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MICHIGAN CHEER COACH TO BE HONORED FOR SAVING CHEERLEADER'S LIFE

The NCSF present the Ashley Marie Burns National Cheer Safety Award of Excellence

As a part of National Safety Month, the National Cheer Safety Foundation has selected South Lyon High School cheerleading coach Jen Combest to receive the First Annual Ashley Marie Burns National Cheer Safety Award of Excellence. Ms. Combest was selected by the NCSF Awards Committee.

/24-7PressRelease/ - IRVINE, CA, June 16, 2008 - As a part of National Safety Month, the National Cheer Safety Foundation has selected South Lyon High School cheerleading coach Jen Combest to receive the First Annual Ashley Marie Burns National Cheer Safety Award of Excellence. Ms. Combest was selected by the NCSF Awards Committee after her heroic efforts helped save the life of 17 year old cheerleader Katie Martin on April 24, 2008 at a school sponsored cheer clinic. After Katie went into cardiac arrest, Ms. Combest within moments began CPR, summons for help from school officials who then called 911 and continued CPR until police, fire and emergency personnel could arrive. Once on the scene, emergency personnel used an Automated External Defibrillator to reestablish an effective heart rhythm for Katie. Ms. Martin has had a remarkable recovery being able to attend her high school graduation last Saturday. She will return to South Lyon High School in the fall to assist the Junior Varsity cheerleading coach.

"We are grateful to Jen and to everyone who played a role in saving Katie's life. Jen is an amazing coach and an inspiration to young people. She would have done the same thing for any of the cheerleaders. We could not be more proud of the award the National Cheer Safety Foundation has given to Jen," replied Katie's mom, Donna Martin after hearing about the honor.

Ashley Marie Burns' mother, Ruth Burns will present the award named in honor of her daughter at the South Lyons Community Schools Board of Education Meeting on June 16, 2008. Ashley Burns passed away on August 9, 2005 from internal injuries sustained during an attempted double down from an arabesque while cheering for the Medford High Mustangs. The National Cheer Safety Foundation named the award in honor of Ashley Burns and her legacy. Executive Director of the National Cheer Safety Foundation, Kimberly Archie will also be present.

"I am honored to present an award in honor of my daughter Ashley to Jen Combest. Ashley would be so proud to have her name affiliated with such an outstanding coach!" responded Ruth Burns of Medford, MA. Ms. Burns is one of the Founding Families of the National Cheer Safety Foundation.

In conjunction with the award, the National Cheer Safety Foundation released the National Safety Committee's recommended "Rehearsed Catastrophic Injury Emergency Routine for Competitive Cheerleading Programs". The plan is a step by step guide for cheer programs in case of a catastrophic injury. Parents, coaches and school administrators can download a PDF version of the emergency plan at www.nationalcheersafety.com free of charge.

"The award, Jen Combest and the Rehearsed Catastrophic Injury Emergency Plan work together in harmony to send a bold message to everyone involved in youth sports - Being prepared for a catastrophic injury is worth the money and the effort! Just ask the Martin family." Kimberly Archie, Executive Director of the National Cheer Safety Foundation.

The NCSF acknowledges and congratulates Jen Combest for her outstanding efforts in a catastrophic emergency. We also extend our congratulations to the Michigan Cheerleading Coaches Association, Competitive Cheer Coaches of Michigan and the Michigan High School Athletic Association for their continued efforts in sports safety. Michigan is one of only 8 states that recognize competitive cheerleading as a sport and is governed by their state athletic association. Michigan's rich history of cheerleading, coaches training and safety first mentality are worthy of additional accolades. Additional heroes include South Lyon Police Officer John Tomanek, South Lyon Police Chief Lloyd Collins, Millennium Middle School Principal Maureen Altermatt, Millennium Middle School Teacher John Brickney, South Lyon Fire Chief Craig Kaska and the Huron Valley Ambulance.

The press and public are welcome to attend.

Award Presentation Information:

June 16, 2008 at 7:15 pm
Administrative Building
South Lyon Community Schools
345 South Warren
South Lyon, MI
(248)573-8170
School District Contact:
Melissa Meister
Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services

About National Cheer Safety Foundation

The nation's premier cheerleading safety organization, the National Cheer Safety Foundation (NCSF) is raising the bar in cheer safety awareness throughout the United States and has working partnerships with the National Center for Catastrophic Injury Research and the National Center for Sports Safety. For more information on the only not-for-profit educational organization for cheer parents, visit www.nationalcheersafety.com .

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