone fell in love with Kari. She was smart, hard working, and funny. Normally the higher level athletes who don't give the time of day to the Compulsories athletes knew her name and joked with her. She was loved by all the gymnasts & coaches, and shortly thereafter got the nickname Kare-Bear! You couldn't help but love her.



She had many successes as a Compulsory and soon was promoted to the beginner Optional Levels. Now, I feared that this was going to have Mom - reconsider this long drive and additional practice days. Mom - without hesitation said she would do her best to allow Kari to continue.

At the time, my daughter was on the team with Kari. My daughter became good friends with Kari. Part of being a gymnast and being on the "Team" is the social aspect of gymnastics. As part of the Team, you're invited to Sleep-overs at

your teammates house & Birthday Parties. That often meant another long drive on a day where there wasn't practice to play with the teammates. Mom did her best to get her to most of those events. It was helpful to the McCloskey's that my daughter Mackenzie was good friends with Kari. We have practice on Friday nights & then again on Saturday mornings. We invited Kari to sleepover with my daughter and just take her to practice in the morning to save mom a drive and allow both to enjoy their friendship. Kari became part of our extended family and would have us all laughing half the night.

Perhaps I shouldn't tell this story, but it is true Kari. Kari was a hard worker and put a lot of effort into each turn on the equipment. One day while I was coaching on Uneven Bars, the team was working on Free-Hip Handstands. Determined to be the first to get it, Kari came flying into the Bar and pushed with all she had to get to the handstand. With that great push she also Farted - perhaps the loudest Fart I ever heard in my life. The bars are the furthest equipment in the back of our gym, yet everyone in the gym stopped to see what broke. Even the office Secretary came out to see what happened. Most kids would have been embarrassed and some might have cried. Kari exploded with laughter and fell to the floor hysterically. The gym erupted with laughter, and nothing was accomplished for at least 1/2 hour before we could all stop laughing. She was determined to do an encore.

Another favorite story of mine is 3rd School. One day just in small talk with the Team, I asked Keri what school she attended. I wasn't familiar with the school districts so far away from my gym. "What school do you go to Kari?" ~ simple enough. Not sure what she thought I said but she answered - "3rd". I asked again, "What school do you go to?" Again she answered "3rd". "OK, so you go to Third School?" "Yes", she answered happily. I didn't know & thought perhaps it was some weird Amish School name or something like a Bank Name 2nd National 5th Bank. It then it dawned on her that she was referring to 3rd Grade, however bust out laughing and never got the real school name out. As is my personality, I never drop anything & will keep a joke going for way longer than it should... every year she went to a new school - 4th School, 5th School.... Often at Shows or in Programs where I announce the child's name, age, & school ~ I often added that Kari goes to 3rd School to which she would crack up.



Kari's symptoms began here in her last season for Team Lightning. I believe it came on slowly and none of us realized the occasional headaches and nausea were anything other than doing too many flips. She was never a 'complainer' or 'whiner', so these symptoms really went unnoticed by any of us. No one knew or realized that this was possibly the beginning of the Cancer Tumor growing in her brain stem. It is a symptom of the horrible disease that was about to change all of our lives.

Toward the end of that season, I got word that my good friend and Professional Colleague bought & was reopening a Gymnastics School in Greenville. Kim Silloway - a National Level Judge - bought & opened GGAC - Greenville Gymnastics Academy & Cheer. This again was right down the road from the McCloskey family. We talked openly & honestly, and we both knew it was crazy for them to drive that far for coaching when they had a great new coach right on their back door step. Kari didn't want to leave her friends, but knew Mom was struggling to get Kari & her brother & little sister to everywhere they needed to be. In some talks with Kim & the McCloskey Family, we all decided that we would share Kari. We weren't sure how it would work, but she could train at both places and still be part of both teams. That was happily acceptable to all. She never quit our Team and never left her Teammates.

