

DAWN MUSSELMAN INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER 2003

The Pacific Northwest Association Local Masters Swimming Committee proudly presents the 2003 Dawn Musselman Inspirational Swimmer Award to **Chaya Amiad**.

Chaya, back surgery and rehabilitation brought you to swimming. Jan Kavadas, our '92 Inspirational Swimmer, introduced you to Masters in 1977. You were inspired to improve your stroke technique and speed. Soon, with expert training and hard work, you earned national Top 10 honors in the 100/200 Breast, 50/100/200 Back, 100/200 Fly and the dreaded 400IM!

After winning these coveted awards, coaching was the next natural step. After earning a Bachelor of Science, you studied Exercise Physiology and Swim Coaching while attending graduate school. As a volunteer, you started Masters teams at the Downtown Seattle YMCA and Gateway Athletic Clubs, leading to your current position as founder and coach of the West Seattle YMCA team. At the Gateway and Downtown clubs you coached six workouts daily, and volunteered time and expertise to two additional workouts each week for stroke skills instruction. Today, you remain a volunteer coach for workouts at the YMCA and continue your stroke technique classes for Masters and non-Masters alike.

You are a qualified trainer by virtue of education and your own athletic history. Your accomplishments alone have inspired many West Seattle team members. That inspiration comes from knowing what you have had to overcome in the midst of these achievements. Throughout your swimming career, even while aiming for new PNA records, you have had to deal with rheumatoid arthritis, arachnoiditis, severe asthma, and progressive spinal cord disease. Teammate Christine Pruneau said, "The first time I saw Chaya at the pool, she was coaching from a wheelchair. I later learned that she had been in and out of this chair for several years. After multiple surgeries she has been able to return to swimming temporarily, but only until her next bout with her health. In spite of this, she rises at 4 AM three mornings a week to catch the bus that brings her to the pool. It takes a lot to keep Chaya from coaching."

Christine continues, "Nearly all of the swimmers at the West Seattle YMCA know Chaya. After Masters workouts, the non-Master swimmers hit her up for free coaching advice. She gives it gladly, and encourages all swimmers to attend her weekly stroke class (regardless of YMCA membership). Many a swimmer who has taken her advice has gone on to join Masters! I am one of those people, and Chaya has patiently reconfigured all four of my strokes. She instills a certain confidence in her swimmers and has much faith in our abilities. Chaya seems to know better than many of us what we are capable of. After all, it's hard to whine when directed to do 100 fly knowing this arthritic 65 year old is doing it! It just seems wimpy to say "I can't" to Chaya!"

Chaya, for your inspiration to the West Seattle YMCA Dolphins and as an example for our organization, the PNA is proud to recognize you as the Dawn Musselman Inspirational Swimmer for 2003.

For the PNA Board:

Lee Carlson, President

For the Nominating Committee:

Steve Peterson

