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GRANDMA'S MARATHON EARNS FACILITY OF MERIT AWARD FOLLOWING POST-PANDEMIC RETURN

Presented by National Center for Spectator Sports Safety & Security

(DULUTH, MINN.) --- Grandma's Marathon has been named one of five recipients of the 2023 Facility of Merit Award by the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety & Security (NCS4), the organization announced today.

The award, which is being presented this year to five organizations or facilities across several industries, serves as recognition of an innovative approach to enhancing safety and security beyond normal operations and/or addressing a significant safety and security concern.

Grandma's Marathon is receiving its award based on its planning and execution of the 2021 race weekend, which marked one of the nation's first major road races to return to an in-person format amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"With what was happening at that time around the world, we're proud to have done the work needed to have an in-person race," Race Director Greg Haapala said. "Safety and security of our event are always our top priorities, but 2021 offered different parameters that many in the event industry hadn't dealt with previously. To have developed a plan in collaboration with many public agencies and partners was a very proud moment for our organization."

After canceling its in-person race in 2020, Grandma's Marathon returned the next year with a modified, half-scale event plan designed to abide by existing, yet ever-changing, state guidelines and to help keep participants, volunteers, and community members safe and healthy.

The plan was created by Grandma's Marathon alongside many partners, including Marcel Altenburg of Manchester Metropolitan University and his crowd science software *Start Right*, which helped race organizers visualize, predict, and control the way people moved through various areas during the event.



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Garmin | Grand Casino Hinckley/Mille Lacs | Grandma's Restaurant Co. | Great Clips | Holiday Inn & Suites | Holiday Stationstores | Jamar | maurices
Michelin's | Minneapolis Oxygen | Minnesota Pork Board | Minnesota Power/ALLETE | Nature's Gem CBD | Northland FAN 106.5 | Powerade ION4
Storm Creek | Super One Foods | Waste Management | WDIO/WIRT-TV

The Facility of Merit Award is being formally presented on Wednesday, June 28 during the NCS4 Exhibition in San Antonio, Tex.

For any questions or interview requests, please contact Marketing & Public Relations Director Zach Schneider via phone at (218) 343-9874 or via email at zach@grandmamarathon.com.

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ABOUT GRANDMA'S MARATHON

Grandma's Marathon began in 1977 when a group of local runners planned a scenic road race from Two Harbors to Duluth, Minnesota. After seeing just 150 participants that year, the race weekend has now grown into one of the largest in the United States and welcomes more than 20,000 participants for its three-race event each June.

The race got its name from the Duluth-based group of famous Grandma's Restaurants, the first major sponsor of the marathon. In addition to the 26.2-mile race, the organization has now added the Garry Bjorklund Half Marathon and William A. Irvin 5K to its weekend offerings.

As the popularity of Grandma's Marathon has grown, our mission has stayed the same – to organize, promote, and deliver annual events and programs that cultivate running, educational, social, and charitable opportunities to our communities.

Grandma's Marathon-Duluth, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization with a nine-person, full-time staff and a 17-member Board of Directors.



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