



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Step Into Swim Announces Grant Recipients**

*National Swimming Pool Foundation Distributes Funds to Worthy Causes*

**Colorado Springs, COLORADO, August 29, 2018**—The [National Swimming Pool Foundation®](#) (NSPF®) announces recipients of the 2018 [Step Into Swim™ \(SIS\) Campaign](#), a 10-year initiative to create one million more swimmers. NSPF is humbled by the generosity of [forward thinking organizations and individuals](#) who support SIS, thereby enabling more people to enjoy happier and healthier living through water-based activities.



“Teaching children to swim should be the number one charitable outreach of our industry,” suggests NSPF CEO, Thomas Lachocki, Ph. D. “Not only is swimming a vital life skill that opens the door to a world of activities, but knowing how to swim reduces the likelihood that a child will drown by 88%.” That statistic is even more impressive than that of seatbelts, attributed to reducing toddler fatality by 54% percent, according to the CDC.

The following organizations will benefit from the \$112,000 received this year: Angels of America’s Fallen, YMCA of Greater Charlotte, Jewish Community Center Association, New York State Parks, SwimToday (a program of USA Swimming), Cincinnati Public School System, and many individual learn to swim programs selected by Master Pools Guild members and dealers of Pentair and Hayward. All donated funds are directed toward learn to swim programs, with NSPF covering all administrative cost.

“There is nothing more important to the short-term and long-term health of the pool industry than ensuring more people—especially the youngest among us—are comfortable and safe around water,” says Lauren Stack, NSPF, Managing Director – Residential Division. “The fact that donations to SIS are nearly double this year shows that industry leaders are increasingly behind an effort to support learn to swim organizations throughout the country,” adds Stack.

[Master Pools Guild](#) (MPG) has contributed \$120,000 to SIS over the past three years. Executive Director Dick Covert recognizes that swimming builds demand for the industry, short and long term. For this reason, Covert states, “We want to help NSPF create a culture of giving among builders and service companies, directed toward learn to swim organizations local to them.” Joining MPG in dealer outreach this year are [Pentair](#), [Hayward](#), and the [Florida Swimming Pool Association](#).





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[Angels of America's Fallen](#) (AoAF) is a fourth-year SIS recipient that supports children of fallen military and first responders by engaging them in healthy activities throughout their entire childhood. The SIS grant supports their "[Lessons from Lylah](#)" program (Lessons), named in honor of a two-year old girl who fell into the family pool and tragically drowned while on AoAF's wait list. Through Lessons, all children within AoAF—or on their waitlist—may receive swim lessons free of charge. NSPF is the Title Sponsor for AoAF's [2019 Angel Gala](#), to be held February 16, 2019, in Colorado Springs,

where Lylah's mother will be the keynote speaker. The [American Chemistry Council](#) is supporting the program and NSPF will seek additional donations from the industry for the Gala, 100% of which will provide "lessons" from Lylah.

Another perennial benefactor of SIS funding is the [New York State Parks](#) Learn to Swim program. Over six years, the program has expanded from a single location to 28, reaching well over 3,000 children each year. The program, made possible through a partnership with [American Red Cross](#), is heavily backed by Governor Cuomo, the New York Department of Health, the Natural Heritage Trust, the Northeast Spa & Pools Association Foundation, and general industry donations to SIS. "This is a great example of government, non-profits, and industry collaborating and changing thousands of people's lives for the better," says NSPF Board Chairman Bruce Dunn. SIS is looking for the next state to step up and follow New York's successful blueprint.

Two new programs for lower-income populations received SIS grants this year. The [YMCA of Greater Charlotte, South Carolina](#), received \$10,000 to augment \$140,000 in additional funding to teach swimming and water safety to children living in apartment complexes around the city. Most, if not all, of the pools in such complexes are unguarded and have been the sites of drownings and near drownings in the recent past. A second program is led by [Cincinnati Public Schools](#) (CPS), which is partnering with the [YMCA of Greater Cincinnati](#) to pilot a program with the eventual goal of giving all first and second graders swimming lessons and water safety instruction. Because 88% of CPS students qualify for free lunches, the [Bill Kent Family Foundation](#) is directing their \$10,000 donation to fund the pilot effort. Dr. Bill Kent, CEO of [Team Horner Group](#) and native of Cincinnati, says "I am most pleased to support this program that reaches some of the most economically disadvantaged among us."



Every dollar donated to Step Into Swim goes directly toward qualified learn to swim programs. To help change the world, one swimmer at a time, and to learn more about Step Into Swim, visit [stepintoswim.org](http://stepintoswim.org).



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**About the National Swimming Pool Foundation®**

We believe everything we do helps people live happier and healthier lives. Whether it's encouraging more aquatic activity, making pools safer, or keeping pools open, we believe we make a difference. Founded in 1965 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit and located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, NSPF proceeds go to fund education, research, and to help create swimmers. For a full listing of the NSPF family of products, programs, and services, visit [nspf.org](http://nspf.org).