

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Betsy Armstrong (c): 773.218.3684

barmstrong@gotrchicago.org



***SoleMates* to raise \$200,000 and cover more than 3,000 miles to inspire Chicago youth**

On October 9, 120 runners will complete the Bank of America Chicago Marathon on behalf of Girls on the Run – Chicago

CHICAGO, IL – On October 9, 120 *SoleMates*, the official endurance training team of Girls on the Run – Chicago (GOTRC), will run 26.2 miles in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon to raise funds to inspire young girls to be joyful, healthy and confident.

Motivated by the 7,000 girls who will take part in Girls on the Run-Chicago's cutting-edge after-school programming, the *SoleMates* are on a mission to accomplish so much more than "just" a marathon. These determined athletes are raising scholarship dollars to ensure that every girl across Chicagoland can participate in the GOTRC program, regardless of financial need. The GOTRC program, targeted at girls ages 8-14, combines training for a 5K (3.1 mile) run with interactive lessons that encourage positive social, emotional, mental and physical development.

"The look on a girl's face when she crosses the 5K finish line says it all," says Cindy Firman, a 2011 GOTRC volunteer coach and *SoleMate*. "Race day is the day when each girl realizes that she is capable of so much more than she ever dreamed possible. If running 26.2 miles will give 10 young girls that opportunity, it is the least I can do!"

***SoleMates* Statistics:**

The *SoleMates* program was started in 2003 with nine athletes, raising almost \$20,000 for GOTRC. The program has continued to grow exponentially and now boasts a team on-track to raise \$200,000 in 2011. By participating in *SoleMates*, the experience of the athlete mirrors that of the young girls who participate in Girls on the Run programming: during training, adults and girls alike learn they can go further and be stronger than they ever dreamed, while race day challenges every runner to push through and reach their ultimate goal.

Media Opportunities:

- SoleMates Mid-Season Rally: September 21
- Interviews with program participants ages 8-14
- Bank of America Chicago Marathon Expo: October 6 & 7
- Bank of America Chicago Marathon Race Day: October 8

About Girls on the Run-Chicago

Girls on the Run – Chicago is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident. Using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running, the innovative program combines training for a 5K event with interactive lessons that encourage positive social, emotional, mental and physical development. Over the past 12 years, Girls on the Run – Chicago has served more than 20,000 young girls across six Chicagoland counties. This year, more than 1,000 coaches will mentor 7,000 girls, empowering them with the confidence and character they need to become strong, healthy women.

###