As was typical for Kari, she made friends right away with the GGAC Team, and Coach Kim fell in love with her too! Kim & Team GGAC have their own funny stories to tell. Just like 'Dual Citizenship', we all claimed Kari as our own, and were more than willing to share.

In one final Kari story, I would like to tell you about Bob. Bob Thomas is a 65 year old Special Olympian. Bob was born normal, however when he was 9 years old he was hit by a truck. Bob suffered serious Brain Damage and the only way to describe it is Bob sort of got stuck in "9 year old land". Bob is in his 60's now however Bob loves things very much like a 9 year old would like. He loves Fireman, Construction Trucks, Policemen, and mostly Gymnastics. He is almost a celebrity in Erie and everyone knows him. He has a knack for showing up at Construction Sites, Local Events & such and has several uniforms he carries in his backpack. Being well known by the Police, he might show up at an Erie Festival dressed in his security outfit, and the Police usually give him something useful to do. Everyone Loves Bob!

Very early in my business career 20 some years ago, Erie Gymnastics participated in "Erie Days". Erie Days is a Street Fair with vendor & entertainers. Trying to grow Erie Gymnastics, I thought it helpful & promotional to have the gymnasts perform. I took some mats & a small trampoline downtown to participate in the festival with our gymnasts. During our demonstration, a 50 something man comes out of the crowd, stands in line with the gymnasts and starts doing cartwheels and headstands with the gymnasts. Nervous about this guy, I summoned a Policeman over and said "This Drunk guy is out there with my kids!" The Policeman reassured me that Bob was OK, just Special and wouldn't harm anyone. He told me he even was a Volunteer Policeman and would dress up in uniforms to help the police patrol Erie. After the demonstration Bob asked "Coach, did I do good?" I replied "Sure, you did great!". Bob said he would be at our next practice for the Olympics! I said "OK Bob, nice meeting you!" Long story short, I thought I'd never see this guy again, but sure enough the following week he showed up at the gym during practice. He came in dressed like a fireman, changed clothes into gym shorts & a T-Shirt, and started practicing Headstands & Cartwheels on the floor for an hour. He left, went outside and weeded the entire gym garden and did a great job.

He started showing up every week, same thing every week - came in, did some gymnastics, went outside and did something really useful. He did such a great job, I started paying him for his work. He'd come every week, tell me a couple jokes (same one's every week), then go to wherever he came from.

One day, I was trying to get ready for a very important meet, however I had an angry parent in my office over a billing mistake, several other major distractions, and my team was falling all over the place on beam. Bob came up and started telling me the same joke again I've heard 100 times from him, and I snapped. I really really hurt his feelings.

That night, I went to sleep uneasily, regretting that I snapped on a Handicapped person. In the middle of the night, I had a dream, rather a nightmare. I dreamt that I died in my sleep and went to Heaven. Just like the movies there were big golden gates, and standing in front of the gates was Bob. I said 'Hi Bob, what are you doing here?', however instead of being mentally challenged, Bob was now completely normal. Bob answered only by saying that he was here to review my life & how I lived it. Bob was the Gate Keeper. A sudden dread built up in me that I was going to have to relive the moment where I was mean and dismissive of an elderly mentally handicapped man. The dread was so bad & real that I woke up sweating & kicking in the middle of the night. My wife woke up to the commotion and asked what was the matter? I said "Bob! Bob is God!" She mumbled what are you talking about??? I said, "you know the guy at the gym, the old guy who does gymnastics! He is God!"

That dream changed my life. I believe it was a warning to me to be kind to all, but especially those who need help. Since then Bob regularly comes to my house for Holidays and Special Events, and is now part of my family & the gym family.

Anyway, this isn't about Bob, it's about Kari. Kari's Brain Cancer got progressively worse. We kept in touch & even visited during her illness. She passed away just a little over a month after my mother passed away. However, I cried

more at Kari's funeral than I did at my moms. My mom lived a long and exciting life. She traveled the world and accomplished numerous deeds.

