

# Rizza Dealership Taps Facebook to win \$3,500 for Erin's AAIM

Joe Rizza Ford led the push on a Facebook contest, through the Chicago Automobile Trade Association, to win big for the local non-profit.

By [Ben Feldheim](#)



Gerry Olmsted was a little skeptical at first.

The Orland Park resident and co-founder of [Erin's AAIM For Change](#) was pleasantly surprised to find out that in December they had won a contest through Facebook put on by the Chicago Automobile Trade Association.

Car dealerships from around the Chicago area chose a charity they would represent in the contest, and people could vote for their pick on the association's Facebook page once a day. [Joe Rizza Ford](#) in Orland Park opted to represent Erin's AAIM in the contest, and after a about a month of voting between November and December, the two rose to the top.

Erin's AAIM was presented with a \$3,500 check from the association on Jan. 14.

"We're older, but we have a lot of younger people on our committee," Olmsted said. "And our daughter and son in law teach at a high school so they got all of those kids involved."

The contest was part of the [Chicagoland Dealers Care](#) program through the CATA, an effort since 2008 to both contribute to and highlight charitable efforts by area car dealerships, said Monica Gostkiewicz, communications specialist for CATA. A custom Facebook app was built for people to vote [on the association's page](#).

"There were three winners, but Joe Rizza Ford and Erin's AAIM rose to the top," Gostkiewicz said. "They had thousands of votes, and did a great job promoting it."

Rizza Chief Financial Officer Dan McMillan said the dealership also tapped their own local networks to get the donation for Erin's AAIM.

"We pushed it and pushed it to get the vote, and won by about 5,000 votes," McMillan said. "We just came together as a community. Erin's AAIM is something that's near and dear to our heart. It's important to support that cause. The foundation gives scholarships to Sandburg students and Sandburg is part of the fabric of our community."

Erin's AAIM is named after Erin Olmsted, daughter of Gerry and his wife Sandy Olmsted, who died in 1997 at age 17 while riding in a car driven by an intoxicated driver. The foundation raises money [through the annual Erin's AAIM For Change 5K race](#) and other efforts, and then donates to the [Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists](#), as well as scholarships to Sandburg and Plainfield East students.

After six races, the foundation has donated about \$63,000 to AAIM and about \$57,000 for scholarships, Gerry Olmsted said.

During the Jan. 14 presentation, a \$500 donation was also made by Rizza to Erin's AAIM, following their [Ford Fusion Night in November](#). Another \$4,000 was donated to Erin's AAIM after the [Gridiron Golf Classic outing during the summer](#). The golf outing is organized by the Orland Park Pioneers, which McMillan coaches.

The 2013 Gridiron Classic will be held on June 28. A date is still in the works for the 2013 Erin's AAIM 5K.

"When Dan told me about the contest, I said I'm 60 years old I don't have a lot of Facebook friends, but Sandy does," Gerry Olmsted said. "There's no way we could've done it on our own."