



The Fran Crippen Elevation Foundation

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The Fran Crippen Elevation Foundation Awards 1st Annual “Work the Dream” Grant to Two Olympic Hopefuls

*USA Swimming National Team members Matt McLean and Ashley Twichell are awarded
Foundation’s First Grant*

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania- The Fran Crippen Elevation Foundation (FCEF) recently named the first recipients of its "Work the Dream" Grant. In the year leading up to the Olympic Games, the FCEF has awarded individual grants to a male and female swimmer whom they felt embodies Fran Crippen's passion and dedication to sport. This grant provides financial support to deserving athletes in pursuit of their Olympic dream. The 2011-2012 recipients of the "Work the Dream" grant are Ashley Twichell and Matt McLean.

Ashley Twichell, a Duke University graduate, is an elite swimmer currently competing on the US National Team. During her career at Duke University, Ashley Twichell was a two-time ACC Champion and a three-time NCAA All-American in the 1650 freestyle. Following graduation, Twichell moved to California to train with Coach Bill Rose and the prestigious Misson Viejo Nadadores Swim Team, where she excels in both pool and open water competition. Twichell won gold in the 5K U.S. Open Water Nationals, and then an individual bronze medal and relay team gold medal at the 2011 FINA Open Water Swimming Championships. Twichell then placed third at the U.S. Nationals in the 800 Freestyle, was named the 2011 Female Open Water Swimmer of the Year, and will represent the U.S. in the Pan American Games in the 800 freestyle later this year. With the Olympic Games quickly approaching, Ashley is one of the few Americans fighting for a spot on the U.S. Olympic team in both the pool and open water.

Matt McLean, a native of Sterling, VA, had an outstanding collegiate career at the University of Virginia, and within the last year has proven to be one of the most talented middle distance swimmers on the international stage. During his time as a Cavalier, Matt was named the 2008 Freshman of the Year, 2008, 2009, and 2011 ACC Swimmer of the Meet, and two-time ACC Swimmer of the Year. He was a seventeen-time ACC Champion, fifteen-time NCAA All American, and 2011 NCAA Champion in the 500 freestyle. After graduation, McLean relocated to California where he now trains under legendary coach Jon Urbanchek at Fullerton Aquatics Sports Team (FAST). This past summer Matt continued his success, winning gold in the 200 freestyle and as a member of the 800 freestyle relay at the World University Games in Shenzhen, China. McLean's ultimate goal is to qualify for the 2012 U.S. Olympic team in both individual and relay events.

You can read excerpts of Ashley's and Matt's application essays on www.francrippen.org.

The Fran Crippen Elevation Foundation (FCEF) is a non-profit organization created to support athletes who exemplify the principles of Fran Crippen, a member of the USA Swimming National Team who tragically passed away during an open water swimming competition last year. Fran was a loyal ambassador of sport, fair play, and humanitarian goodwill. He positively impacted this world by embodying what is best in international athletic competition.