

Blake Andrews

Ann Arbor, MI



Hello all, Blake Andrews here and I am delighted to be a part of such a meaningful event with you all. I was born in Milwaukee, WI but grew up in Columbus, OH. I consider myself more of a runner than a swimmer, having found half marathons to be my favorite form of physical activity. I recently moved with my wife, chocolate lab Miller, and cat Sandy Claws to Ann Arbor after living in England working in the National Health Service (NHS) for the past few years. In order to find a way to reconnect with my Midwest roots and get excited about the move to Michigan, I began looking for interesting runs to sign up for. Little did I know, I was about to come across something far more significant than I could have imagined. When I came across the Edmund Fitzgerald Memorial Swim, positions were already full and my future teammates were hard at work fundraising. I reached out to Jim Dreyer to see if there were volunteer spots available to help support the event, to which he responded I should put my name on the waitlist *just in case*. I did just that and to my surprise, a couple months later I had signed up to swim across the Saginaw Bay in Stage 11. Time to hit water and start training!

While no stranger to water, having grown up on water and teaching lifeguarding courses to pay for university, training for this swim has allowed me to discover a new love for endurance sports, open water, the state of Michigan, and the Great Lakes. I am very grateful to be a part of such a thoughtful memorial for the 29 crew who did not make it home on that fateful night in 1975. I look forward to a chance to meet my own personal goals while also deeply reflecting on the contributions of the many people who brave the Great Lakes daily to bring us the life that we are so fortunate to have.

While I train, I am enjoying exploring my new home of Ann Arbor with my wife and dog. I have recently begun a new job at Michigan Medicine as an intraoperative neuromonitoring technician working with excellent surgeons, nurses, and other support staff to help provide top-notch care for patients undergoing neurosurgical or orthopedic procedures. In my free time, I have been enjoying swimming further than I ever have in my life, playing disc golf, running through the many winding neighborhoods around us, and throwing pottery on my newly-acquired wheel. I am grateful for my wife, Emma, for her support in this journey and to my family back in Ohio—especially my young nephew who is at the beginning of his swimming journey at 7 years old!