



**Building our Dream to Waterproof the
Charlottesville/Albemarle Area**

April 2023

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Our Why



Benjamin Hair was a local competitive swimmer and lifeguard who was always drawn to working with children who were on the sidelines because they did not quite fit into the traditional swim-club model. Some may have had different body types, ethnic backgrounds or economic circumstances. Ben saw these children were being marginalized and wanted to make a difference. He began to pull the outliers in, one by one, and teach them to swim so they could feel a part of a swim team experience. Quickly the realization that all children can learn to swim regardless of body type, economic status or ethnic background became very clear.



Ben was killed in a tragic auto accident in 2009 and his parents decided to turn a tragedy into a triumph. A group of local concerned families and community leaders stepped forward and formed the Ben Hair Just Swim for Life Foundation (BH-JSL). Since 2009 the Foundation has taught more than 10,000 children and adults how to swim. This Foundation is the legacy Ben would have been proud of.

Each year the program grows and requests for lessons are received daily. Our programming can be found locally in Charlottesville/Albemarle, Louisa and Staunton/Waynesboro.

Our Mission



“Waterproofing Communities, Saving Lives”

The mission of the Benjamin Hair Just Swim for Life Foundation (BH-JSL) is to raise awareness of the need to provide the motivation, systems, and tools to waterproof our community so all children have basic swimming skills and are safe around water.



A recent study found that 40% of white children, nearly 70% of African-American children, and 58% of Hispanic/Latino children cannot swim and feel uncomfortable around water. According to the CDC, drowning is the leading cause of death in children under age 4. It is the second leading cause of death and

or injury in those children 4 – 14 years old. The Ben Hair Just Swim for Life Foundation works hard to change these statistics. Older generations were either not allowed, or did not learn to swim causing a fear of the water. Their children were then not allowed to be near the water for fear of drowning. This generational pattern continues to affect children today. Through our mission, we have seen a willingness for parents and grandparents to learn to swim. There is nothing better

than seeing the smile on an adult face when they conquer their fear of the water. That confidence transfers to their children which will then transfer to future generations.



Swimming can be an expensive sport which makes it unavailable to many of our communities' underserved populations. The thought of spending money on swimming when many families struggle to pay for food or medical care is simply not important. Our mission provides very low-cost lessons to families so they can be safe around water, along with an environment where all people feel comfortable to learn.

Our Dream



In order to provide access to a safe, accepting aquatic environment, our aim is simple : we want to build a facility that is community-need based to teach swimming to those who do not otherwise have access. This facility would provide swim lessons, water aerobics, swim team practice, Mommy and Me water instruction and so much more. Our teaching facility would be accessible for partnerships with other organizations that help underserved populations in the Charlottesville/Albemarle area.



Our Impact



- All students are provided with a swimsuit, a cap, goggles and a towel if they cannot afford them. We firmly believe that no person should not be able to swim because they do not have the proper gear.
- Since 2015 BH-JSL has partnered with the Charlottesville City School System to teach an opt-out swim lesson program to all fifth-grade students. This program has an average of 288 swimmers each year.
- Greer Elementary School students were able to take swim lessons held multiple summers at the ACAC Waterpark. Nearly 200 children have benefited from these lessons.
- Since 2011, we have partnered with Fry Springs Beach Club and teach on average 400 children and 20 adults.
- BH-JSL has worked with the Waynesboro YMCA to help them develop a swim lesson curriculum and a swim teacher training program.
- The Brooks Family YMCA allows use of their space to teach free and reduced lunch children to swim. We have had many sessions there and look forward to working at the Y in the future.
- In 2021, we developed a Muslim Connection swim program. This program allows women and kids to get in the pool and enjoy learning to swim and building friendships. Over 300 families were settled in Charlottesville during the Afghanistan conflict. Many of those families did not know each other, so it was important for them to have a safe place to interact and build community.
- BH-JSL continues to offer lessons to adults as well, which help them to be comfortable watching their children learn this life-saving skill.



- My two oldest boys have LOVED swim lessons. They ask every day if it is swim lesson day. After only a few months of lessons, my oldest is actually swimming! He has such confidence he didn't have before and is loving going under water. My middle son has always been cautious in the water but after his lessons he LOVES swimming and will even put his head in the water! Beth, Noah, Eric and Lulu have been so kind and are incredible with my kids. I would recommend them to anyone. **L.S. (Child's ages 6 & 3)**
- From my experience it is very nice to see that there are classes for children Javier's age. I am very grateful because I see how much he has learned and I want to continue with classes, he is always very happy, he loves it and it is something very good for Javier. **C.S. (Bilingual lessons, Child aged 7)**
- I think this club is a good opportunity for the kids to learn to swim, It is very important. Daniel likes to come and learn, now he is confident in himself and in the water. He also likes being with Ashley. We would love more classes. **D.R. (Bilingual lessons, Child aged 5)**

Our Need



As we begin the journey of funding this vital lifesaving facility, we must work together to provide this benefit to our community. The project is about providing access to our entire community to learn to love swimming. Our region is filled with and surrounded by water; thus, the threat of drowning is great. We need this resource; we need to be protecting our communities' children and we need to be teaching non-swimming adults to swim so that drownings are minimized. Our community deserves this mission.