However Kari was just 13 years old. She never was married, never had a career, never was kissed, didn't go to her prom.... The most important thing in a 13 year old's life is Gymnastics. Kari's funeral was attended by numerous dignitaries, coaches, & judges of the gymnastics world. Our Team dressed in their complete Warm-ups to attend the Funeral & Viewing. The GGAC Team, former coaches, school friends... all came to say their farewell. The line to the viewing was well over 100 yards long attended by almost her entire school and probably all of Greenville. As we passed the local school that had condolences on their road sign. The local Dairy Queen had a sign out wishing their farewells. We must have passed 10 yard signs on the way to the funeral home - placed in the yards of children mourning the loss of Kari.

Kari was buried in her GGAC Leotard and Team Lightning Warm-ups. Pictures adorned the funeral home of Kari with her friends holding up their medals or posing with their Team Trophies, or just hanging out being gymnasts. There were pictures of me or my wife hugging her after a great meet or laughing about something she did or said seconds before the picture was taken. It was one of the hardest moments in my life to experience, and I cried the whole time I wrote this to you.

It was summer (July) when Kari passed, and Bob typically didn't come to gym in the summer. He has all sorts of interests that keep him busy during the summer months. Bob didn't know anything about Kari, and just like explaining death to a 9 year old, I didn't have the heart to explain all of that to him. But about 2 weeks after the funeral - Bob popped into the gym for no apparent reason. Instead of the same jokes that Bob tells me every time he comes to the gym, he was adamant about telling me about his most recent dream. Bob told me that he had a dream that he was in Heaven bounding on a trampoline. I laughed & thought - Oh Great!, I thought I'd be done with Gymnastics when I die, but God will put me to work Coaching more Gymnastics in Heaven - LOL. Bob said however that he met a girl in his dream while he was bouncing on a trampoline - bigger than my gym, and she said a special hello to me. At that moment, a chill ran up my spine. Bob isn't always clear on explaining things, so you sometimes have to ask specific questions to get to the bottom of his stories. So I asked - "Bob, what does this girl look like? Do you remember her name?" Bob described the girl by holding up his hand. He said - "well, she was about this tall, blonde hair..." and proceeded to describe Kari to a "T". "I can't remember her name, but she wanted me to say a special Hello to you & Tina from her!"

Woah! I mean to say I was floored is an understatement. The McCloskey Family are pretty devout Christians. As a family, they held up really well considering their significant loss. When talking to them and trying to help, they were comforted in their faith and Jesus. They believed that Kari was in a better place and she was Happy, and they are positive they will see her again. I who have faltered on the fence with my religion am now somewhat convinced that I too will see her again, and she is laughing, happy, and apparently bouncing on a 100 yard wide Trampoline in Heaven!

It was my privilege to coach, work, & know Kari (Kare-Bear) McCloskey. She had a positive influence on everyone she met, and for just 13 years old had an impact on so many people - young & old alike. The Team nicknamed her Kare-Bear because of the nature of the word Care. She took an interest in everyone's life and wished to help everyone. She was the go-to person when a team-mate was having a bad practice, and Kari would pull them out of their slump and have them laughing 2 minutes later. My wife, family, and gym community love her and are excited by this opportunity to allow Kari to help a few more people!



The following letter is from Melissa McCloskey ~ Kari's Mom. This is her perspective as written to me. This was intended just to fill in gaps for my story of Kari. I felt compelled to include it with this application. I hope she doesn't mind. I've edited portions that do not apply.

... I think your write up is great and the questions are spot on. Kari would like it very much, especially the fart story (her personal crowning achievement), the Bob story and certainly the way you described her as hard working, caring and funny. That's Kari! She truly would be honored by your words. Thank you. ...

... Do you think you could share the "3<sup>rd</sup> school" story instead??? She LOVED that one. I think that was her first camp with you?? Pretty sure she was going into 3<sup>rd</sup> school that summer. Do you remember how hard she laughed at you laughing at her??

