

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## SIKA HENRY AND HOKA TEAM UP WITH THE IRONMAN FOUNDATION TO INCREASE DIVERSITY IN THE SPORT OF TRIATHLON THROUGH RACE FOR CHANGE PROGRAM

-- Race For Change External Advisory Council announced --

**TAMPA, Fla.** (February 24, 2022) – The IRONMAN Foundation® today announced a partnership with Sika Henry, the USA's first Black female professional triathlete, and HOKA to build awareness and expand outreach in support of the *Race For Change*® initiative. In partnership with HOKA, the IRONMAN Foundation, and Henry will work to identify and remove participation barriers within the sport of triathlon that impact Black and other diverse athlete groups.

Henry will serve as an ambassador for *Race For Change* and work with the IRONMAN Foundation to develop community outreach engagements in conjunction with various 2022 *Race For Change* events associated with IRONMAN® and IRONMAN 70.3® races, including: Certified Piedmontese Beef IRONMAN Tulsa triathlon, Maytag IRONMAN 70.3 Steelhead triathlon, St. Jude IRONMAN 70.3 Memphis triathlon, and Sunbelt Bakery IRONMAN 70.3 Chattanooga Presented by McKee A Family Bakery triathlon. In addition, she will take part in a social media campaign aimed at connecting with young athletes and those aspiring to compete in IRONMAN and IRONMAN 70.3 races. Additional details surrounding the 2022 *Race For Change* events will be announced at a later date.

"I am very happy to support the IRONMAN Foundation's *Race For Change* initiative. I hope to extend and welcome more diverse athletes to our sport who have previously encountered barriers that prevented them from participating," said [Henry](#). "Throughout my journey to become a professional triathlete, I've worked hard to be someone others can look up to and who does something with my story. I am deeply passionate about making the sport more accessible, and I hope my story can inspire others to develop the skills necessary to complete any distance. Together, with the IRONMAN Foundation we can bring more people to the sport that I love so much."

In 2020, with the mission to ensure equity for athletes in the sport of triathlon and the communities where IRONMAN athletes and first-time hopefuls live, train and race, *Race For Change* was launched by the IRONMAN Foundation and The IRONMAN Group® with an initial pledge of \$1 million to support programming.

"Through *Race For Change*, we are teaming up with diverse communities to collaborate on how to best remove participation barriers from our sport at the grassroots level in order to recognize, empower, and sustain diverse competitor involvement long term," said Audra Tassone-Indeck, Executive Director of the IRONMAN Foundation. "As a part of IRONMAN, the largest and most prestigious triathlon race series in the world, we must lead diversity advocacy efforts to welcome more diverse people into the sport as we collectively empower the next generation of great competitors, coaches, and history-makers."

With the goal of leading diversification and growth of the sport, the IRONMAN Foundation has also assembled a *Race For Change* external advisory council consisting of industry professionals. The members of the external advisory council include:

- **Sam Cardona**, triathlete, co-founder of Keep It Simple Coaching and assistant coach for TriLatino Triathlon Club, a 501(c)3 organization ([www.trilatino.org](http://www.trilatino.org)).
- **Mike Ergo**, co-founder of the Gold Star Initiative, an IRONMAN Foundation Ambassador, and a USMC veteran.
- **Lindsay Hiken**, triathlete, and co-founder of the Ginger and Chocolate podcast.
- **Kebby Holden**, triathlete and founder of Coeur, a women's cycling, and triathlon company and community.
- **Tina James**, Sr. Corporate Social Responsibility professional and 15-plus year community relations veteran with an emphasis in sports.
- **Rahsaan Johnson**, managing director of Sponsorships and Inclusive Partnerships at United Airlines.
- **Carrie Tollefson**, a world-class middle-distance runner, and host of the C Tolle Run podcast, a running podcast that inspires all levels to get after it. She represented the USA at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and currently provides commentary for major marathons, road races, and track events on NBC, ABC, ESPN, and [USATF.TV](http://USATF.TV).

"We are extremely fortunate to have a strong group of individuals that represents the breadth and depth of the triathlon community as our external advisory council to also pair with Sika Henry as our ambassador," continued Audra Tassone-Indeck. "Their collective insights and real-world counsel will be invaluable as we work to make meaningful changes in our great sport."

