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15th Annual Swim Across America Fairfield County Open Water Swim Scheduled for August 8, 2021

Swimmers, Boaters, Volunteers Make Waves in the Fight Against Cancer

STAMFORD, Conn., May 25, 2021 — **Swim Across America Fairfield County is #makingwaves to #fightcancer!** Celebrating its 15th year in Fairfield County, this year's swim will be held **Sunday, August 8, 2021**. The swim takes place in Stamford in the waters of Long Island Sound at the headquarters of the Swim's local beneficiary, Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy. There are three different swim distances available: a half-mile, one-and-a-half mile and a three-mile swim. Boaters, kayakers, paddle boarders and land volunteers participate in this inspirational event with close to 300 swimmers and 100 volunteers. To register as a swimmer or a volunteer, visit swimacrossamerica.org/fc.

Why does Swim Across America Fairfield County swim to raise money in the fight against cancer? Cancer touches everyone — whether it is a loved one or a friend, we all know someone who has been impacted by cancer. In 2021, it is estimated that 1.9 million new cases of cancer will be diagnosed and there will be 608,570 cancer deaths in the U.S. These staggering statistics offer compelling proof of the need to continue devising new approaches to treatment. Whether it is through swimming, volunteering, donating or cheering on loved ones and friends, Swim Across America Fairfield County welcomes anyone and everyone who wants to be a part of the fight against cancer.

Funds raised by Swim Across America Fairfield County go directly to support scientific cancer gene therapy grants administered by the Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy. The Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy research fellows funded by Swim Across America Fairfield County currently include three world-renowned researchers studying better ways to treat pancreatic cancer, pediatric sarcomas and brain cancer. The researchers are **Sidi Chen, PhD (Pancreatic cancer)**, assistant professor Yale University School of

Medicine Department of Genetics, System Biology Institute and Cancer Center; **Stephen Gottschalk, MD (pediatric sarcomas)**, chair of the Bone Marrow Transplantation and Cellular Therapy at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital; and **Noriyuki Kasahara, MD, PhD (glioblastoma brain cancer)**, principal investigator at the Brain Tumor Center at the University of California, San Francisco.

"We are so excited to have our 15th annual open water swim this summer," noted Nancy Carr of Old Greenwich, co-chair of the event. "In addition to swimming together on August 8th, we are continuing the successful 'SAA My Way' program that was created in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. 'SAA My Way' allows participants to complete any type of activity they want to help raise funds to fight cancer. Last year we had participants walk, run, bike, synchronize swim and even jump out of an airplane! We also still had those who swam last year, albeit independently or in small groups, as swimming is still at the core of our event. This year, we are so thrilled to be able to have our big group back together on August 8, but recognize that some individuals liked the 'SAA My Way' program, so we wanted to be able to offer both. In addition, the last day of the Summer Olympics will be the same day as our open water swim - the Olympics provides great inspiration for those who may want to emulate some of the Olympic sports as their contribution to being active and raising funds for cancer research."

This year Nancy Carr is joined as a co-chair for the Swim Across America event by Cristy Fraser of Old Greenwich. Cristy is the mother of Julian Fraser, a 2014 Greenwich High School graduate and All-American swimmer and water polo player, who sadly passed away in 2017 after a short battle with osteosarcoma.

"I joined the Swim Across America community so that together, we can change the outcome of a cancer diagnosis," said Cristy Fraser. "In 2019 I swam 1/2 -mile, and my husband Alec and sons Andrew and Matthew, have swam the three miles since 2016 at least. This year, I am challenging myself by raising as much money to fight cancer as I can. I have been so impressed by Swim Across America that I decided to accept a gracious request to be the co-chair for Swim Across America Fairfield County. I truly believe that its fundraising efforts make a difference in our fight against cancer."

While Swim Across America is a national organization and offers 21 open water swims from Boston Harbor to under the Golden Gate Bridge, and more than 100 pool swim fundraisers across the country, its roots are firmly anchored in Connecticut and along the shores of Long Island Sound. Darien, Connecticut, resident **Matt Vossler** and his lifelong friend and college roommate **Jeff Keith** founded Swim Across America in 1987. Throughout its years, Swim Across America has raised more than \$100 million in the fight against cancer. More than 120 Olympians support Swim Across America, including

Michael Phelps, Craig Beardsley, Donna De Varona (a Greenwich resident and honorary Fairfield County co-chair), Rowdy Gaines, Janel Jorgensen McArdle (who grew up in Ridgefield, Connecticut), Bobby Hackett, Ryan Lochte, Glenn Mills, Cristina Teuscher (who participates in the Fairfield County event) and many more.

To learn more about Swim Across America Fairfield County or to register to swim, volunteer or donate, visit swimacrossamerica.org/fc.

About Swim Across America

Swim Across America, Inc. (SAA) is dedicated to raising money and awareness for cancer research, prevention and treatment through swimming-related events. With the help of hundreds of volunteers nationwide and past and current Olympians, Swim Across America is helping find a cure for cancer through athleticism, community outreach and direct service. To learn more visit swimacrossamerica.org/fc or follow on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) @SAAFairfieldCo or email nancycarr@swimacrossamerica.org.

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