Anyway ... I thought I would write down Kari's story, in short, for you from my perspective. You don't have to use what I have written below. It's for your reference to help flush out her gymnastics career and give you a little more detail of what she did after her diagnosis. She tried so very hard to get back to being herself. You would have been so proud. I've been meaning to start writing everything down so this was a good start for me. Like I said, you don't have to use it, but please convey our thanks to Team Lightning.

... She knew your "history of Bob story" well. She loved Bob. She loved you and Tina. There was absolutely no better way for her to reach out to you than via Bob. It warms my heart. Thank you for sharing.



Kari.

When Kari was 2 years old, her older brother, Jacob, signed up for a recreation gymnastics class at the local gym in Greenville, which was Starfire Gymnastics at the time. Kari would play in the basement on the mini gym equipment while Jacob was in his class upstairs. One day when she was hanging from the little mini bar, Mrs. Cooper walked in and told her she would be a great gymnast someday. Kari beamed. She wanted to go upstairs to the big gym but gym policy said not until you are 3 years old. On her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, she stated with a smile, rather matter of factly - now I can go to gymnastics too! And that is exactly what she did, every available class time, her entire life. And Jacob, very proudly, has always taken credit for Kari's gymnastics career.

She made preteam in no time, and then team, and competed for Starfire for two years as a Level 4 gymnast. She was a state vault champion in 2009. Her coach at the time told me that the gym didn't officially have team captains, but if they did, she would name Kari because of her hard work and encouraging personality. She was just 8 years old.

She walked into Erie Gymnastics for the first time at the age of 7. Mr. Cooper and Coach Erin from Greenville suggested that she go to Team Lightning's summer gymnastics camp with some of the older girls from the Starfire team. She went along. All the commotion on the morning of the first day of gym camp in the city was overwhelming for a little country girl. She, who didn't complain or whine much, looked up at me with big, bright blue teary eyes just barely shaking her head "No". I was ready to head for the door, when out of nowhere; Tina appeared and worked her magic. Tina got down to Kari's level and I don't know what Tina said to her, but Kari reached up and took her hand and away they went. She was laughing when I picked her up. She was crazy for Coach Tina and in awe of Doug. At the end of the week, on the drive home, Kari asked me to promise her that if anything ever happened to her gym in Greenville that she could go to Erie. It was very hard to say no to that smile. She loved that gym camp, and every camp after that.

A year or so later, the program did change at Starfire and we made the decision to go to Erie. We showed up on Doug and Tina's doorstep and they took us in. For over three years Kari competed with Team Lightning. She absolutely

loved every second of it! She started as a Level 5 and moved up from there. She loved practice, strength training, meets, end of year shows, gym camp, teammates and coaches. It was her home away from home. She has a wall full of medals, countless memories and some of her very best friends to show for it.

Skills didn't always come easy to her, but she didn't mind working for them. Rips and bruises were badges of honor to Kari. She loved to be the first to ring the bell on the rope climb and was mad at herself if she didn't make it. It wasn't easy. She had to work for it, for all of it. When it came to gym time – it was all business – happy business – but all business! Kari loved to be pushed and challenged. Kari was a strong-willed girl to begin with. Combined with the expectations of Doug and Tina; her time at Erie made her both physically and mentally incredibly strong. She broke numerous records at her school for physical fitness tests. Several were school-wide (she was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and topped many high school records) and many still stand to this day.

Erie Gymnastics was over an hour drive one way from home. She would grab a snack and do her homework on the way north. She never, not once, said "I don't feel like going". People thought we were crazy to drive that far. Looking back, I don't regret a single mile. And wish we could go a million more...

As time went by, Kari's little sister Cassidy, who accompanied us on most of our trips north, was becoming increasingly less enchanted with the road trip and Jacob was beginning his teenage years. By this time, Kim Silloway was the new owner and head coach of Greenville Gymnastics and Cheer (GGAC) and was doing absolutely great. For the sake of her siblings and out of respect for Miss Kim, Kari agreed to go to GGAC while maintaining her ties with Team Lightning. She was almost 11 years old when she started training at GGAC.

