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BUONICONTI TO PARTICIPATE IN MARATHON WITH ASSIST FROM DEAN

Marc Buoniconti, President of the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis who leads the fight to find the cure from his wheelchair, will participate in the ING Miami Marathon and Half-Marathon® on January 31 with,an assist from University of Miami Miller School of Medicine Dean Pascal J. Goldschmidt, M.D.

Goldschmidt, who is also CEO of University of Miami Health System (U Health) will be running in the 13.1 mile half-marathon and will join Buoniconti just outside the Intercontinental Hotel and escort him the final 100 yards of the race. Buoniconti has no movement below his shoulders and powers his wheelchair by sipping and puffing.

This symbolic participation for Buoniconti and Goldschmidt is intended to signify the continued efforts of the UHealth medical group in finding a cure for paralysis.

“It is a true honor to be able to cross the finish line of the marathon with my good friend Dr. Goldschmidt,” Buoniconti said. “He stands side by side with us as we try to accomplish our goal of curing paralysis at The Miami Project and the image of us crossing that line together makes me think of the day when I, and the millions of others affected by spinal cord injuries, will be able to stand and walk across our finish line.”

The effort is designed to get paralyzed individuals like Buoniconti running like active adults like Goldschmidt.

“Every day of his life Marc shows tremendous courage, provides a role model for his colleagues and friends, and proves to all of us that anything is possible – including that one day he and thousands of others will be able to leave their wheelchairs and walk,” Goldschmidt said. “It is an honor and a pleasure to pass the finish line of this long-distance race side-by-side with Marc.”

More than 60 wheelchair and pushrim athletes with disabilities will also participate in Sunday’s marathon.

“Over the years, UHealth and US Road Sports have enjoyed a great partnership with UM serving as the official medical provider of the ING Miami Marathon,” said Dave Scott, General Manager of US Road Sports & Entertainment of Florida and Race Director of the ING Miami Marathon. “We are proud to have this aspect of the University’s medical program be recognized for the research that they are conducting in this much needed area.”

About the Miami Project

In 1985, Barth A. Green, M.D. and NFL Hall of Fame linebacker Nick Buoniconti helped found The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis after Nick's son, Marc, sustained a spinal cord injury during a college football game. The Miami Project, housed in the Lois Pope LIFE Center, is a Center of Excellence at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and is the world's most comprehensive spinal cord injury research center,. The Miami Project's international team of more than 200 scientists, researchers and clinicians take innovative approaches to the challenge of spinal cord injury.

About Miller School of Medicine

The University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine, founded in 1952, was the first medical school in the state of Florida. The Miller School of Medicine is located on the 100-acre University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center complex in Miami. The medical center includes three University-owned hospitals that make up the University of Miami Health System (UHealth): University of Miami Hospital, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center and Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. Our three primary affiliated hospitals on the campus include Jackson Memorial Hospital, Holtz Children's Hospital and the Miami VA Medical Center. Miller School faculty members conduct more than 1,700 research projects in basic science and clinical care in facilities totaling more than 500,000 square feet of research space. Along with the M.D. degree, the school offers two specialized B.S./M.D. programs, a combined M.D./Ph.D. program, graduate degrees in nine areas, postdoctoral programs and continuing medical education courses.

About US Road Sports

US Road Sports & Entertainment Group is a health and wellness company dedicated to the production of world-class endurance events. The mission of US Road Sports is to offer an unparalleled participant sports experience that showcases host communities and endures as a deeply valued local asset through events that are a part of the city's culture, identity and brand. For each participant, US Road Sports strives to offer events that allow participants of all skill levels the opportunity to improve their physical and mental health and accomplish life-altering goals while having fun. US Road Sports provides sponsors and municipalities highly effective exposure to help maximize their presence and message in the community.