



Good Day,

On a perfect summer day in 2012, a teenage boy named Brian was swept away in a Lake Michigan rip current, leaving friends and family to forever grieve.

You may be surprised to know that in the last seven years alone, more than 550 people have drowned in the Great Lakes – an average of 77 deaths per year – and virtually all of these tragedies were preventable.

Alarminglly, the number of Great Lakes drownings rose 78% from 2015 to 2016. We know why and what to do about it (see next page), but we need your help.

Humanity has opportunities to make changes that can positively impact individuals and societies. We have gathered some exceptional people to advance a very important lifesaving effort.

This effort aims to **END drowning in the Great Lakes**. We are the Great Lakes Water Safety Consortium, and we bring together more than 300 scientists, meteorologists, lifeguards and other first responders, beach managers, community leaders, drowning survivors, victims' loved ones, and other advocates with a common goal to inform, educate, and enlighten as a "community of BEST practice."

We hold annual conferences and collaborate year-round through our board, leadership council, and several action committees dedicated to **helping people avoid, escape, and safely save others from dangerous currents and conditions**.

To date, we have relied on 100% volunteer member support and conference registration fees. However, for this consortium to be sustainable and to truly make a difference, **we need support from generous donors like you**.

(over, please)



The 78% spike in drownings is due to warmer air temperatures drawing people to our beaches, warmer water temperatures luring them into the water, and higher water levels bringing wave energy and resulting dangerous currents closer to shore where the people are.

With your help, would like to see **warning flag systems, consistent signage, and rescue equipment** on every public beach along the 10,900 miles of Great Lakes shoreline.

Not enough people know lifesaving water safety messages like, “stay dry when waves are high,” or “flip, float & follow,” or “don’t just bring a life jacket, wear it,” so your donation will also go toward funding **water safety education programs in schools**.

It is our dream to have this collaborative hub take the best practices for water safety throughout the eight Great Lakes states and Ontario, Canada and scale them to save people from drowning anywhere.

It is with this message that we ask you to provide whatever monetary assistance you can. We are a 501c3 nonprofit organization so your donation is tax deductible.

Please donate today at <http://greatlakeswatersafety.org/donate/>.

Genuinely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jamie Racklyeft'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Jamie' being particularly prominent.

Jamie Racklyeft
Executive Director

P.S. You can help us prevent another family’s heartbreak of losing their loved one to drowning. Please donate today. Thank you.