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PRESS RELEASE

2/12/20 CHARLOTTE IMSA PROTOTYPE RACER TO INSPIRE STUDENTS IN AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



WHO:

International Motor Sports Association prototype car competitor and Charlotte resident, Kenton Koch, is set to make a Quick Tips on Winning in Life life skills presentation to Keith Family YMCA students participating in a Charlotte after school program, Wednesday, February 12, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.

WHEN:

4:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2020

WHERE:

KEITH FAMILY YMCA
8100 Old Mallard Creek Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28262

KEITH FAMILY YMCA:

Since 1996, the Keith Family YMCA has served individuals and families who live, work and play in Charlotte's vibrant and growing University City community. Formerly called the University City YMCA, the branch was renamed in 2017 to honor the Keith family, whose multi-generational support across the YMCA of Greater Charlotte made this branch possible.

The Keith Family YMCA serves nearly 15,000 people each year with diverse and enriching programs and services for all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

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Federal Tax I.D.: 95-4417337 California Tax I.D.: 1911416

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The YMC, itself, is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. The organization believes strong communities are possible only when kids, health and neighbors are invested in.

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte engages more than 297,000 men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – at 19 branches, two overnight camps and one child development center.

The YMCA believes that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve, under the guidance of caring adults who believe in their potential. Every interaction with young people is seen as an opportunity for learning and development – all grounded in the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Additionally, the YMCA is a safe place for teens. The YMCA holds that all teens have potential, and that a successful future is fostered by caring adults who make teens feel valued, capable and safe. When a teen is in crisis, it is important that they know where to go to get help. Through the YMCA's Safe Place Program, help is always close at hand for teens. A teen can enter any designated Safe Place site and request assistance when faced with a threatening situation. Safe Place partners in Mecklenburg County include Bojangles, CATS buses, QuickTrip locations, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the Charlotte Fire Department. The YMCA of Greater Charlotte became an official designated Safe Place in 2010.

When a young person enters a Safe Place seeking help, an employee provides a comfortable place to wait and contacts the local Safe Place agency. Quickly, an agency team member arrives to talk with the youth and, if necessary, provide transportation to the agency. There, counselors meet with the teen and provide appropriate support.

KENTON KOCH:

Kenton Koch began racing when his parents gave him a kart when he was eight years old. He has now been racing for 10 years. He began his career-long winning streak right away, taking third in his 2003 outing with the World Karting Association's Western Region Series. By, 2008, he had placed third overall in the WKA's National Jr. World Formula Series.

In 2010, Kenton competed for a Skip Barber Karting Scholarship and earned a half Regional Series Scholarship to race in 2011. In 2011, he finished in 2nd place at the Skip Barber Champions Shootout and took home \$30,000 to use toward his 2012 racing season.

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He enrolled in the Mazdaspeed Driver Development program, which gives young drivers a chance to earn a "ride" (driverspeak for an opportunity to race). In 2012, Kenton took 17 wins, placed 2nd twice, placed 3rd once and scored two track records in the Skip Barber MAZDASPEED Challenge Champion Series, securing the overall Skip Barber MAZDASPEED Challenge Championship. Kenton says, "All it took was some effort and work, along with great training and guidance from the Mazdaspeed Driver Development staff."

In 2013, Koch took 9 wins out of 11 and earned 5 Track Records on the Skip Barber MAZDASPEED Pro Challenge Series. The 2014 race season saw Koch serving as Data Analysis Judge in 2014 Mazda MX-5 Cup Shootout, winner of the FIA Young Driver Excellence Academy Americas Selection Event, and driver of the Cal State Fullerton Formula SAE Car at the Lincoln Nebraska Formula SAE Competition placing a school best of 12th out of 80 schools being the second fastest non-aero car. In 1915, Koch won 11 out of 14 races in the Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Powered by Mazda Series.

In 2016, Koch won the Le Mans Prototype Challenge at the Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona event and in 2016 and 2017 showed third in Class DSR at the 25 Hours of Thunderhill racing event. In 2018, he competed on the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship Series, the IMSA Prototype Challenge Presented by Mazda and scored three podiums, including two wins, of five starts in the Continental Tire Challenge TCR Series. In 2019, Koch competed on the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge Series.

In 2020, he is still racing IMSA prototype cars, but is also competing on the Pirelli GT4 America Series.

His overall outlook is: "If I don't live a life to a higher standard, I can very well damage my career and the name of those who support me. Knowing this, I strive to live an admirable life every day."

RACERS WHO CARE, INC.:

Racers Who Care, Inc. is a Hohenwald, Tennessee-based 501c3 based nonprofit charitable corporation, founded in 1993, that works with auto, boat, motorcycle and truck racers dedicated to making a positive difference for our next generation. RWC retains its California corporate status, and has registered as a foreign corporation in Tennessee.

In operation for more than twenty-five years, RWC has built up a proven track record for its racer presentations and its popular field trip program for children and teens.

Throughout the U.S. in communities surrounding their tracks, RWC's racers have unforgettably impacted kids with exciting observations on how to succeed, presented by people who have -- very publicly, and in a field perceived as ruthless, tough and unforgiving.

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The life skills racer presentations, based on each racer's own career experiences, center on key universal truths RWC calls *Quick Tips On Winning In Life*, applicable to all children and teens regardless of age, cultural background, or life experience: find something to do in life that you really love, study, learn the art of teamwork, find a mentor, take the long view, be flexible with your dreams and goals, avoid the path of least resistance, and more.

Because of knowledge gained through learning the ropes of racing, attaining skills and becoming leaders in their field, racers are uniquely positioned to fill a void in youngsters' general education between what they learn in school and what they need to know as they approach the realm of adulthood and entering the workplace, life skills such as how to: establish working relationships, develop coping skills, locate mentors, and other key practicalities.

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