

— DONOVAN CATHOLIC —
2027-2028 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

FOR CURRENT STUDENTS
THE JOHN BROWN SIMPSON JR.
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

\$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP
TWO CURRENT JUNIOR STUDENTS AWARDED
DEADLINE: JANUARY 8TH, 2027

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Address _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent Email _____ Parent Cell _____

CRITERIA:

1. Submit this application along with a letter of recommendation from a peer, a mentor or a teacher.
2. Attach an essay (500 word) identifying an experience in which you were impacted by a mental health situation with yourself, a peer or a family member, how you played a role in the outcome and change.

Considering the close-knit nature of the Donovan community and the importance of impartiality in the selection process, you are not expected to reveal personal information if you do not want to.

SUBMISSION

Donovan Catholic High School
711 Hooper Avenue
Toms River, NJ 08753
Advancement Office

Scholarships@donovancatholic.org

711 HOOPER AVENUE TOMS RIVER, NJ 08753
732-349-8801
www.donovancatholic.org
scholarships@donovancatholic.org

DONOVAN CATHOLIC

2027-2028 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

John Brown Simpson Jr. graduated from Monsignor Donovan High School in 1990. He excelled as a student and became the star of the varsity tennis team by his Junior year. At seventeen he began showing signs of mental illness, with a loss of motivation at school. Although he went on to serve with distinction as a hospital corpsman in the United States Navy, his symptoms of bipolar schizoaffective disorder intensified. He suffered from depression, delusions of grandeur, anxiety and paranoia. He struggled to work, to maintain friendships and to interact socially with his peers, and ultimately became unable to care for himself. Following frequent hospitalizations from one behavioral health setting to another, he spent eleven years at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital. Despite the care and advocacy of his family and over 25 years of psychiatric treatment and therapy, he passed away at fifty-years-old in March 2023.

Reflecting on John's short life, family and friends remember his kind and caring nature and the "good old days" before chronic mental illness set in. John loved to listen to music and found himself and some of his closest human connections in the rhythms and lyrics of classic rock. The eldest of six brothers and sisters, John was a natural leader and team player. With his steadfast spirit and carefree nature, he was admired by his peers for his courage and fair play. His closest friends would follow him anywhere as they knew they'd have a good time.



THE

John Brown Simpson, Jr.

SCHOLARSHIP

John was adventurous and driven to extremes, swimming off the Seaside beaches mid-winter or across the Barnegat Bay, cycling one hundred miles in a day, standing at the edge of the World Trade Center observation deck, flying a kite over the ocean further than the eye can see. He dreamt of cycling the Tour de France, of climbing Mount McKinley, of descending into the Mariana trench in a scuba suit.

John always did his best to be positive, to not give up on life and to love his family. Throughout his later years, he inspired empathy for and from individuals and their families with psychiatric illness. To witness his torment was to share his burden while feeling powerless against it. But to know John was also to feel informed about the importance of genetic and environmental factors on the development and evolution of the human mind. It is to encourage reflection on John's example that his family decided to create a scholarship in his name, the goals being to raise awareness for mental illness at an early age and to help students identify and combat the stigma associated with its many forms. Mental illness can be treated individually, but, like any disability, the better it is understood and embraced by society as a whole, the better off will be all those affected by it.