

Dear Fellow Lacrosse Enthusiasts,

The Friends of Drew Webb invite you to Houston to be a part of the Eighth Annual "7's for 7" Lacrosse Tournament on January 6, 2018. This event will benefit the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Greater Houston and raise awareness of depression and other mental illness in athletes.

Drew Webb was the first Houston lacrosse player to be a high level D1 recruit. He was valedictorian at Episcopal High School where he wore the #7 jersey. He set multiple scoring records which still stand and was recognized as a 3 time All-State Selection and a 2 time HS All-American. He attended Cornell University and earned 4 Varsity letters. While there his struggle with depression came to the fore resulting in his hospitalization. Nonetheless, he persevered, continued with lacrosse (two NCAA Final Fours, four Ivy League championships), was a columnist for the Cornell Daily Sun, won awards for his film production, and graduated in 2008. Following graduation he was the founding coach for the Houston Hurricane Lacrosse Club and inspired many from the inaugural team to set their sights high and play collegiate lacrosse. He succeeded! Players from that group of twenty play(ed) at Army, U. Michigan, Roanoke, Fairfield, Merchant Marine Academy, Sewanee, and more! But recognizing others in need, Drew did even more: he volunteered in the psychiatric ward at Ben Taub Hospital as well as at a hospice caring for the terminally ill. This inspired Drew to change career plans, so he decided to go back to school and complete his pre-med requirements, all while continuing his battle with depression. However, in April 2010, while at UPenn preparing for medical school Drew took his own life. In addition to his family and friends, his death shook the lacrosse community in Houston. He was a beloved figure in Houston and throughout the state. His tragic death has galvanized the Houston lacrosse community to annually honor Drew and work to prevent such tragedies in the future. So, we hold a 7 vs. 7 tournament to honor #7.

The goal is to raise money for mental health care in young adults but even more importantly to raise awareness of this disease among young athletes and coaches. Our goal is for a young athlete with mental illness to be treated like an athlete with an ACL injury or a disease like diabetes rather than feeling like or being treated as an outcast or weakling. Our tournament grew quickly, in part out of love and respect for Drew and in part out of a shared love of lacrosse. Remarkably, every year many of Drew's Cornell teammates come to Houston from the corners of the country to reunite, remember Drew, support the Webb family, play the game they love together once again. This group has included multiple Team USA members, a Tewaarton Trophy winner, multiple MLL players, and up to a dozen All-Americans. Remarkable! What is truly remarkable is that one of these men, the NCAA Defenseman of the Year, repeat All-American, and MLL All-Star Ryan Flanagan comes and shares his experiences with depression, and the value of lacrosse as a sport and as a community in helping him fight that battle.

All proceeds of the event go to the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Greater Houston (www.dbsahouston.org), which was of great help to Drew. This organization provides free counseling and support for those struggling with depression or bipolar disease and has many clinics in schools and throughout the community. We have raised over \$200,000 for DBSA and more importantly raised awareness among our young athletes and their families/friends/coaches. 7's for 7 has won a national award recognizing its impact in the community. In the Houston area in the last few years there have been a number of young-athlete suicides and also athletes hospitalized with depression or anxiety disorders. We hear again and again that it can be hard for a coach to recognize and/or address such issues. And it is hard for teammates to know how to reach out to their struggling teammate. At least one athlete was hit hard enough by Drew's death to realize that he himself needed professional help. So, we are trying to further

Drew's contributions to the lacrosse community and we are asking for your support. This tournament will include up to 90 teams playing 7 vs. 7 at Bear Branch Park Sports Fields in The Woodlands on January 6th. Please come to celebrate the game, the fellowship of lacrosse, and Drew's memory. Will you join us for the tournament? Enter a team or come and enjoy the day of fun. Registration will open on October 1st. Once the spots are gone, they're gone. If you'd like to contribute, please take a moment to support DBSA thru this [LINK](#).

With gratitude,
The Friends of Drew Webb

*"The Friends of Drew Webb" is a 501c3 non-profit made up of members of the Houston lacrosse community who knew and loved Drew.

*We will have Club/Adult, High School, JV, 7th/8th grade, and 5th/6th, 3/4th Grade divisions for boys as well as girls 7/8th, JV, Varsity, and Club Divisions.

*We have added girls divisions and youth divisions.

*7's for 7 is sponsored by Nike Lacrosse, STX, Ironman Institute/Memorial Hermann Sports Medicine, Just Her Sports

*We will need volunteers! If you can help, please contact Kay Amendola at kayamendola@gmail.com.

