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2009 OneAmerica 500 Festival Mini-Marathon Wheelchair Division field almost full

INDIANAPOLIS (Date) – The Wheelchair Division of the 2009 OneAmerica 500 Festival Mini-Marathon is nearly full. The field for the Mini-Marathon, the nation's largest half marathon, closed on December 27, 2008 with 35,000 runners and walkers registered. A few spaces are still available for wheelchair participants. For more information on registering in the Wheelchair Division for the May 2 event, e-mail raceinfo@500festival.com.

The Wheelchair Division is sponsored by Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana (RHI) Sports Program RHI Sports Program. RHI is dedicated to providing and enhancing athletic opportunities for individuals with physical disabilities. RHI supports 12 adaptive sports teams, in addition to sponsoring the Wheelchair Division of the Mini-Marathon. To be eligible for prize money, RHI requires wheelchair participants to use only a "push-rim" wheelchair.

A wheelchair staging and parking area will be provided near the start line of the race for all wheelchair participants. Also, wheelchair participants may relax after the race and enjoy time with other participants and their guests at the wheelchair VIP area at the 500 Festival Post-Race Party.

The Mini is the nation's largest half marathon with 35,000 participants. The Mini-Marathon has continued to grow since its inception in 1977 and a field of 800 participants. This is the eighth consecutive year the event has sold out.

The mission of the 500 Festival is to produce events and programs that celebrate the success of the Indianapolis 500 Mile Race and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Indiana and their guests. These events and programs, produced largely by volunteers, enhance the image of our city and state by showcasing our cultural, educational, and social benefits to the world.

The 500 Festival, a not-for-profit volunteer organization, was created in 1957 to organize civic events celebrating the greatest race in the world. Over the past 52 years, the 500 Festival has grown to become one of the largest festivals in the nation.

Last year, nearly 500,000 Hoosiers and visitors participated in festival activities throughout the month of May. Whether they were athletes running the Mini, fourth grade students participating in the Education Program, families enjoying the state's largest festival for kids or spectators being dazzled by one of the nation's premier parades, they were there, celebrating the legacy.

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