

The Niagara Falls International Marathon Art Installation Pilot Project

Niagara Falls, ON (May 30, 2019) A unique community partnership will help participants in the annual Niagara Falls International Marathon soar to new personal bests at this year's races.

Race organizers Diane Chesla and Henri Ragetlie are partnering with A.N. Myer Secondary School on a pilot project that will install an interactive, larger-than-life butterfly sculpture along the race course for the event coming up on Sunday, Oct. 20. It's part of the unique entertainment program the race directors have been developing over the last couple of years.

The project focuses on designing, building and installing a Niagara-themed sculpture along the race course on Niagara Parkway. The students at A.N. Myer came up with the idea of creating a larger-than-life size butterfly sculpture. The butterfly's body will actually be built in the form of a chair that when sat upon, causes it's wings to flap and marathon runners will be welcome to take a breather and interact with the installation during their race.

"Many runners now look for races that offer unique experiences" says Chesla. "We want to build a program that is unique to Niagara, showcasing Niagara Region while involving the community."

An artist herself, Chesla reached out to Tracey Garrett, A.N. Myer's Visual Arts and Drama teacher, to see if there was interest in partnering on the pilot project. Joe Fernandez, a visual arts teacher at A.N. Myer, is leading the project, drawing on many different departments and expertise within the high school to design and build the complex, interactive, large scale sculpture. The teachers volunteer their time after school to oversee students from the Special High Skills Major program to make the butterfly installation come to life. Students in this program need to accomplish various industry specific certifications in order to receive the designation on their diploma.

"I was ecstatic that Tracy was interested and completely blown away by the interactive butterfly theme the students came up with" says Chesla. "Butterflies was one of the potential themes to work with and pays homage to Niagara Park's Butterfly Conservatory along the Niagara Parkway."

About the Niagara Falls International Marathon

Voted one of the most scenic courses with every race distance following the Niagara River and ending at the majestic Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side of the border. The Marathon is truly international with the start in Buffalo, NY. The Half, 10k and 5k distances all start and end in Canada. The original race took place in 1974 and has twice been host to the men's U.S. Olympic marathon trials. For more information, visit <https://niagarafallsmarathon.com/landing-page/>

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If you would like more information about this topic please call Race Director Diane Chesla at 905-356-9460 or email racedirector@niagarafallsmarathon.com