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## **Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon is First Canadian Partner Event for 261 Fearless**

### ***Global nonprofit aims to empower women through running***

NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO — The Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon on June 5 has been named the first Canadian partner event for 261 Fearless, Inc., a global nonprofit community of female runners and walkers founded by women's running legend Kathrine Switzer.

261 Fearless is using running as a vehicle to empower women globally, reaching out to make them fearless through the creation of clubs, training opportunities, merchandising and events. But most of all, Switzer says, 261 Fearless is about creating a global community of female runners and walkers who are supporting and talking to each other, encouraging healthy living and a positive sense of self.

"I have been a guest of the Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon for its first four editions. I've watched it grow, and I am overwhelmingly impressed at the empowered community of women that it has created," Switzer said. "The growth of 261 Fearless as a charity has paralleled the growth of this tremendous race, so now, on this fifth edition, it's appropriate to make our friendly relationship official!"

Ross Robinson, the founder and director of the Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon said, "Kathrine is an inspiration to these women. She is friendly and accessible, hugging and talking to each one of them. But what makes her special is that she keeps pushing for their cause. She knows running empowers them and we are joining her in trying to empower as many women in the world as possible."

Switzer continued: "The 261 Fearless Partner Event relationship is pretty simple, really, and it's a win-win for everyone. We give women in both organizations information about running and walking, and about events that are spirited and women-friendly, like the Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon. This allows them to broaden their running network, and as they share - through personal interaction of clubs and events or through technology - their fearless hopes and determination."

Runners and non-runners alike may be familiar with Switzer thanks to the iconic 1967 photo of a Boston Marathon race official trying to forcibly remove her from the course. Switzer - and her nonprofit namesake bib number 261 - went on to finish the event, becoming the first woman to officially run the Boston Marathon. She has spent the decades since working as a champion for women's running, and has become both an Emmy Award-winning TV commentator and a bestselling author.

"We are thrilled to have Kathrine back with us again this year as the 'Event Celebrity' said Robinson. "She'll be signing books and taking selfies at the Packet Pick-Up June 3 and 4 at the Niagara Square Shopping Centre, speaking at Betty's Restaurant for the pre-event dinner on the evening of June 4 and on race day will be high-fiving and hugging participants. How great that our race is now an official part of the 261 Fearless movement. This is a wonderful way to let thousands more women around the world know they are welcome at the Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon!"

The fifth annual Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon kicks off at 8am, Sunday, June 5 at Upper Rapids Blvd. parking lot. The fast 13.1 mile (21.1K) course is one of the most beautiful and famous in the world as it winds its way along the Niagara River Parkway and passes the Niagara Falls TWICE before finishing where it started.

For more information about the Niagara Falls Women's Half Marathon, go to [www.nfwhm.com](http://www.nfwhm.com).  
To learn more about 261 Fearless, go to [www.261fearless.org](http://www.261fearless.org).

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