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TEAM 261 FEARLESS TAKES THE TORCH FROM KATHRINE SWITZER FOR 2018 BOSTON MARATHON

Boston, MA (April 2, 2018)—Building on the momentum of founder Kathrine Switzer’s 50th anniversary run last year, 47 runners are expected to toe the start line for the 122nd Boston Marathon on April 16, seeking to raise funds toward advancing the mission of 261 Fearless to empower women around the world through running.

“When I crossed that Boston Marathon finish line last year 50 years after the first time, I was overwhelmed with gratitude,” said Switzer, who in 1967 became the first woman to officially run the Boston Marathon. “Certainly for the good health that has allowed me to keep running all these years, but mostly to the many women who ran with me for Team 261 Fearless who will carry forward the message of empowerment for the next 50 years. The moment I finished that race I felt I had passed the torch to this next generation, and I am confident they—with the continued support of adidas and the Boston Athletic Association—will make those breathtaking positive changes on a global scale that we have long dreamed of achieving.”

Established in 2015, 261 Fearless Inc. is a global non-profit organization founded by Switzer that uses running as a vehicle to empower and unite women through the creation of local running clubs, education programs, communication platforms, and social running events. Breaking down the barriers of geography, 261 Fearless—named after Switzer’s bib number in that game-changing race—aims to create a global community for women runners of all abilities to support, encourage, and inspire each other toward a positive sense of self and fearlessness.

“Thanks to Kathrine’s courageous run 51 years ago, the door to running first swung open for many women in the United States,” said Edith Zuschmann, CEO of the non-profit. “Boston is where it all began and will always be a touchstone for women’s empowerment, but the world is where it needs to go now.”

With that in mind, and recognizing the role of the Boston Marathon in both Switzer’s career and the history of women’s running, 261 Fearless recently named Joann Flaminio as the first global 261 Fearless Advocate. In 2011, Flaminio became the first woman president of the Boston Athletic Association in its 123-year history and served for seven years. She will promote the mission of 261 Fearless around the world.

Already, there are 18 clubs on three continents. Three clubs—in Norwell, Hopkinton, and Boston—are based in Massachusetts, the home of a dozen Team 261 Fearless runners: Nicole Boussy, Pembroke; Amanda Dole, Abington; Gilda Doria, Boston; Sherri Dunwell, Saugus; Liza MacEachern, Boston; Katrina McKee, Medford; Monica Mishra, Brighton; Linda Montoya, Norwell; Judith Neufeld, Somerville; Kelly Nummelin, Boston; Elizabeth Perrone, Shrewsbury; and Cynthia Smith, Acton.

Runners on Team 261 Fearless in this year’s Boston Marathon represent six countries—Australia, Canada, China, India, Malaysia and the U.S.—and 21 states. As well as supporting the existing 261 clubs, funds raised in Boston will also go toward training additional coaches and club directors as they launch new 261 clubs around the world.

Participating in the Boston Marathon is the second major initiative of 261 Fearless in Boston this year, after



it hosted an event to mark International Women's Day on March 8 that featured, among others, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey and Boston City Councilor Ayanna Pressley.

For more information about the organization, visit www.261fearless.org.

About 261 Fearless, Inc.

261 Fearless, Inc. is a global non-profit organization founded by pioneer runner, Kathrine Switzer. 261 Fearless uses running as a vehicle to empower and unite women globally through the creation of local 261 running clubs, education opportunities, communication platforms, merchandising and events. Through these networking opportunities, 261 Fearless breaks down the barriers of geography and creates a global community for women runners of all abilities to support and talk to each other, encouraging healthy living and a positive sense of self and fearlessness. For more information please visit, www.261fearless.org.

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