

Buffalo Speedskating Junior Summer Camp - Matthew Crovella Memorial Award

The Matthew Crovella Memorial Award is given to the camp athlete who best demonstrates the traits that Matthew embodied during his seven years attending the camp.

● Kindness ● Helpfulness ● Positive Attitude ● Sportsmanship

The award will be presented on the last day of the camp. The recipient will be determined by a majority vote of his or her fellow campers, with review by the camp staff.

The recipient will receive an award certificate, complimentary registration to the Buffalo Short Track Speedskating Championships, and recognition on the camp website.

Matthew Crovella

January 26, 2001 - January 31, 2021



Campers saying goodbye to Matthew on his last day at camp in 2019.

Matt was one of our original 2013 campers along with his sisters Sarah and Izzy. Matt attended the next seven camps until 2019 when he had to leave a day early to attend Cornell University. In 2013, Matt's sisters were both under the minimum age of 12 that we had set for the camp, Sarah was 11 and Izzy was only 9, Matt was 12 years old. However, with assurances from the Syracuse team coach and their parents (Dilia and Paul), we allowed the three of them to attend. It was at this first camp that we came to understand the love and devotion that the Crovella siblings had for each other. It was so heartening to see how Matt looked after his younger sisters and how the three of them looked to each other for support. As the years progressed it was such a joy to see Matt grow as both a young man and as a skater. Matt's easy-going, approachable personality made him everybody's friend, and with his sisters, a camp institution. Those of us fortunate enough to have known Matt are profoundly saddened by his loss, but the memory of Matt's kindness, generosity, and love, will forever bring us joy.

Matt was born in Hamilton, NY on January 26, 2001. Matt revelled in youthful adventures living in the small, rural community of Madison, NY, exploring his surroundings, from the nearby forests behind the house to the faraway homeland of his mother, Ecuador. None of these adventures passed without his sisters by his side, and his parents racing to keep up. When he started Pre-K he knew almost no English and listened shyly as his classmates chattered away. He quickly found words and friends to open his life in this new world. By the end of his pre-K year, his teacher selected him as the "the most curious" in his class, always full of questions, and filled with further wonderment with each explanation.

After thirteen years, Matthew and his family began a new adventure, with a move to Syracuse (Manlius), NY His world at school grew enormously, and once again he listened shyly at first as he met new friends and found a new home. He was exhilarated by the challenge of the classes but still couldn't wait for the day to end and head out outside for soccer and cycling in the fall and spring, and of course his favorite sport, speedskating, in the winter. Early in 9th grade his speedskating efforts earned him a medal in Innsbruck, Austria, as a part of a delegation representing Lake Placid and the US at the International Children's Games. His desire to connect with others and his love for kids led him to attain a job working as a referee for youth soccer games. After his eleventh-grade year, Matthew worked for the summer as a legal intern at a law office in Quito, Ecuador. His interest in law was constantly stoked by his efforts on the F-M "Mock Trial" team, and the team was recognized as NYS Champions in two of the four years that he participated. Having started scouting in Madison, and continuing in Cazenovia, his Senior year he became an Eagle Scout. During this time, Matt was drawn to activities to help others: He spent many weekends helping to fix bikes for the CNY family bike giveaway, spent two trips to Mexico building orphanages with Heromakers, and many days with family in Ecuador distributing rice and sugar in the Ecuadorian countryside.

His schooling and desire to contribute led him to Cornell University. His interests in service and global issues led him to pursue a degree in Health Care Policy, Analysis, and Planning, with a focus on Global Health. While at Cornell he volunteered as a Cornell Tradition Fellow and also served as a volunteer EMT and exterior firefighter for the Cayuga Heights Fire Department. Mathew was also employed part-time with Bang's Ambulance as an EMT.

Matthew loved his family and revelled in spending time together. Every night at dinnertime, he enjoyed the lively debates around the dinner table, which more often than not ended in wild discussions about life on other planets and lots of laughter. He enjoyed cooking, whether it be preparing breakfast in bed for his parents or cooking perfect pizzas with every pepperoni meticulously placed. Matthew found comfort in music, especially classical and instrumental music. He loved family trips as well, not for the places he visited, but for the time he spent with his family exploring nature and discovering new trails. Family trips to Yellowstone and the Badlands didn't add a stamp to his passport but left him with a treasure trove of memories. All of it, he did with love and passion.