



For Immediate Release  
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CAF to Auction Slot to Ford Ironman World Championship  
At *Celebration of Heroes, Heart and Hope* on July 18:  
Proxy Bids Accepted Until July 17

*San Diego, CA* – The Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) will auction a prized slot to the 2007 or 2008 Ford Ironman® World Championship at a gala dinner in New York City on July 18. The winning bidder can choose which year they prefer to race in. Proceeds from the auction will help fund specialized equipment, training and coaching for physically challenged athletes so they can participate in the sports that many able-bodied individuals take for granted.

Interested parties can bid on the coveted slot in one of two ways: In person, by buying a ticket for the *Celebration of Heroes, Heart and Hope* (go to [www.challengedathletes.org](http://www.challengedathletes.org) or call 858.866.0959, ext. 108 for more information) or by downloading and completing a proxy bid form at [www.challengedathletes.org](http://www.challengedathletes.org) and faxing it to 858.866.0958. The minimum opening bid for proxy bidders is \$15,000 and during the live auction, bids will be made in increments of \$1,000 until the bidder's maximum bid is reached. The winning bidder must have completed an Ironman® 70.3 or long distance triathlon by Oct. 1 prior to their Hawaii race date and is required to submit a completed application to Ironman®. For a complete list of auction rules, go to: [www.challengedathletes.org](http://www.challengedathletes.org).

"We are so thankful to Ironman® for donating this valuable spot in triathlon's premier event," said Virginia Tinley, CAF's Executive Director. "We know it will be instrumental in making our event a success, and allowing us to help even greater numbers of challenged athletes."

Held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, *A Celebration of Heroes, Heart and Hope* will feature challenged athlete "stars," celebrities, and notable New Yorkers. Funds raised at the event will help challenged athletes overcome the economic roadblocks to participation in sports and live life to the fullest. The event will also honor James M. Benson, CEO of Clark Benson, LLC (and former CEO of John Hancock Life Insurance Company), for his many outstanding contributions to the movement to provide equal sporting opportunities to disabled persons around the world.

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### ***About Challenged Athletes Foundation***

*Headquartered in San Diego, CA, with a chapter in Florida, CAF is a special place where courage has many faces ... where perseverance comes through the door with a first name ... where dreams are nourished and heroes have a home. It is an organization unlike any other in the world.*

*CAF grew out of a desire to assist one athlete paralyzed in a triathlon. From this modest beginning arose a more important mission – to make sure people with physical challenges have the same freedom to enjoy sports that the able-bodied take for granted.*

*Since 1994, CAF has raised more than \$11 million and satisfied more than 2,600 funding requests from challenged athletes in all 50 states and dozens of countries. Additionally, CAF's outreach efforts reach another 60,000 individuals each year. Whether it's funding a handcycle, helping underwrite a running prosthetic or arranging enthusiastic encouragement from a mentor who has triumphed over a similar challenge, CAF's mission is clear: give those with the desire to live active, athletic lifestyles every opportunity to compete in the sports they love.*

### ***About Ironman***

*World Triathlon Corporation, owners and organizers of Ironman, is a Florida-based company recognized for athletic excellence, performance and quality products. With the addition of the Ironman 70.3 Series, Ironman now has more than 40 qualifying events worldwide. Ironman has been a respected name in triathlon since its inception 29 years ago and is regarded as the world's most challenging endurance event. Each year, more than 80,000 athletes compete for slots in the Ford Ironman World Championship held every October in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, and the Ford Ironman World Championship 70.3 held every November in Clearwater, FL.*