

# The Devon Silva Memorial Scholarship

The Miss Nina Foundation has created this scholarship in memory of Devon “*The Defender*” Silva, a 2004 graduate of Wyoming Area, who passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 19, 2017 at 32 years old. Family and friends that were closest to Devon knew he had a big heart and was very generous.

The Miss Nina Foundation was formed in 2016 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The mission of the foundation is to provide assistance to children to give them an equal opportunity for personal success and to build a positive feeling of self-worth and self-confidence. Besides the scholarship, the foundation, starting in 2018, annually donates winter coats and shoes to the 3rd grade students at Wyoming Area. Future projects include providing a free tutoring program for Wyoming Area students.



Devon was given his nickname at an early age. His day care teacher noticed that Devon would continually defend classmates that were being bullied. She started calling him “*The Defender.*” As he got older, Devon continued to be passionate about helping those in need. In High School, he raised funds to help Autistic children. He donated his money and time for numerous other causes and continued to “defend” others when he felt they were being treated unfairly.

When Devon was in grade school, he would be on his bike all day every day. Every Saturday during the summer, he would race his BMX at the dirt track in Ransom. From his bicycle, he moved onto riding his quad. He was fearless when he was on it. On or off the quad, there really wasn’t much that scared Devon (except maybe the dentist). He also loved playing basketball. He was a frequent player at the adult pick-up games at the YMCA or the Oblates in Pittston.



Devon was an avid Philadelphia 76er’s fan. He enjoyed going to the games and collecting autographs. Devon’s favorite player was Allen Iverson. The world stopped when Philadelphia traded Allen. There were many week nights that Devon would get home late from the game but he would never miss school the next day.

Devon was a great friend. He was loyal and caring. Friends knew that Devon “had their back.” If Devon could help a friend or a stranger, he would not hesitate. It was unusual to not see Devon smiling. He was always in a good mood and wanted to make sure everyone had a good time. He tried to see the best in everyone.

Spending time with his family, especially his grandparents, during the holidays was very important to Devon. It wasn’t the same for Devon if Gram and Pop were not with him to celebrate. Halloween, Christmas and July 4<sup>th</sup> were his favorites. For Halloween, he made sure that there was a cemetery in the front yard. There were fireworks for all the neighbors to see on

the 4<sup>th</sup>. At Christmas, he couldn't wait to walk in the field to cut the tree down. Devon enjoyed watching others open their gifts as much as opening his own presents.

Going on family vacations was also a big part of Devon's life. He wanted to go places that were fun for his family. Pop liked Las Vegas. Gram had great memories in Wildwood and Mom loved Disney. Devon's favorite was New York City. He liked Philadelphia but NYC was the place to be for Devon. He was all smiles walking through the city.



Devon was a hard worker. He worked part time during the school year and had a full time job in the summer. Once he graduated high school, he worked two jobs. One of his jobs was at the Fort Café in Forty Fort. He was a partner in the business and also the bartender on most nights.

Devon was one of a kind. He wasn't afraid to show his true feelings or to be different than the rest of the crowd. He touched many lives and will be greatly missed.

Winner of this scholarship will receive financial assistance at the beginning of each semester for up to four years depending on fulfilling the donor's criteria. In order to receive the assistance in future semesters, student must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher while enrolled as a FULL TIME student as defined by the college recipient is attending.

**CRITERIA:** Applicant must be a Wyoming Area graduating senior who has been accepted as a full time student to a trade school, technical college, community college or a four year college/university. All Majors will be considered. Financial need may be considered. An interview may be part of the selection process.

**REQUIRED ESSAY:** Choose one of the following essay prompts, and write a solid essay of at least 500 word. Identify the prompt you selected in the first line of your essay:

1. Why are you continuing your education and what is your goal?
2. What would you need to accomplish in your life to consider yourself successful?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a person which you are going to bring with you to college?
4. Name a person you see on TV/Social Media that you consider a positive role model for young adults. Explain why you think they are a positive role model.