Kari was a little unsure, but she and Miss Kim quickly hit it off and another truly amazing friendship was formed! The plan was for her to score out of Level 7 early in the season then compete at Level 8 the rest of the year. She was working her giant and smiling. She renewed friendships with old teammates and maintained her friendships with Team Lightning. Little Cassidy even started the beginner classes at GGAC.

Kari had a setback in the summer of 2011 when a back handspring went wrong and she broke a bone in her foot. She stayed home for awhile but it was hard to convince her she couldn't do gym with a cast on. So she would go in and hang from the bar with a cast on her foot. Miss Kim was a saint.

She eventually got the cast off and was back at it. Very sadly, she would only be able to officially compete one more time before she became ill. In December 2012, she developed terrible migraines, nausea, and numbness in her legs. After several trips to the hospital and tests, she was diagnosed with an inoperable glioblastoma on her brain stem. She was only 11 years old. There are no words...

She underwent surgery to biopsy the tumor and then started chemotherapy and underwent extensive radiation therapy that lasted for weeks in Pittsburgh. It was indescribably scary for her. It was scary and heart-wrenching for all who knew her. She pushed through though. She was a fighter and even then she would light a room up with her smile or a quick-witted joke to the nurses. She always surprised her doctors with her strength, determination and faith. Her faith was unwavering. The ONLY thing she would voluntarily miss gym practice for throughout her career was church camp and other youth activities at our church. That was her other home away from home. Gymnastics gave her mental and physical strength – God provided the spiritual drive to remain optimistic and positive – even on the darkest of days.



The radiation worked temporarily and her symptoms subsided. She started her 7<sup>th</sup> grade school year in 2013 at Commodore Perry with all the hope in the world. She was working her way back into gym. She wanted her skills,

strength and flexibility back. Period. She also decided to run cross country that year, partly to get back into shape and partly because she thought it was cool to run for her school. She ran the entire season of cross country that year, and the really cool part was that her brother was on the same team. Of all the time they spent apart while she was in gym, they got to do that sport together. It was priceless. She was 12 and he was 14 years old. She ran, and finished, every race but one... with a brain tumor. The community rallied behind her. The love that poured out of the community – both locally, and across her world of gymnastics – was truly unbelievable.

After several months, the symptoms returned. Her dad tirelessly searched everywhere for a treatment or doctor that could help her. We went to New York City, twice for surgery and treatment. We took her to every doctor that would look at her case. It was exhausting and heart breaking and all the while her symptoms were getting progressively worse. We tried a new immunotherapy treatment, which involved painful deep muscle injections in her thigh. We even went through a second round of radiation. Nothing was working and we felt helpless.

Kari, the fighter, however, still insisted on going to gym through all of this. Half of her body was numb, she had terrible headaches, and her belly was upset all of the time. She couldn't walk the beam or hold onto the bars or run, but she would go in with the team and do what she could. She even helped Miss Kim coach the little girls. She was unwilling to give up. I would hesitate before we left home to go to gym those days. I would ask her if she was sure she wanted to go in. She would give me that determined Kari look, pick up her water bottle and to gym we would go with a limp. She was 12 years old.

It all eventually became too much for her. Cassidy even stopped going to her little gym class. In her four year old mind she decided that if Kari couldn't go to gym then she wasn't going to go either. She said it was more important for her to be with her big sister. So the rule in our family was set. If Kari doesn't go to gym – then nobody goes to gym.

Jacob and Cassidy were by her side every day. And her teammates and church friends were always visiting or messaging her. It was an unbearably difficult time.

Kari's spirit passed on to Heaven at Children's Hospital on July 18, 2014. She had just turned 13 years old.

The hole in our hearts is beyond description. However, giving up is not an option. Giving up never even crossed Kari's mind – and if there is no other reason other than to honor her – we aren't giving up either.

Our extended gym families have been incredibly supportive. We are forever grateful. Kari would be honored that this scholarship is named after her. We thank you for keeping her name and memory alive in the gym. Stars and Stripes was, by far, her favorite gym meet ever.

