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Media Contact:
Julia Little
aussieangel@hawaii.rr.com
(808) 778-8048

**HONOLULU EKIDEN & MUSIC FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 5TH ANNIVERSARY
ON MAY 21, 2017**

Annual Event Begins with Relay Race, Culminates With Star-Studded Concert
at the Waikiki Shell

HONOLULU – January 30, 2017: The Honolulu Ekiden Foundation invites you to “Ho’ohui Pa’ani” or “Be united in play” at the Fifth Annual Honolulu Ekiden and Music Festival. Last year, the Foundation brought more than 1,300 runners together for a relay race and music festival, and once again welcomes runners to register for its 2017 event on May 21st.

The Honolulu Ekiden and Music Festival culminates in a star-studded concert finale at the Waikiki Shell, featuring hip-hop, reggae and rock sensations, *Dirty Heads*, known for their hits “My Sweet Summer,” “Lay Me Down,” and recent release “That’s All I Need.” Their current single “Oxygen” from their self-titled album is out now. Grammy-nominated and internationally known *Gin Blossoms*, are recognized for their numerous hits including “Hey Jealousy” and “Follow You Down.” Singer/songwriter *Piko Taro* is best known for his smash viral sensation hit “Pineapple Apple Pen” and his latest song “Orange Juice.” And extremely popular Japanese rock band *FLOW* will also perform.

Participants in the relay are encouraged to register in two to six-member teams before May 18. The registration fee includes participation in the Ekiden race and admission to the nighttime music festival at the Waikiki Shell (tickets are first come first served for the first 2,000 participants).

The Honolulu Ekiden and Music Festival is the only one of its kind in Hawaii, bringing Japan’s Ekiden tradition of a marathon-length relay race to the islands. In ancient Japan, the Ekiden was a method to pass along important news from provinces to the capital with multiple messengers, completing different segments of the journey. Today, the event symbolizes teamwork and cooperation to achieve a common goal, with races held throughout Japan. It is the goal of the 2017 Ekiden to promote tourism, foster cultural understanding between the residents of Hawaii and Japan and provide a way for friends, co-workers, running and military groups to participate together in a race that not only promotes teamwork and competition but most importantly is a lot of fun.

“Ekiden races are very popular in Japan, where they bring people together for friendly competition. Our goal is to bring some of that goodwill to Hawaii and develop a stronger relationship between the people of Hawaii and Japan,” said Honolulu Ekiden Foundation Secretary Jon Nakata. “For many, a full marathon might be too much of a challenge, but now, participants can form a team and complete the race with friends, family or co-workers.”

EVENT DETAILS:

The 26.2-mile race will start and end at Kapiolani Park and features six segments, with each member completing one or more legs of the race, then handing off a sash to be worn by the next runner. Prizes will be awarded to the top finishers in 15 divisions, including youth, high school, university/college, corporate, heroes, family and kamaaina. There’s also a contest for the best team costume. As with Ekiden races in Japan, local volunteers will encourage runners at the stations, adding to the fun and excitement of the event.

Immediately following the Ekiden race from approximately 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. everyone is invited to unwind and recharge as we continue to “Ho’ohui Pa’ani” with an impressive entertainment festival. An exciting variety of Hawaiian and Japanese entertainment will take place at the Kapiolani Bandstand, adjacent to the Ekiden finish line. The awards ceremony will start approximately at 10:30 a.m.

Concert festivities at the Waikiki Shell begin at 5 p.m. with the entrance gates opening at 4 p.m. The concert will run from 5 to 9:15 p.m. featuring Piko Taro, FLOW, the Gin Blossoms and Dirty Heads live! For more information visit www.hnlekiden.org or to purchase tickets for the concert only, (tickets go on sale beginning February 4 at 10 a.m. HST) visit www.ticketmaster.com, charge by phone at 1-800-745-3000 or visit the Blaisdell Box Office.

RACE DETAILS:

Regular Registration (closes on May 18, 2017 at 11:59 p.m.)

2-person team \$120, \$60 per person.

3-person team \$180, \$60 per person.

4-person team \$240, \$60 per person.

5-person team \$285, \$57 per person.

6-person team \$300, \$50 per person.

Last Chance Registration (closes May 20, 2017)

2-person team \$140, \$70 per person.

3-person team \$210, \$70 per person.

4-person team \$280, \$70 per person.

5-person team \$335, \$67 per person.

6-person team \$360, \$60 per person.

*Payment may be made via Credit Card, personal check issued in the USA or money order.

