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**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High School Swimmers Dive into Fundraising to Support YMCA Aquatics Program

Northbrook, IL: March 2015 – Two members of the Deerfield High School swim team have turned their passion for their sport into a mission to provide swim instruction for youth in their community. Lauren Kurzydlo and Grace Frankel have launched a fundraising organization called Swimmers for Life, and are partnering with the North Suburban YMCA in neighboring Northbrook to provide swim lesson scholarships for children in need.

Lauren and Grace, both juniors, wanted to put their energies into a cause that connected to their love of swimming. The friends and teammates shared a commitment to good instruction as a foundation for water safety. “We value the importance of water safety,” notes Lauren. “Many kids die every year from drowning because they don’t know how to swim. Kids need to feel safe and comfortable in the water. We want to share our love for the water with other kids.”

With this goal in mind, the students contacted Don Enger, the NSYMCA’s Aquatics Director. Enger described the comprehensive program of swim classes offered at the Y, and also explained that the Y makes its all its programs available to children in need through its Strong Kids Financial Assistance Fund. Lauren and Grace saw the Y as a perfect fit for their goals, since funds they raised could be directed to provide swim lessons for kids who could not to afford them without help.

Swimmers for Life launched a fundraising drive, selling bracelets and accepting donations at swim meets and other events. They started with modest goals, but with enthusiastic backing from family and friends they eventually raised approximately \$2000. They presented the check in January to Enger and NSYMCA CEO/Executive Director Howard Schultz.

“Lauren and Grace accomplished so much more than we ever would have expected,” says Enger. “Knowing how busy teenagers are, I would have been happy with any amount they were able to donate. This generous gift will enable us to provide swim lessons for many kids in the community, setting them on a path for a lifetime of water safety and enjoyment.”

This initial donation is just part of the journey that Grace and Lauren see for Swimmers for Life. The girls plan to continue fundraising, and also to volunteer in the Y's aquatics program. To enhance the impact of their efforts, the Y hopes to find donors who will match funds that they raise. Businesses and individuals who would like to help should contact Don Enger, denger@nsymca.org.

"Our goal is to raise enough money to provide swim lessons to as many children as possible," notes Lauren.



Photo Caption: NSYMCA Aquatics Director Don Enger accepts a donation check from Swimmers for Life, a fundraising effort started by Deerfield High School students Lauren Kurzydlo and Grace Frankel. The donation will help fund swim lessons for children in financial need through the Y's Strong Kids Fund.

About the North Suburban YMCA

The YMCA is a not-for-profit entity and relies on donations to make services available for all families and individuals in its 15-city region. All board members are volunteers, who donate their time, talents and financial resources. Located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, the YMCA has served the northern suburbs of Chicago for over 45 years. The Y is about youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, providing programs and services that address the needs of our diverse community and are accessible to all. For more information or to make a donation, contact Barb Flanagin at 847-272-7250 or bflanagin@nsymca.org, or visit www.nsymca.org.