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## **Kathrine Switzer will run the 121<sup>st</sup> Boston Marathon® in Celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of her Historic Run**

**Port Washington, NY (September 8, 2016)**-- Kathrine Switzer, the woman who made history by pinning on an official race bib and running in the 1967 Boston Marathon®, at a time when the marathon was a male -only event, is making history again. As a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and to pay tribute to the streets of Boston for birthing the women's distance running movement, Kathrine will lace up her shoes once again, pin on a "legitimate" bib and run the 121<sup>st</sup> Boston Marathon®. This time, she will be running with a team of women representing her new global non-profit, 261® Fearless, Inc.

"It is an honor and joy to participate in the 121st Boston Marathon," said Kathrine Switzer. "What was a dramatic incident 50 years ago when angry race co-director Jock Semple tried to throw me off the course for being a girl, became instead a defining moment for me and women runners throughout the world. The result is nothing less than a social revolution; there are now more women runners in the United States than men."

Despite this inauspicious beginning, the Boston Athletic Association (BAA) early on realized the seriousness of women's desire to participate and the potential of their endurance. In 1972, five years after the 'Switzer Incident', the BAA welcomed women as official competitors. Switzer was 3<sup>rd</sup> in that race, ran Boston eight times, and posted her personal best of 2:51:37 in the 1975 edition. Boston was the first major marathon to admit women; this opened the floodgates for women's participation globally.

"We are so pleased to welcome back Kathrine to the race which elevated and hastened the movement in women's sports," said B.A.A. President Joann Flaminio. "She has always been a fearless woman, and we look forward to concluding our year-long '50 Years of Women at Boston' celebration when we greet her at the finish line next April 17."

After an instrumental career of racing, event directing, and television commentary—including 30 consecutive years of broadcasting Boston for local CBS affiliate WBZ-TV-- Kathrine Switzer has most recently launched 261® Fearless, Inc., a global non-profit aimed to empower and connect women through running. Active communication platforms, a series of running clubs, events, training and merchandizing align to create a unique women's community that helps them to overcome life obstacles and embrace healthy living. The community unites under the number, 261 which is the bib number Kathrine fearlessly defended as she ran the Boston Marathon 50 years ago. The Boston Athletic Association has granted 261 Fearless a limited number of invitational bibs for the 121<sup>st</sup> Boston Marathon to be used exclusively for fundraising purposes to further the mission and programs. The women who are accepted onto Team 261® Fearless will start the race with Kathrine.

Switzer's run is spurring other exciting events, including a celebratory re-launch of her popular memoir, *Marathon Woman*, and she and the 261® Fearless non-profit are partnering with Reebok in a line of commemorative 261 Fearless running apparel and shoes.

"At 70, I am grateful to have these opportunities and still be able to run this challenging distance," Switzer said. "One reason I can is because of the support and gratitude that I receive from women all over the world. They tell me I inspire them, but it's really they who give me my FEARLESS! I cannot think of a better way to celebrate 50 years of pushing forward the women's running movement than to line up with a big group of women, all wearing official Reebok 261 Fearless gear, and all who believe in using running as a way to empower and connect with other women. Thanks to the B.A.A., we have a great opportunity for women to run here, and the 261® Fearless spirit will be strong on the streets of Boston!"

For more information about 261 Fearless, please visit [www.261fearless.org](http://www.261fearless.org). If interested in applying for a fundraising bib for Team 261 Fearless to run the 2017 Boston Marathon, registration opens on our site on September 12, 2017 at 10 a.m., EST.

#### **About Kathrine Switzer**

Iconic athlete, sports and social advocate, author, and Emmy award-winning television commentator, Kathrine Switzer was the first woman to officially enter and run the Boston Marathon. She has been honored widely for her achievements, most recently being inducted into the USA National Women's Hall of Fame for creating positive social change. The ramifications of this work is both joyful and profound, changing forever the face of sports, health, and opportunities for women around the world and fearlessly empowering millions beyond the finish line, through the non-profit 261 Fearless, Inc.

#### **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 communication platforms, clubs, training opportunities, ambassadors, 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](http://www.261fearless.org).

#### **About the B.A.A.**

Established in 1887, the Boston Athletic Association is a non-profit organization with a mission of promoting a healthy lifestyle through sports, especially running. The B.A.A.'s Boston Marathon is the world's oldest annual marathon, and the organization manages other local events and supports comprehensive charity, youth, and year-round running programs. Since 1986, the principal sponsor of the Boston Marathon has been John Hancock Financial. The Boston Marathon is part of the Abbott World Marathon Majors, along with international marathons in Tokyo, London, Berlin, Chicago, and New York City. More than 60,000 runners will participate in B.A.A. events in 2016. The 121st Boston Marathon will be held on Monday, April 17, 2017. For more information on the B.A.A., please visit [www.baa.org](http://www.baa.org).

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