



# PRESSRELEASE

Menlo Park Fire Protection District 170 Middlefield Rd Menlo Park, CA 94025 650-688-8400 Fax: 650-323-9129

Date: September 27, 2019  
Contact: Harold Schapelhouman, Fire Chief  
Phone: (650)380-1006 Cellular

## The Saving of a Life!

### 14 year old girl miraculously survives drowning incident at Burgess Pool that occurred in June



**Pictured Above - From left to right** – Firefighter/Paramedic Scott Nixon, Firefighter Erik Anenson, Firefighter/Paramedic Paul Kaufman, Battalion Chief Chris Pimentel, Captain/Paramedic Matt Menard, Julie Cohn (aquatics head coach), Captain/Paramedic Eric McGlennon, Sam Witmer (AMR EMT), Santino Guerrero (NCTI Paramedic Intern), Andrei Klestoff (AMR Paramedic), Firefighter/Paramedic Brett Bates, Doctor Pete Meaney, Jonathan Martinez (head of lifeguards, Burgess pool) – **Photo Credit Menlo Fire**

## **Menlo Park Fire Protection District - City of Menlo Park - Drowning Incident Follow-up**

June was an unusually difficult and tragic month for Firefighters working for the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, which provides essential emergency services to the Town of Atherton, Cities of East Palo Alto and Menlo Park along with Unincorporated Areas of San Mateo County and on Contract to the SLAC National Accelerator and Laboratories.

Firefighters responded to a two year old drowning and death in an Atherton pool early in June followed by two separate fire related fatalities. Then on Friday, June 28, 2019 at 4.42 pm, during a swim meet at Burgess Pool, located at 501 Laurel Street, they responded to another drowning.

Menlo Battalion Chief Chris Pimentel was in his office at Fire Station 1 when he heard the report of a drowning at Burgess Pool with CPR in progress come over the Police radio. He immediately told crew members on Engine 1 and Truck 1 of the drowning as the station emergency tones were going off. He jumped into his vehicle and was the first Fire unit on-scene at 4.46 pm, quickly locating the 14 year old girl.

**Battalion Chief Pimentel said,** *“Unfortunately, I’ve been to a number of drowning calls at Burgess Pool. When I arrived, the 14 year old girl had just been pulled from the water and was pulseless, not breathing and CPR was in progress. Things didn’t look good, despite being told that her total down time under the water was only 15 - 30 seconds. What we didn’t know at the time, was that she had experienced a sudden cardiac arrest, prior to slipping under the water.”*

Bystanders reported that the girl had just completed a race and was at the pools edge when she took off her goggles and seemed to collapse and sank to the bottom of the pool. Her fellow swimmers and coach noticed her drop below the water’s surface. The coach and off duty Menlo Fire Captain/Paramedic Eric McGlennon immediately dove into the pool, bringing her to the surface and handing her off to head Life Guard Jonathan Martinez, head Swim Coach Julie Cohen and Doctor Peter Meaney, with Stanford Children’s Health Center, who had rushed to the edge of the pool and immediately started cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Captain/Paramedic Matt Menard and his crew of Engineer Lemos and Firefighter/Paramedics Nixon and Kaufman on Menlo Fire Engine One arrived on scene at 4.47 pm along with Captain Neily Hunt on Menlo Truck One and her crew of Engineer Quadt, Firefighter/Paramedic Bates and Firefighter Anenson.

The team of Firefighters immediately took over CPR and used Advanced Life Support (ALS) techniques, including starting an intravenous line (IV) for fluids and drug therapy and one round of cardiac defibrillation, with no success.

The patient was quickly loaded into an American Medical Response (AMR) Ambulance when it arrived. Fire/Paramedics Nixon and Kaughman continued treatment, delivering a second round of defibrillation in the ambulance prior to departure and then restarting CPR with the assistance of AMR Paramedic Klistoff and his intern Guerrero. Within moments, the patient positively responded as the ambulance traveling code 3 (red lights and siren) raced to Stanford Hospitals

Trauma Center.

**Fire Chief Schapelhouman, who was at the awards ceremony sponsored by Stanford Children's Hospital and Revive Initiative for Resuscitation Excellence, spoke to the group Thursday afternoon said** *“there can be no greater accomplishment in this world than the saving of a life. This was an incredible team effort by so many different people from those that dove into the pool and the handed her out to the staff and Doctor that started CPR, to the Firefighter/Paramedics and Ambulance Crew who used advanced life support techniques, to the Emergency Room Team of Nurses and Doctors where everything went exactly right, which very rarely, if ever happens with the end result is she and her family are standing together here with us today. We all wish for you a long life! “*

***Please Note: The patient and her parents have asked that her name not be included in this story and their privacy be respected.***

Additional information can be found at the Stanford's Revive Initiative for Resuscitation website. *Revive presented recognition awards to the 18 first responders who contributed to the resuscitation efforts at Menlo Swim. Lynda Knight, RN; Marc Berg, MD; Peter Meaney, MD; and Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman were among the speakers at the event and Menlo Park's mayor, Ray Mueller, thanked the entire Menlo Park community.*