

June 1, 2020

To Our Swimmers,

**After much thoughtful discussion, the exploration of many options and the consideration of our long-standing commitment to always putting safety first, we have decided to cancel this year's Long Bridge Swim.** We considered delaying the Swim, but due to the ever-changing nature of the COVID-19 situation, we felt it was most responsible to cancel this year's event and provide participants, volunteers, sponsors and spectators with two months' notice of our decision.

**Participants** who have already registered for this year's Swim may request a refund or defer their registration until the 2021 Long Bridge Swim, which will be held on Saturday, August 7, 2021. **We hope many participants will consider a third option: donating their registration fee to the Swim Lessons Initiative which provides water safety and swim lessons to over 1,000 children each year.** Created over ten years ago, the mission of the program is to have no child in Bonner County get past third grade without learning how to swim. If all swimmers who have registered thus far donated their registrations, about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the cost of the program would be covered for the 2020-21 school year.

**We also urge participants who have not yet registered to consider making a donation to the Long Bridge Swim to support the Swim Lessons Initiative.** If all swimmers who have not yet registered (or delayed registering because of the pandemic) chose to make a \$25 donation, approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the cost of the program would be covered for the 2020-21 school year.

Likewise, we are asking our loyal sponsors to continue to support the Long Bridge Swim this year. 100% of sponsor contributions go the Swim Lessons Initiative, so any and all sponsorship support will help us fulfill our commitment to teaching kids to swim this year.

**It is important to note that the Long Bridge Swim continues to be completely volunteer run, with no paid staff.** To deliver the Swim Lessons Initiative, the Long Bridge Swim contracts with our local YMCA for pool time and water safety staff and we provide volunteers to support the teaching of all lessons, substantially reducing the cost of the program and allowing us to offer lessons at no charge to over 1,000 students each year.

Our 250+ race day volunteers will miss seeing over 700 swimmers who hail from dozens of states and many other countries for what would have been the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Long Bridge Swim this summer.

Go to [www.longbridgeswim.org](http://www.longbridgeswim.org) to make a contribution to the Swim Lessons Initiative. Please stay safe and join us next summer for the Swim!

Thank you,

Jim Zuberbuhler  
Race Director