For more information about *Race For Change* and the IRONMAN Foundation, visit [www.ironmanfoundation.com/raceforchange](http://www.ironmanfoundation.com/raceforchange). For more information on The IRONMAN Group, its brands and global event series, visit [www.ironman.com/about-ironman-group](http://www.ironman.com/about-ironman-group).

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### **About IRONMAN DE&I Efforts**

IRONMAN® has and continues to provide a welcoming platform and environment for all, becoming synonymous with monumental achievement by athletes from around the world proving that ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE®. Over IRONMAN's 40-plus year history, the brand and its series of events have worked with and celebrated athletes of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds, from all races, religions, nationalities, and sexual orientations. Since the very first years, IRONMAN has represented breaking barriers and redefining what is possible. This legacy continues as athletes and the greater IRONMAN community have utilized the platform as a vehicle to challenge and redefine society views. The very first trailblazing Special Team of Dick and Rick Hoyt racing alongside other athletes was a pinnacle moment for what was to come. Their determination and fortitude has continued with athletes like John MacLean, Jim MacLaren, David Bailey, Carlos Moleda, Jim Howley, Scott Rigsby, Sarah Reinertsen, Rudy Tolson-Garcia, Ricky James, Turia Pitt, Minda Dentler, Team Agar, the Pease Brothers, Alex Zanardi, Rajesh Durbal, Team Liza, Lauren Parker, Roderick Sewell, and most recently Chris Nikic and Sam Holness, among so many others. These athletes and their achievements through IRONMAN have established non-profits and long-standing partnerships like the Challenged Athletes Foundation that continue to do incredible work. The vastness of the athlete community, partners and the openness that exists with its events is what makes IRONMAN special and is core to the what the brand represents. Continuing the belief and importance of inclusivity, IRONMAN is

committed to Women For Tri and Race For Change while working on additional avenues to further increase diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### **About the IRONMAN Foundation**

The IRONMAN Foundation creates positive, tangible change in IRONMAN race communities by engaging athletes and volunteers to participate in programs that demonstrate service through sport and commitment to community. Since 2003, over \$55,000,000 has been provided through IRONMAN charitable giveback programs, including the IRONMAN Foundation, to more than 10,000 local, regional, national, and global nonprofit initiatives. Through these partnerships, IRONMAN and Rock 'n' Roll Running Series® participants are powerfully linked to the community and together help leave a positive legacy behind in race communities long after event day. For more information on IRONMAN Foundation programs, including Team IMF, Community Fund, Race For Change®, Rock This Town®, and Your Journey Your Cause, visit [www.ironmanfoundation.org](http://www.ironmanfoundation.org).

### **About The IRONMAN Group**

The IRONMAN Group operates a global portfolio of events that includes the IRONMAN® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® 70.3® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® Virtual Racing™ (VR™) Series, 5150™ Triathlon Series, the Rock 'n' Roll® Running Series, the Rock 'n' Roll Virtual Running™ Series, IRONKIDS®, World Triathlon Championship Series, premier running events including the Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon™ and The Sun-Herald City2Surf®, UTMB® World Series events including Tarawera Ultramarathon and Ultra-Trail Australia™, mountain bike races including the Absa Cape Epic®, road cycling events including Haute Route®, and gravel racing like Gravel Epic®, and other multisport races. The IRONMAN Group is the largest operator of mass participation sports in the world and provides more than a million participants annually the benefits of endurance sports through the company's vast offerings. Since the inception of the iconic IRONMAN® brand and its first event in 1978, athletes have proven that ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE® by crossing finish lines around the world. Beginning as a single race, The IRONMAN Group has grown to become a global sensation with hundreds of events across 55+ countries. The IRONMAN Group is owned by Advance, a private, family-owned business. For more information, visit [www.ironman.com/about-ironman-group](http://www.ironman.com/about-ironman-group).

### **About Advance**

Advance is a private, family-held business that owns and invests in companies across media, entertainment, technology, communications, education and other promising growth sectors. Our mission is to build the value of our companies over the long-term by fostering growth and innovation. Advance's portfolio includes Condé Nast, Advance Local, Stage Entertainment, The IRONMAN Group, American City Business Journals, Leaders Group, Turnitin, 1010data and Pop. Together these operating companies employ more than 17,000 people in 29 countries. Advance is also among the largest shareholders in Charter Communications, Discovery and Reddit. For more information visit [www.advance.com](http://www.advance.com).