

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHALLENGED ATHLETES FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA FUNDRAISING EVENT 'A CELEBRATION OF HEART' — FEBRUARY 27 AT SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

SAN FRANCISCO — (Feb 13, 2018) — The Challenged Athletes Foundation™ (CAF) will hold the inaugural “A Celebration of Heart” – a special evening benefitting CAF on February 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA). The event, designed to raise funds to empower the next generation of challenged athletes by providing adaptive sports equipment, clinics and mentoring, will bring together a unique crowd from across sports, technology, business, and philanthropy to experience CAF and be moved by the power of sport. Event Co-chairs include Allison Caccoma & Alan Shanken, and Alison & Mike Mauze.

A Celebration of Heart will enable guests to connect with local challenged athletes, from elite Paralympians to a young CrossFit athlete who has shown us her resilience through sports after losing her leg to cancer. The evening will showcase how CAF is impacting lives through our programs to fund grants, host adaptive sports camps and clinics, empower our injured military and create an inclusive community. The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a welcome reception and dinner stations; followed at 7:45 p.m. by a powerful CAF presentation, including inspiring athlete stories of overcoming adversity. After the theater-style program, the party will continue with a blue-grass performance by Mick Hellman and the Well Known Strangers and craft beer tasting sponsored by Stone Brewery.

Featured athletes include:

- **Andre Kajlich** – In 2003, Andre Kajlich was a 24-year-old college student in the Czech Republic who, after a night out with friends in Prague, ended up getting hit by a subway train, resulting in a bilateral above-knee amputation. Today, he is a world-class paratriathlete and trailblazing ultra-endurance wheelchair racer. He was the winner of the 2012 Ironman World Championships (handcycle division), has won multiple titles in paratriathlon and held the #1 World Ranking. Andre is the first and only solo handcyclist to finish the grueling Race Across America in 2017.
- **Mohammed Lahna** – Born and raised in Morocco with a congenital limb underdevelopment in his left leg, Mohamed played sports as a child and grew up playing soccer. However, receiving his first real running prosthetic at the age of 20 completely redefined his athletic ability. Mohamed spent the next few years pursuing sports with a renewed vigor and determination to push himself, leading to his first marathon and finish at the age of 27. Mohamed competed for Morocco in the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio and won a bronze medal in Paratriathlon. He is currently training with the intent of winning gold in Tokyo for the 2020 games, representing his adopted country of the USA
- **Breezy Bochenek** – A runner, triathlete, surfer, CrossFitter, Breezy was diagnosed at 10 years old with Osteosarcoma, an aggressive form of bone cancer on her left thigh. At the age of 10, she amputated her leg above the knee to save her life. Since her fight with cancer and leg amputation, Breezy has been determined to overcome her limitations. She races triathlons, surfs, runs, and has won awards like the Challenged Athlete of the Year at the 2014 Endurance Live Awards in San Diego, Calif. She inspires and mentors others, like fellow cancer survivor, Alex Henry, who will also be attending A Celebration of Heart. She’s also a singer, and has sung the national anthem at sporting events, at CAF events, and she has even sung on-stage with the band Switchfoot.

Alan Shanken, event co-chair and CAF board member shared, “In our 25th Anniversary year, it’s a milestone to be launching the Celebration of Heart event to bring more awareness and support in the Bay Area and transform more lives through sport. Attendees at SFMOMA on Feb. 27th will truly be moved by the power of sport.” Shanken commented that over the past four years in North California, over \$800,000 has been funded to 3,507 Challenged Athletes to help ensure a full active life. Of these grants, 28 percent have been funded to youth athletes globally and 14 percent of Northern California grants were funded to youth athletes.

CAF programs include grants for adaptive sports equipment — Össur running feet, handcycles and sport wheelchairs, travel, training and competition expenses (items not covered by medical insurance); Camps + Clinics, including running and mobility, paratriathlon, swimming, adaptive cycling, wheelchair basketball, sit volleyball and more; Operation Rebound, providing support for injured military, veterans and first responders to strengthen their mental and physical well-being through sports; and Mentorship + Community, empowering the newly injured and those with physical challenges through inclusion and strengthened communities. Overall, in 2017 alone 97 different sports were supported, including wheelchair rugby, blind surfing, equestrian, sled hockey, adaptive CrossFit and many more to empower active lifestyles.

Sponsors for this inaugural event include: Alison & Mike Mauze, IRONMAN®, Marvell Semiconductor, Microsoft, Allison Caccoma & Alan Shanken, TPG Sixth Street Partners, Accenture, Mark Bregman, Dean Family & Breen Family, Kate & Bill Duhamel, Sabrina & Mick Hellman, Julie & Michael Hughes, Allison & Brian Jacobs, Tony Lee, MarkLogic, McGuire Real Estate, Össur, Qatalyst Partners, Ranger Road, Enrique Salem, SMASHMALLOW, Spinner Family, Stone Brewing, UBS - Private Wealth Management, Aquilo Capital Partners, Asset Management Company, ColRich, Headsweats, Justin’s, Koret Foundation, Susan Levine & Jim Lauer, Brenda & Alexander Leff, John S. Osterweis, Rebecca Chia & Arthur Romeo, ROTH Capital Partners, Deborah Taylor Barrera & John Steinbuch, and Mary & Mark Stevens.

About the Challenged Athletes Foundation

The Challenged Athletes Foundation® (CAF) is a world leader in helping people with physical challenges lead active, healthy lifestyles. CAF believes that participation in physical activity at any level increases self-esteem, encourages independence and enhances quality of life. Since 1994, more than \$93 million has been raised and over 18,000 funding requests from people with physical challenges in all 50 states and 70 countries have been satisfied. Additionally, CAF’s outreach efforts reach another 60,000 individuals each year. Whether it’s a \$2,500 grant for a handcycle, helping underwrite a carbon fiber running foot not covered by insurance, or arranging enthusiastic encouragement from a mentor who has triumphed over a similar challenge, CAF’s mission is clear: give opportunities and support to those with the desire to live an active and athletic lifestyle. To learn more, visit challengedathletes.org or call 858-866-0959.

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