

## PRESS RELEASE

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**Bank of America**

**CHICAGO MARATHON**



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### **Bank of America Dedicates 2008 Bank of America Chicago Marathon to Chicago 2016**

*U.S. Olympic Sponsor Plans Weekend of Activities to Support City's Bid*

**CHICAGO (October 9, 2008)** – Continuing its tradition of supporting the U.S. Olympic Movement and in an effort to showcase Chicago's expertise at staging world-class international sporting competitions, Bank of America announced today that it is dedicating the 2008 Bank of America Chicago Marathon to the city's candidacy to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The news was shared at a press conference attended by Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, Chicago 2016 head of venues and game operations Doug Arnot and several Olympic marathon runners including **Deena Kastor** (USA), **Kate O'Neill** (USA) and 2008 Olympic marathon gold medalist **Constantina Tomescu-Dita** (ROU).

"I applaud Bank of America for dedicating this year's race to Chicago's bid to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games," said Mayor Richard M. Daley. "We are very grateful for this support because it is vital in helping us move forward with our plans to host an unparalleled Olympic and Paralympic Games. An Olympic Games in Chicago will build bridges of friendship between the United States and the rest of the world and will bring the world to the United States. The same can be said for the Bank of America Chicago Marathon."

"Chicago's history is filled with a distinguished legacy of memorable sports moments and events, including the Chicago Marathon," said David Rudis, President, Bank of America Illinois. "As we celebrate our inaugural year as title sponsor and as the city enters the final phase to win the international bid to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we felt this was a unique way to further lend our support to this exciting endeavor," said David Rudis, Bank of America Illinois President and Chicago 2016 Committee Member.

As part of its dedication efforts, Bank of America is working closely with Chicago 2016 to support a variety of activities to engage runners and spectators and rally the entire community around the city's Olympic bid. Among the activities:

- **Honorary Roles for Olympians** – For the first time in the Marathon's 31-year history, Bank of America has invited Olympians to play a number of honorary roles during the Marathon to demonstrate their support of Chicago's bid and to bring the excitement of the Olympic and Paralympic Games to the 45,000 registered participants and more than 1.5 million spectators expected at this year's race. **Jessica Galli** (USA, Paralympian '00, '04, '08), **Cat Osterman** (USA, Softball '04, '08), **Dathan Ritzenhein** (USA, Track & Field '08) and **Jim Spivey** (USA, Track & Field, '84, '92, '96) will serve as honorary starters of the wheelchair, elite and open field competitions. Ritzenhein will then join **LaShawn Merritt**

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(USA, Track & Field '08) at the 22<sup>nd</sup> mile to cheer the runners on from the sidelines. To complete the celebration, Osterman will assist with the champion awards ceremony at the finish line and **Mark Coogan** (USA Track & Field '88, '92, '96) will address the runners, their families and friends at the Bank of America 27th Mile Post-Race Party.

- **Cheer on Chicago 2016** — Throughout race weekend, runners, visitors and residents are invited to cheer on the Chicago 2016 bid by recording a personal “Why Chicago” message at America’s Cheer™, Bank of America’s Olympic mobile experience that has been adapted to provide an opportunity for people to express their support for the city’s Olympic candidacy through the act of cheering. America’s Cheer, complete with a cheer capture room and other interactive activities, will be staged at the two-day Health & Fitness Expo held in advance of the race at McCormick Place Convention Center. The “cheers” collected throughout race weekend will be uploaded for viewing at Chicago2016.org. America’s Cheer debuted in April, traveling 27,000 miles across the United States and collecting more than 20,000 cheers for America’s Olympic athletes who competed this summer in Beijing, China.
- **Chicago 2016 Volunteers** — The weekend of Marathon-related events will be supported by hundreds of Chicago 2016 volunteers as more than 250 will be positioned just beyond the finish line to distribute recovery items to runners, while others provide interpretation services in the media center and at the start line for international guests. More than 100 2016 representatives will gather at the 18<sup>th</sup> mile of the race course in Little Italy to encourage the field of runners.
- **Marathon Observation Tour** — While all city agencies and departments have been integrated in the making of the Marathon for three decades, members of the Chicago 2016 community relations department will have an opportunity to witness the behind-the-scenes efforts of the race to work with and engage the community. After touring the start and finish areas in Grant Park, 2016 representatives will board the lead vehicle to witness the men’s elite competition and view the course in its completed state, just ahead of the elite field.

“The Bank of America Chicago Marathon runs through 29 neighborhoods, showcasing the diversity of the city and the ability of sports to bring the city together,” said Doug Arnot, director of venues and games operations at Chicago 2016. “Chicago’s concept for the Olympic and Paralympic Games put athletic competition in the heart of the city, and the marathon embodies this approach: elite athletes cheered on by more than a million of Chicago’s passionate sports fans.”

### **Bank of America Chicago Marathon**

The 2008 Bank of America Chicago Marathon will start and finish in Chicago’s Grant Park beginning with the wheelchair race at 7:50 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 12. Registration opened to the public on Feb. 1 and closed in record time on April 23 when the participant capacity of 45,000 was reached. In advance of the race, a two-day Health & Fitness Expo will be held at McCormick Place on Friday, Oct. 10 and Saturday, Oct. 11. In its 31<sup>st</sup> year, the Bank of America Chicago Marathon annually attracts 45,000 runners, 1.5 million spectators and 125,000 Expo visitors and generates more than \$10 million for affiliated charities. The Bank of America Chicago Marathon is one of the five races that comprise the World Marathon Majors. More information on the race and how to get involved is available at [chicagomarathon.com](http://chicagomarathon.com).

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### **Bank of America**

Bank of America is one of the world's largest financial institutions, serving individual consumers, small and middle market businesses and large corporations with a full range of banking, investing, asset management and other financial and risk-management products and services. The company provides unmatched convenience in the United States, serving more than 59 million consumer and small business relationships with more than 6,100 retail banking offices, more than 18,500 ATMs and award-winning online banking with more than 25 million active users. Bank of America offers industry leading support to more than 4 million small business owners through a suite of innovative, easy-to-use online products and services. The company serves clients in more than 150 countries and has relationships with 99 percent of the U.S. Fortune 500 companies and 83 percent of the Fortune Global 500. Bank of America Corporation stock (NYSE: BAC) is a component of the Dow Jones Industrial Average and is listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

### **Chicago 2016**

Chicago 2016 is a 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to seek the privilege of hosting the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Chicago. The committee's board consists of business, civic, athletic, cultural and academic leaders representing Chicago and the surrounding Midwest region. Patrick Ryan serves as the organization's chairman and CEO. [www.Chicago2016.org](http://www.Chicago2016.org).

*[www.bankofamerica.com](http://www.bankofamerica.com)*

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