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PHOTO BY MARSHALL FRANKLIN LONG



Twin Cities Youth Rowing Club head coach Tina Cho helps students develop teamwork, strength and focus as they glide across the water.

## Flight Over Water

One club gives new (water) wings to youth and others learning competitive rowing.

MINNESOTANS LOVE BEING ON THE WATER. According to the Department of Natural Resources, there are more of us participating in boating activities than residents of any other state. Competitive rowers, a growing part of the boating scene, have a strong foothold in Edina in the Twin Cities Youth Rowing Club (TCYRC).

TCYRC began in 2008 with the goal of promoting competitive youth rowing, a sport relatively under-represented in this state considering our affinity for aquatic recreation. In the last two years, the team has grown to include 96 rowers from 24 different schools. The attraction might be the thrill of speed combined with the simplicity of the sport. Teams of four or eight youth row boats, called shells, with synchronized strokes, guided by a coxswain. The rowers sit on sliding seats which help them use their leg muscles, as well as their core and upper body to maximize the power of each stroke.

Being on a team helps individuals develop focus, teamwork and formidable strength. Head coach Tina Cho emphasizes the importance of the sense of community within the group. "Individuality strengthens the whole," she says. "The harder you work for your teammates, the harder they work for you. In the last two minutes of a race, you think, 'I have to pull; I can't let my teammates down.' When every single person thinks like that, the boat flies."

With that attitude, teams and individuals in TCYRC have been winning trophies and medals, helping high school seniors catch the eye of collegiate teams with scholarships to offer. Jessie Lovell, a 2009 Edina High School graduate, is one such student. A two-year veteran of TCYRC, and voted 2009 team spirit award-winner (like an MVP), she values the experience she gained in the club that helped her win a scholarship to Southern Methodist University. "Rowing is cool," Jessie says. "It's not super well-known, so it's a small



Visit the Twin Cities Youth Rowing Club's website at [tcyrc.org](http://tcyrc.org) for more information about current and upcoming programs and events.