The 26.2-mile course is divided into six sections. Relay teams can consist of two to six participants. The race will begin with the first member of the team at the start line wearing the team sash. There will be three relay stations to delineate each section of the race, where team members must transfer the sash to the person who will complete the next section. For teams with fewer than six members, each member may complete more than one section. However, multiple sections must be completed consecutively by the same person (i.e., runner #1 can complete sections 1 and 2, but not 1 and 3). Every sash contains an electronic chip that will register at each relay station. Teams must complete

sections 1, 2, and 3 within three hours; thereafter, sections 4, 5, and 6 must each be completed within an hour. Thus, the maximum allowed duration to complete the entire course is six hours.

Ekiden Schedule

- 4:30 a.m. – Assemble at starting line
- 5:30 a.m. – Race start
- “Ho’ohui Pa’ani” (be “united in play”)
- 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- 10:30 a.m. – Awards Ceremony

Concert Schedule

- 4:00 p.m. – Gates Open
- 5:00 p.m. – Concert begins
- 9:15 p.m. Concert ends

For more information, or to register please visit www.hnlekiden.org. Runners must pick up race-day information, packets and sashes for team entrants at the 2017 Honolulu Ekiden Expo, held on May 20th at the Hawaii Convention Center, 3rd floor from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Late registration will be accepted on May 20, 2017 at the expo.

About Honolulu Ekiden Foundation:

The Honolulu Ekiden Foundation was formed on Jan. 3, 2013 to promote the advancement of peace and social welfare among people in the Pacific Rim, including Hawaii and Japan in particular, through amateur sports and cultural activities. The Ekiden and concert will provide recreation, exercise, entertainment, cultural exchange, and an economic boost to the local community.

About Dirty Heads:

After two decades spent chiseling their unique, multi-genre infused sound, Dirty Heads have finally come into their own. Since the release of their 2008 debut 'Any Port in a Storm,' the five-piece band -- Jared Watson (vocals), Dustin "Duddy B" Bushnell (vocals/guitar), Jon Olazabal (percussion), Matt Ochoa (drums) and David Foral (bass) - has consistently experimented with their sunny style, leaning heavily on reggae fused with hip-hop cornerstones and scaling back for more acoustic fare, darting between extremes. But it's with their fifth and self-titled album that the group has felt fully confident in a body of work, ready to bring their unique style to the masses.

About Gin Blossoms:

In late 80's Gin Blossoms started to grow a huge following as the #1 local music draw in Phoenix and certainly were the hometown heroes of their favorite hang, Tempe, Arizona. Gin Blossoms indelible jangle-pop sound was evolving during radio's diverse mix of hair bands and grunge music superstars like Nirvana. After the Phoenix New Times chose them the city's best rock band, they qualified to play at the South By Southwest Music Festival in Austin, Texas in 1989. That same year, College Music Journal dubbed them the “Best Unsigned Band in America” and added an invitation to perform on MTV's New Music Awards in New York City. The Gin Blossoms have been defining the sound of jangle pop and indie rock for more than two decades.

About Piko Taro:

Piko Taro is a singer/songwriter from Chiba prefecture, Japan his video, “PPAP (Pen Pineapple Apple Pen)” went viral on the Internet after being posted on YouTube last summer. Shortly after that, Justin Bieber posted on his Twitter saying it is his favorite video on the Internet, which

stirred more buzz. Global media including CNN and BBC then picked up the story and turned him into a globally recognized star. Piko Taro's song reached American Billboard Chart Hot 100, which was the first in the last 26 years as a Japanese artist. His song is also registered as "the world's shortest song" in the Guinness Book of World Records. Currently his video has been viewed more than 1 billion times. His latest video "I like OJ" is up on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCIfcc8J2M>

About FLOW:

Flow is a five-piece Japanese mixture rock band formed in 1998. The group made a major debut in 2003 with a first single "Blaster," and kept releasing hit after hit, well received for their strong twin vocal melody and their wide range of musicality. They have released numerous anime tie-in songs such as "Naruto" opening theme song called "GO!!!," Code Geass : Lelouch of the Rebellion R2's opening theme song called "COLORS," Tales of Zestiria the X's opening theme song called "Kaze no uta," and have earned their popularity over a long period of time.

Their energetic live performance is also something not to miss. In 2008, they had a successful solo live concert at Nippon Budokan. But not only in Japan, they keep getting offers to play at various festivals worldwide and performed in more than 15 countries since 2006. In 2015, they completed a world tour, which took place in eight countries including Japan, Taiwan, USA, Canada, Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Argentina. The group continues to perform and deliver music across the border.

For concert production info contact: Producer: Umma Berkelman umma@ekadantagr.com

For race information contact: Race Director: Brent Imonen brent@pacificrimsports.com

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