We need your financial support . Help us find donors who have a desire to save lives. Help us find concerned individuals who can help to fund this project. Help connect us to relevant social media influencers who can push our message.



There are many jobs in making this campaign a success. **WE CAN, MUST AND WILL SUCCEED!**

Contact: Ben Hair Just Swim for Life Foundation (BHJSL)
2208 Dominion Drive
Charlottesville, VA 22901

Office Phone: (434) 973-3838

Email: Exec.BHJSL@outlook.com

Our Goal

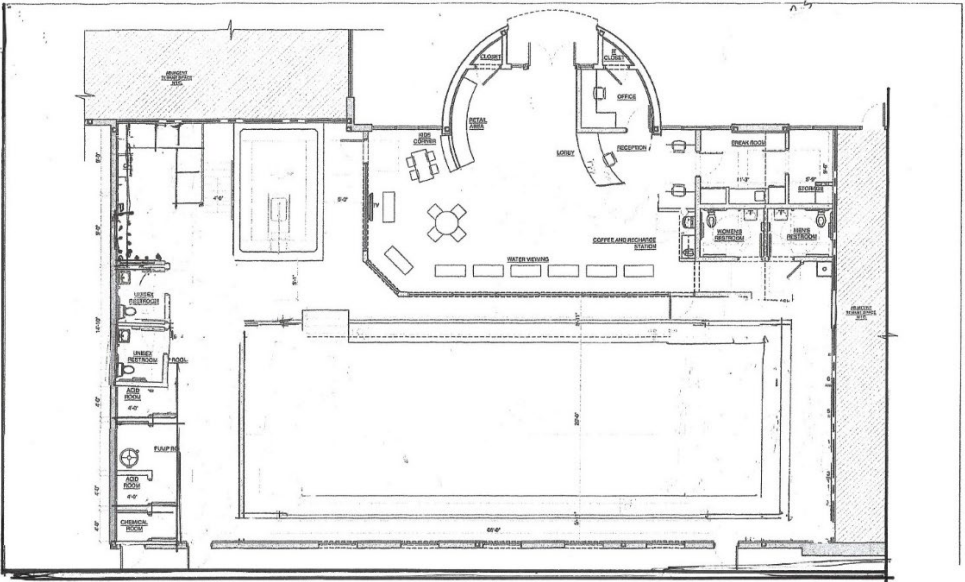
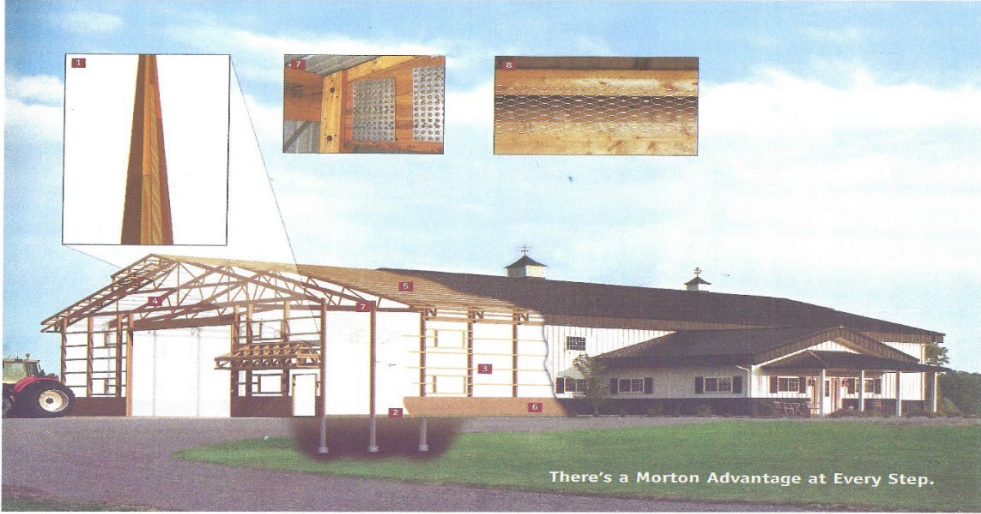


