



2024 Athlete of the Year

Nominations

This award is presented to an athlete who is nominated for contributions to collegiate synchronized swimming and is based equally on athletics, academics, and community service.

2023 Nominees:

1. Emmanuella Tchakmakjian - Stanford University
2. Noela Seung – UCLA
3. Erandi Aguirre – University of Incarnate Word
4. Makayla Crichton – Texas Woman’s University

Emmanuella Tchakmakjian - Stanford University

Emma placed 1st in the Team event and 6th in the Technical A category event at the 2023 National Championships as she helped her team to a 2nd place Overall finish. She took 3rd in the Duet and Trio events and 2nd in the Team event at the 2022 Collegiate Championship. In 2021, she placed 1st in Duet & 1st in Team as an important part of Stanford’s Overall win. She is a two-time MPSF Champion in the team event, a three-time All-MPSF & All-Academic MPSF winner, and she is a two-time Collegiate All-American. Prior to coming to Stanford, Emma was a member of the 13-15, Junior & Senior National Teams, competing at numerous Jr. World Championships, World Championships & the Pan American Games.

Emmanuella is a Political Science & Psychology double major with a 4.025 cumulative GPA. She has served as a Peer Athletic Educator for the incoming freshmen to assist and guide them as they navigate their student-athlete experience. She was recently accepted into the Coterminal program for Sustainability, Science and Practice where she will earn her Masters of Arts degree next year. Following graduation she plans to attend law school to study entertainment law. She would like to pursue a career that combines her love of athletics & law in the future.

Emma currently serves on the Board of Directors for USAAS as the AAC President. She is responsible for representing and advocating for the athletes perspectives on all issues, as well as guiding the younger athlete reps as they transition into voting roles on various committees. Emma served as the co-director and financial officer of Cardinal RHED (Resilience, Health & Emotional Development), a student-athlete group whose directive is to support the emotional well-being of Stanford student-athletes. She served as a liaison between Stanford administration and the student-athletes. She was also recently elected the VP of Stanford SAAC (Student Athlete Advisory Council), a group representing all 36 Stanford sports. In this role she spearheads all activities surrounding gender equity and support of Olympic sports. A proud member of the Armenian-American community at Stanford, she is the Financial Officer for the Armenian Student’s Association. She also serves as the Artistic Swimming representative for Stanford’s chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. In her limited free time, she has enjoyed spending her off days coaching at the San Francisco Merionettes.

Noela Seung - UCLA

Noela has had a long career with artistic swimming ranging over 10 years. Noela helped lead UCLA to their first club title in 2023 by competing in the duet, trio, and team competitions. She placed in C figures and 5th in Solo at the 2022 Collegiate Championship. Noela was a member of the 2017 Junior Olympics 16-17 1st place team and went to the National Talent Camp in 2016. Noela has been an integral member of the UCLA Artistic Swimming club since its inception 3 years ago. She cuts all the music, has recruited new and coaches to join, and has secured invaluable resources for the team. The past 2 years she has served as Team Captain and Club President. Noela has also been on the student board since the inception of the club.

Academically, Noela has maintained the same high standard of excellence in the classroom, earning a cumulative 3.7 GPA while studying psychobiology. She has been accepted to nursing Masters programs at John Hopkins University and Columbia University and will further her studies after graduating this year.

Outside of the pool and classroom, Noela has found ways to give back to her community in the Los Angeles area. She works as a physical therapy aide at the UCLA Ashe Student Health Center and is treasurer of the UCLA Sports Medicine Club. She is also a member of the on-campus faith group, Grace on Campus. Noela continues to help grow the sport of artistic swimming by working as a swim instructor and volunteering her time as a coach of the La Mirada Aquabelles.

Erandi Aguirre – University of Incarnate Word

During her time at Incarnate Word, Erandi has helped the team place 1st at Regionals and Conference in 2024. She took 1st in B Technical at the 2023 Collegiate Championship. Erandi currently serves as team captain for the 2023-2024 season. She has won numerous awards at UIW including the Character and Community Award (2022-2023), Hardest Worker Player, and the Cardinal Spirit Award (2021). Outside of her collegiate team, Erandi has represented her home country Mexico as a member of the junior national team for 4 years. She was a finalist in two world junior championships in the combined routine and team events (2016 and 2018) and a Pan-American UANA medalist in team, combo, and duet events (2016, 2017, and 2019).

In the classroom, Erandi studies Psychology and has made the Dean's List every semester. She was awarded the Dr. Anita L. Anderson Psychology Mission Award in 2023 and is a member of Psi Chi, the international honor society in psychology. Erandi continues to make a difference in the community as well. She has worked with Catholic Charities of San Antonio Crisis Response and the Elf Louise Christmas Project. Erandi is an active member of the UIW community outside of artistic swimming and volunteers at different UIW athletics events and at the UIW Community Garden.

Makayla Critchton – Texas Woman’s University

Makayla was the first athlete to commit to the Texas Woman's University as an Artistic Swimmer. As a true Pioneer, she has demonstrated leadership for our growing team in the pool and is the very first graduating senior of our program. Makayla has demonstrated tremendous growth in her skills athletically through the collegiate system, placing 8th most recently in A elements at the South Regional Championships, 3rd in trio, and 3rd in team. She has been an integral member of our team since day one and she will be missed next year as she transitions into her further endeavors outside of artistic swimming.

Makayla is a 7-time Chancellor's List (4.0 GPA) recipient at TWU. She has a cumulative GPA of a 4.0 and is expected to graduate May 2024 with a Bachelors degree with a focus in Psychology and minor in Philosophy. She is exploring opportunities to continue her education in Graduate School in her chosen field. She was a member of the MPSF All-Academic team in 2022 as well as the USAAS All-Collegiate Team.

Makayla is a leader on our team and demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to both the community and our service driven campus. During her time as a Pioneer she has logged countless hours of community service for our team. Earlier this year, Makayla volunteered her time to share her love and knowledge of Artistic Swimming by providing an educational clinic for a local start-up artistic swimming team in the Dallas/Denton area. She has demonstrated leadership by supporting many of our on-campus volunteer opportunities including gathering donations and canned foods during the holidays. She is a forward thinker and leader.