



Florida Swimming Pool Association
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For Immediate Release

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\$2,250 IN GRANTS TO GO TOWARDS FREE SWIMMING LESSONS

(SARASOTA, Fla.) April 28, 2016 – The Northeast Chapter of the Florida Swimming Pool Association (FSPA), The Swimming Pool Education and Safety Foundation (SPESF), and the Step Into Swim Campaign of the National Swimming Pool Foundation (NSPF) together, granted \$2,250 to provide 10 children on the Autism spectrum with swimming lessons. The lessons will take place over a time period of five months. The grant was presented to Swimming Safari Swim School in Jacksonville, Florida.

Drowning is among the leading causes of death of individuals with Autism. Joani Maskell, owner and operator of the Swimming Safari Swim School, has been teaching swimming lessons in Northeast Florida since 2002. “Learning to swim with Swimming Safari has changed the lives of my two boys. They are both autistic and have challenges with traditional methods of teaching. The unique teaching of Swimming Safari is second to none,” says proud mother Abby Ehlers, a long-time customer of Swimming Safari Swim School.

The Northeast Chapter of the Florida Swimming Pool Association granted \$1,000, which was matched by the Swimming Pool Education and Safety Foundation (SPESF). An additional \$250 from the Step Into Swim Campaign of the National Swimming Pool Foundation (NSPF) was added to the total. According to Swimming Safari Swim School’s partner, Safe Kids Northeast Florida, led by THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health at Wolfson Children’s Hospital, donations from various other organizations totaled \$1,750. The total grant awarded for swimming lessons was \$4,000.

“The children love lessons and the parents not only see their children’s improvement, but they like the consistency and the routine. Our promise is to teach every swim lesson with the Swimming Safari Difference,” says owner and operator of the school, Joani Maskell.

An annual average of 390 children ages 0-14 drowned in pools and spas between the years of 2011-2013 as reported by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Children with Autism are at an even greater risk. The Florida Swimming Pool Association is thrilled to provide a grant to such a wonderful organization to help curb those numbers.

Photos are attached. For more information please contact FSPA.

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