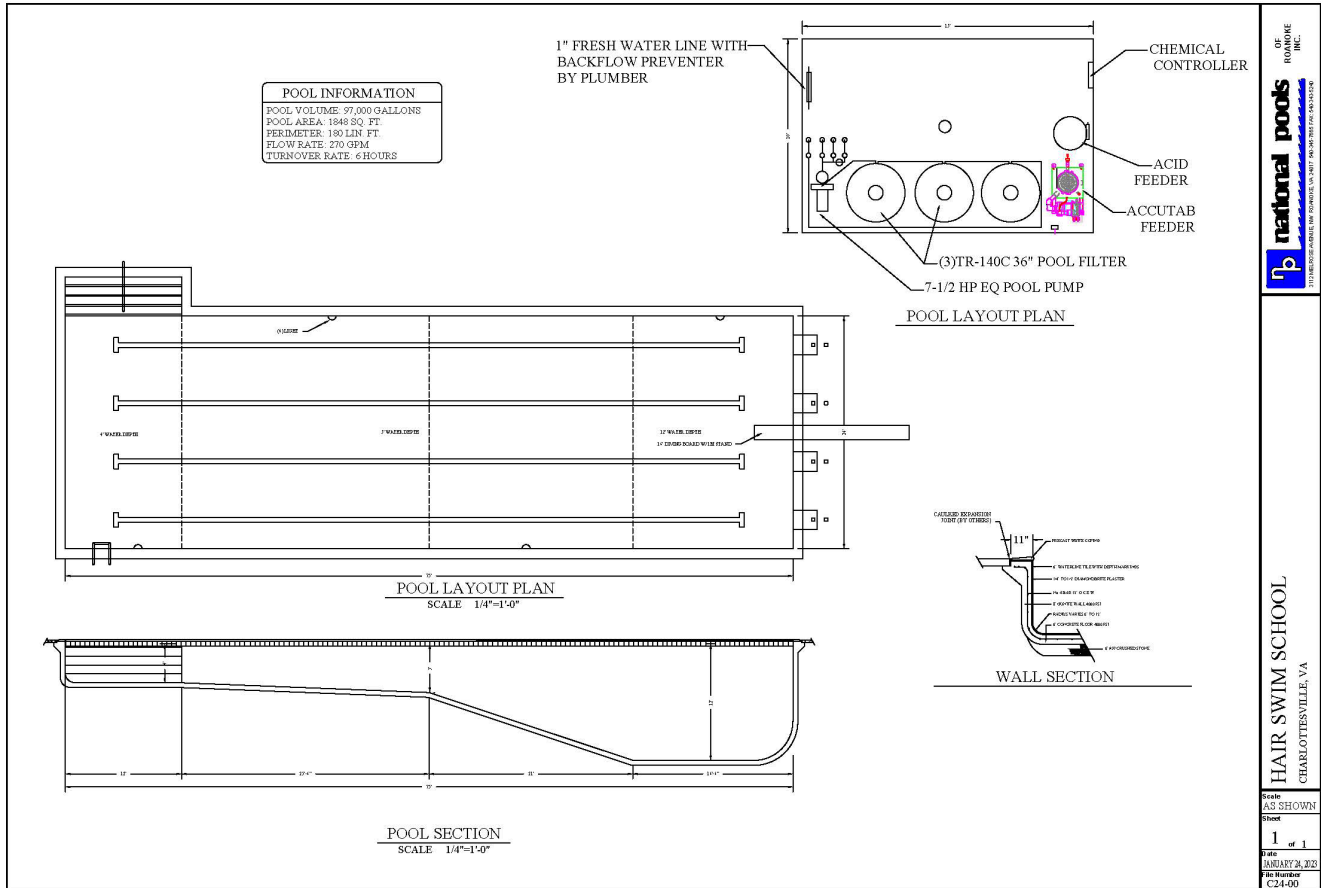
\$2,650,000

Building/Facility	\$1,735,000
Pool (pool, paddock system, dehumidifier system)	\$700,000
Endless Pool	\$100,000
Landscaping	\$50,000
Family Lounge (furniture/décor)	\$30,000
Teaching supplies	\$35,000

See attachments for more information and detail on the above.

Current Plans for Building and Pool





For more detailed information on our pool building dream, please visit our website www.bhjsl.org and visit “The Dream for the Future “ tab.

- 1) Swimming Kids are Smarter
- 2) National Pool Drawing
- 3) National Pool Estimate
- 4) PoolPak Unit Selection Worksheet
- 5) PoolPak Paddock Pricing
- 6) Endless Pools
- 7) Morton Buildings Estimate
- 8) JACS BHJSL Supplemental Survey Report
- 9) ACPS Lambs Lane Campus Project