We hope Kari's spirit encourages you to keep fighting for your dreams. Kari's famous saying was "tuff nubs"... translation ... "If you face plant on the floor, get up, shake it off and try again. Don't complain and don't give up. Laugh at yourself." If Kari were standing beside you today and you fell down, not just in gym but in any aspect of your life, she would reach out a hand, help you up with a smile, say "oh well, tuff nubs", and expect you to try it again.

Written by Melissa McCloskey





# Kari (Kare-Bear) McCloskey

## Memorial Scholarship

### Application & Conditions

This Scholarship is intended in Good Will to help members within the scope of the USA Gymnastics Competitive Programs. Our intension is to provide some Financial Aid assistance for Gymnasts who share that same spirit as our beloved & departed Kari McCloskey, and to generate good will in her memory. We intend to give three Scholarships defined as Gold = \$1,250.00 // Silver = \$1,000.00 // Bronze = \$750.00. This fund was established by the EGCPA "Team Lightning Booster Club" and Team Lightning Inc. dba Erie Gymnastics Center - 4725 Park Harbor Dr. Erie, PA 16511.

Eligibility for this Scholarship must meet the following conditions.

1. All applicants must be an active Athlete Member in good standing with USA Gymnastics.
2. Applicants can be Male or Female involved in any Level of Artistic Gymnastics.
3. Applicants must be in their Senior Year of High School with a 2.0 GPA or Higher.
4. Applicants must be planning on attending an Accredited University / College / or Trade School following their Senior Year in High School.
5. Any monies received from the Scholarship must be spent on Books / Tuition / or Room & Board for Educational purposes only.
6. Winning Applicants must make themselves available for the Check Presentation at the Awards Ceremony at the Stars & Stripes Main Event (even if they are not competing in that Flight), typically held on Saturday evening of the Stars & Stripes Annual Competition.
7. Must be a US Citizen.

SELECTION: All applicants must submit the complete application and any supporting documents by email to [staff@eriegymnastics.com](mailto:staff@eriegymnastics.com) by the required deadline of January 2nd. The applications will be reviewed & considered & voted on in equal weight by a) the McCloskey Family / b) the Executive Board of EGCPA 'Team Lightning Boosters, and c) Douglas & Tina Pershun - Owners - Erie Gymnastics Center.

The tentative winners will be selected by the above listed committee and notified by phone or email. From there we will determine whether the parties can be present at the event. We will also ask for a recent photo & bio of the athletes who win the award for our Event Program and Promotion.

We thank you for considering this opportunity and wish you the best of luck!

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Email to [staff@eriegymnastics.com](mailto:staff@eriegymnastics.com) by Jan. 2nd 2019. Please write legibly or type. Feel free to expand your essay on an additional page if necessary. Please make sure that your .jpg image is clear & legible prior to submitting.

Kari (Kare-Bear) McCloskey  
Memorial Scholarship Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ / Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ / Level: \_\_\_\_\_ / Team: \_\_\_\_\_

USAG# \_\_\_\_\_ / Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Coaches Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your current GPA? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What grade are you currently in? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Current High School? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please list any Academic Achievements: (ex. NHS or Science Fair Winner)

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

5. Please list any Sports / Achievements other than Gymnastics.

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

6. Please list significant Gymnastics Achievements:

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

ESSAYS: Please supply us with 3 short essays on the following subjects.

E1. Kari was a fighter both in the gym and in her battle with Brain Cancer. How are you a fighter? Include significant battles you've fought for/with in your life.

E2. Kari got the nick-name Kare-Bear partly for her demeanor in truly caring about the people in her life. She had the ability to help her teammate having a rough day - turn it around - and make it a positive and productive day. How - as a Senior Member of your Gymnastics Team are you a role model for your Teammates?

E3. Kari was Funny. Even with visits to her when she was extremely ill, she still said and did things to make us laugh. She had the greatest sense of humor. What are some memorable / funny moments you have to make us laugh?