

More Than 300 Swimmers to Get Wet Saturday at Swim Across America Anti-Cancer Fundraiser

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More than 300 swimmers and 100 volunteers will participate in the 13th annual Swim Across America Fairfield County open water swim this Saturday, June 22 on Long Island Sound at the Old Greenwich/Stamford border.

— *This article is adapted from an announcement by [Swim Across America Fairfield County](#)*

The swim takes place at the headquarters of the swim's beneficiary, the Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy (ACGT).

The Goal of the Organization Co-Founded by Darien Man

- Darien resident Matt Vossler and his lifelong friend and college roommate, Jeff Keith, founded Swim Across America in 1987. The organization is dedicated to raising money and awareness for cancer research, prevention and treatment through swimming-related events.

- Swim Across America has grown to be a national organization that offers 20 open water swims from Boston Harbor to under the Golden Gate Bridge. Nationally, Swim Across America has raised more than \$80 million in the fight against cancer.
- This year's Fairfield County event is expected to be bigger than ever, with a goal of raising more than \$300,000 to go toward crucial cancer gene therapy research. To date, the Fairfield County Swim Across America event has raised \$3.8 million for its local beneficiary the Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy (ACGT) and its groundbreaking cancer gene therapy grants.

When and Where

WHEN: Saturday, June 22

7:00 AM: Registration/Check-in Opens

7:45 AM: Group photo of all swimmers

7:50 AM: Welcome & Honored Speaker Mike Brock

8:15 AM: 3-Mile Swimmers Start & Award Ceremony

8:55 AM: 1.5-Mile Swimmers Start ****NOTE:** This is the largest group of swimmers

9:00 AM: 0.5-Mile Swimmers Start

10:15 AM: Event Ends

WHERE:

- Swim Across America Fairfield County is held at the headquarters for the Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy (ACGT)
- [96 Cummings Point Road, Stamford](#)
- Parking is available in the Conair parking lot at the end of Cummings Point Road: Walk east across street to where the Swim is held and come to the beach

Motivational Presentation

Kicking off the swim will be a motivational presentation on “Why We Swim and Volunteer” by Mike Brock of Old Greenwich, whose wife Shân is a stage IV colon cancer patient.

When diagnosed in 2014, Shân was given less than a five percent chance of surviving five years. Today, five years after enduring 42 chemotherapy treatments and three radiation treatments, Shân is enrolled in an immunotherapy clinical trial at Yale University.

She is the first person in the world to receive three immunotherapy medications simultaneously — and progress is thankfully being seen. Shân’s first scan after eight weeks showed nearly a ten percent reduction

in tumor size. Shân's subsequent scans have shown further small reductions in tumor size.

"It's amazing to note that the last few years have seen an exponential growth in the number of clinical trials available for many different types of cancer with some extraordinary curative results," Brock said.

"This gives hope where there was none before. But many of these novel clinical trials and treatments require and continue to require funding. That's why it's so important to fund Swim Across America Fairfield County and the swim's beneficiary ACGT."

Come Saturday, Mike Brock and he and Shân's youngest daughter Brontë, will be swimming in the open water swim and Shân will be volunteering as a kayaker, keeping watch over the swimmers. "Swimming and kayaking are our small contribution to helping make waves in the fight against cancer," said Shân.

"Funding organizations like ACGT with Swim Across America Fairfield County is a game changer for cancer treatment," said Michele Graham, co-chair of Swim Across America Fairfield County.

"At the forefront of cell and gene therapy is immunotherapy, which aims to awaken the immune system to the threat of cancer and deactivate the inhibitors that block the invasion of killer T-cells," she said. "The long-term goal is to develop treatments that attack only cancer cells, eliminating adverse effects on the body. ACGT is dedicated to this type of research."

Michele's 22 year-old daughter Nicole is a leukemia survivor who was diagnosed at age 16 and was cancer-free for almost five years before relapsing last year. Nicole has spent the past year undergoing another round of treatment and was just recently given the green light to resume normal activities.

Nicole will be volunteering at the event and her brother Clayton will be swimming on Team Julian. Clayton not only swims for Nicole, but for their friends and family members who have been touched by cancer. Michele Graham and Nancy Carr are co-chairs of this year's open water swim.

More About Swim Across America

More than 120 Olympians support Swim Across America, including Michael Phelps, Craig Beardsley, Donna De Varona (a honorary Greenwich-Stamford co-chair), Rowdy Gaines, Janel Jorgensen McArdle (who grew up in Ridgefield, Connecticut), Bobby Hackett, Ryan Lochte, Glenn Mills, Christina Teuscher and many more.

- ***SEE ALSO:*** [Conquer Cancer and Swim Across America: Making Waves to Fight Cancer](#) (May 10, The American Society of Clinical Oncology's *ASCO Post*)

Darienite

News for Darien

<https://darienite.com>

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 [Swim Across America Fairfield County](#) or follow on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#)@SAAFairfieldCo or email michele@swimacrossamerica.org or nancycarr@swimacrossamerica.org.