



## For Immediate Release

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### **Drennen's Dreams Foundation promotes pool safety and asks lifeguards to be vigilant**

Centennial, Colo. (May 26, 2015) – As summer days warm up, more of us head to the pool in search of a refreshing cool down. While the Drennen's Dreams Foundation wants everyone to have fun, they also want to remind swimmers, parents, lifeguards and pool managers to focus on safety as well.

On June 5, 2010 Drennen O'Melia opened his seventh competitive swim season by swimming the anchor leg on two winning relay teams and qualifying for All-Stars in his three individual events. The next day, June 6, Drennen drowned in four feet of water despite the presence of lifeguards. Following that tragic day, the Drennen's Dreams Foundation was created to focus on making guarded pools safer for patrons, especially children. The Foundation's intent is to ensure that no more unnecessary deaths occur due to insufficient training of lifeguards, mismanagement of pool facilities, and lack of necessary monitoring and medical equipment. The Foundation shares Drennen's story with lifeguards, pool managers, and others to inspire their vigilance while on the job. This Spring, Bill O'Melia, Drennen's father, has already shared Drennen's story with over 1000 incoming lifeguards to help them understand the weight of their responsibility as lifeguards and to remind them that lifeguards need to be ready to serve as lifesavers.

Drennen's Dreams Foundation welcomes requests from parks and recreation departments and aquatics facilities throughout the state to come and speak to reinforce this important message. We aim to work with private and community pools to help lifeguards understand what is truly at stake while they are on duty. Drennen's death may have been preventable, and our community cannot afford to lose another child due to poor supervision.

"We would like to sincerely thank Drennen's Dreams Foundation and Bill O'Melia in particular for speaking at our Aquatics All Staff Orientation this past Saturday," said Kimberly Henderson, Recreation Supervisor/Aquatics for Foothills Park and Recreation District. "Your talk had a great impact on our staff. Some were crying and tearful, others were in disbelief that this could actually happen. We train, talk, and reinforce the seriousness of their jobs over and over; but

nothing we could say, or have ever said, could have the impact on them that your presentation did. For this, we thank you. We plan to share your story in more trainings this summer and for years to come to re-emphasize the true importance of their job and why they are here.”

In addition to private donations, a significant portion of funds are raised through the Splash Dash, a 5K run through the Southglenn neighborhood where Drennen lived. The 2015 run will be held on Sunday, June 7. For registrations or for more information, please visit [www.drennensdreams.org](http://www.drennensdreams.org).

#### About the Drennen’s Dreams Foundation

The Drennen’s Dreams Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 2014. The foundation’s mission is to continue Drennen's legacy by promoting pool and water safety to prevent unnecessary deaths due to insufficient training of lifeguards, lack of necessary monitoring and medical equipment, and mismanagement of pool facilities; and by supporting initiatives that inspire well rounded individuals and the leaders of tomorrow. More information about the organization can be found at [www.drennensdreams.org](http://www.drennensdreams.org). Donations to Drennen’s Dreams can be made through the Drennen’s Dreams Foundation website.

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