



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Iditarod welcomes the Blood Bank of Alaska as a new partner

Anchorage, Alaska – The Iditarod announced today that the Blood Bank of Alaska will be a partner for the 2023 world-famous Iditarod. The Blood Bank of Alaska is currently celebrating 60 years of helping Alaskans across the state, connecting Alaskan blood types to Alaskan recipients in need. In 1962, Dr. Michael F. Beirne, of Alaska Medical Laboratories, initiated the foundation of a not-for-profit blood bank designed to serve the blood needs of the sick and injured Alaskans statewide. That first year at Blood Bank of Alaska there was only one technician and one bed. In the first year 682 pints of blood were collected and distributed to local hospitals.

As the population of Alaska grew, so did the need for blood. Opening two new facilities for collections in 1995 and in 1999 and purchasing its first self contained mobile collection unit in 1999. The LIFEmobile coach was funded entirely through community donations. In 2005 another donation facility arose, as well as a second coach purchased in 2008, to expand the mobile collections capabilities to cover the hundreds of mobile drives held each year from Dead Horse to Dutch Harbor.

From the original 682 units collected that first year, Blood Bank of Alaska now collects over 24,000 units each year. The vision of Dr. Beirne has transformed into a multi-site, multi-service blood bank that continues to serve Alaska.

“Blood Bank of Alaska is excited to sponsor and be associated with such a venerable event as the Alaska Iditarod! The Iditarod represents the best of the Alaskan characteristics of endurance, selflessness, and self-reliance,” says Robert Scanlon, Chief Executive Officer of Blood Bank of Alaska.

“We are delighted to have the Blood Bank of Alaska as a new partner, as their criticality to the well-being of Alaskans is extremely consistent with the Iditarod’s history and ethos. Their mission is not only life-saving but also very inspiring,” said Rob Urbach, CEO of the Iditarod.

The ceremonial start of the Iditarod will take place at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 4, in downtown Anchorage. Fans are encouraged to come and support the teams on their journey to Nome.



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About Blood Bank of Alaska

For 60 years, Blood Bank of Alaska has been at the forefront of Alaska health care, ensuring that our medical facilities all over the state have a safe and adequate blood supply. Blood Bank of Alaska sees approximately 2,000 volunteer blood donors each month across Alaska in order to supply blood in case of accidents, trauma, heart surgery and treatment of diseases such as cancer. Blood Bank of Alaska collected 682 units the first year of operation. Blood Bank of Alaska now collects over 20,000 units a year and ships those units thousands of miles from Barrow to Juneau. Learn more at: www.bloodbankofalaska.org

About the Iditarod

The Iditarod Trail Committee is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve the rich tradition of the Alaska sled dog and the Iditarod Trail. The organization is charged with coordinating the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, an annual long-distance sled dog race stretching from Anchorage to Nome for an approximate 1,049-mile journey through Alaska over the roughest, most breathtaking terrain in the world. For more information, visit www.iditarod.com.

Media contact:

Shannon Noonan
Iditarod Trail Committee
s.markley@iditarod.com