



## Background Bio

Schuyler Bailar was a star student at Georgetown Day School in Washington, DC – one of the top private schools in the country, graduating in 2014. He was aggressively recruited by most of the Ivy League and eventually committed to swim for Harvard. Schuyler Bailar is also the first openly transgender athlete to compete in any sport on an NCAA Division 1 men's team.

Schuyler's love of swimming started with Mommy-and-me classes before he was a year old and he was swimming solo before his first birthday. Schuyler competed in his first meet at the age of 7 and by 10 Schuyler was competing in the Junior Olympics. By 13, Schuyler qualified for his first National level competition, and less than two years later, Schuyler was ranked one of the top 20 15-year-old breast-stroke swimmers in the United States.

In 2012 Schuyler broke his back in three places in a biking accident. He was released from an upper-body brace shortly before swimming championships. He went on to win all three DC-area 100-yard breaststroke championships and qualified as an All-American. At the 2013 NCSA Jr. National Championships he qualified for the U.S. Open – the fastest U.S. meet in a non-Olympic year. At the 2013 USA Swimming National Championships, his 400-yard Medley Relay Team set the U.S. 15-18 year-old Age Group USA Record.

Throughout his journey, but particularly in high school, Schuyler struggled with issues of body image and self-esteem, often battling with disordered eating and self-harm. In the spring of his senior year, he decided to take a gap year before enrolling in college to deal with these issues. In therapy, it became clear that Schuyler's real struggle was with gender identity and that he was transgender. This presented Schuyler with the most difficult decision ever: whether to continue as a possible NCAA champion – on the women's team – or to transition to a man and be authentic to himself, accepting the consequences and challenges it would entail.

Schuyler's choice – to be true to himself – has been historic. His story hit Facebook's top-trending news and has been recounted globally in thousands of media outlets from *The Washington Post* and *60 Minutes*, and *The Ellen Show* with millions of online and broadcast media views. *MTV* cited his story in their list of "2015's Best Moments for the Trans Community" and *Buzzfeed* named him one of the "11 Transgender people who are shifting our views."

In 2019, Schuyler was awarded the prestigious Harvard Athletics Director's Award, which is not granted annually – but only when an athlete demonstrates outstanding contribution to Athletics through education. He is only the 7<sup>th</sup> recipient of the award.

Schuyler's advocacy includes speaking to schools, governments, corporations and non-profits about inclusion and diversity. Schuyler sits on the NCAA Common Ground task force for Inclusion in Sports. He collaborated with USA Swimming for their LGBTQ and Asian Pacific Inclusion Guides. He is a recipient of the SMYAL Community Advocacy Award, a GLAAD MEDIA Award nomination, the OUT100, the A-100 and the azn100 among other accolades.

Schuyler is also a writer. His first published short story appears in *Fresh Ink*, an acclaimed collection of works by leading young adult writers (by WNDB through Random House).

Schuyler chronicles his journey on Instagram @pinkmantaray, for others to explore.