

# DROWNING PREVENTION

## COALITION OF ARIZONA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **ARIZONA DROWNING PREVENTION EXPERTS RECEIVE NATIONAL HONORS**

*Three "Community Lifesaver Awards" Given to Drowning Prevention Coalition Members*

As a top-ranked state for fatalities, Arizona has long been recognized for the negative headlines related to child drownings. But this spring, Arizona's programs and experts were also recognized for their efforts to save lives.

The National Drowning Prevention Alliance, a group which brings together programs across the nation, presented three "Community Lifesaver" awards to Arizona experts. Seven Community Lifesaver Awards were presented altogether. The award was created to honor exceptional work in the advancement of drowning prevention at the community or regional level.

Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona members recognized by the National Drowning Prevention Alliance included:

- **Carol Achs** and **Druann Letter**, who were recognized for their work in developing the **Water Watchers at Phoenix Children's Hospital** program, a major educational initiative for children, and for increasing public awareness of water safety. The mother-daughter team turned grief to advocacy and action after the drowning death of Letter's son and Ach's grandson Weston Letter in 1998.
- **Tim Flood, M.D.** from the **Arizona Department of Health**, who was recognized for his unrelenting work and personal dedication in facilitating and promoting research, including a comprehensive yearly report on Arizona drownings. Dr. Flood's work has advanced drowning prevention efforts across the nation, and particularly in Arizona.
- **Michelle Long** with **Mesa Fire Department**, who was selected for her dedication in following an academic model to develop, implement and evaluate an effective water safety program. Mesa Fire's approach to education on the issue of drowning has set an example which other programs can look to for guidance.

"We are so proud of our members," says Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona President, Lori Schmidt. "We see their hard work and wisdom paying off every day in the community, and it's a pleasure to have their dedication honored by the National Drowning Prevention Alliance."

To learn more about the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona, visit [www.preventdrownings.org](http://www.preventdrownings.org). To learn more about the National Drowning Prevention Alliance, visit [www.NDPA.org](http://www.NDPA.org).

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The Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona, a community based organization comprised of parents, health and safety professionals and business leaders, exists to provide a forum to prevent drowning and near drowning through the promotion of education, legislative action and enhanced product safety. Check out our website at [www.preventdrownings.org](http://www.preventdrownings.org) for more information.