

**2009 BRAIN HOWARD MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER FOR THE PROGRAM –  
WINNER**

**Shannon Vreeland**

School: Blue Valley West High School - Senior  
Age: 17  
Stats: 2009 Top 16 Finisher World Trials  
2008 Top 8 Finisher Short Course Nationals (December)  
2009 Top 8 Finisher U.S. Open  
2009 Sectional Spring High Point Winner  
2009 Set Team Records in the 200y free, 200y IM, and 200m free.  
2009 National Junior Team member

Elite Group Member

Shannon had a breakthrough year in 2007-2008. She is my one Elite female who has moved every year to top of this sport in the USA. Between the ages 12-13, she made a commitment to “be the best she could be” which was supported by all her choices and followed by actions. Four years ago, Shannon, along with a number of girls, was invited to move to Elite group. She was the only one who accepted the invitation going into her 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. She quickly moved to the top of our women’s team through that first year. Without any demands or pushes from Peter D., she proceeded to choose to not swim high school and to center her focus on doing what she “needed” to do to reach her potential. In life, most people today seem to let their choices and decisions be made based on what “they like” and what they “want to do”. The key to Shannon and anyone who realizes their peak potential is to focus actions and choices on what “I need to do.” Hopefully in time it will match what you like and want. This has happened with Shannon as her needs, likes, and wants are beginning to match up. She has qualified for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row for USA National Youth Team.

Shannon has been fortunate to have Bobby Bollier, our 2008 Brian Howard Award winner, as a mentor over her first three years in the Elite group. It does not always work out where a person looks up to and wants to learn from the “star” that is ahead. Shannon has embraced and was excited to learn all she could from those lessons. This really showed this year as she became the highest level swimmer in the Elite group. How would she do with reaching the next level when she was the peak of the Elite group? Shannon stepped up her personal ownership for what needed to be done and did an exceptional job. Not only did she make the steps

forward, but she also accepted being the role model and led by example. She has been very supportive and a great pleasure to coach and work with.

Congratulations on all you have done! I am sure that in the years ahead you will be asking, “What do I need to do this year to realize the next step in experiencing my potential?” Well Shannon, look, listen, and act as you have done.

Peter D. Malone  
Head Coach and Program Director Kansas City Blazers

Blazer Coaching Staff – 2008 / 2009  
Derek Shipp, Henry Morrow, Scott Bliss, Kate Zabler, Denise Holm, and Maggie Kroemer