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## **No Finish Line Too Far: Paralysis Won't Stop Two Boilermaker Participants From Inspiring Others**

*Area native Todd Hart and Beth Deloria are connected by their lower-leg paralysis and will take on the Boilermaker Road Race to raise awareness and inspire others*

**Utica, NY – June 29, 2015** – “Finding Beth gave me my confidence again. I can't begin to put a price on what that means to me,” said Todd.

Among the sea of more than 14,000 participants who will compete in the Boilermaker Road Race on Sunday, July 12, two runners strive, not just for medals, but to inspire the thousands of Americans who have lower-leg, ankle or foot paralysis and are searching for answers.

A runner and triathlete throughout his adult life, Todd Hart, originally from Prospect, NY, was swept off of his feet literally when he was suddenly stricken with stage three melanoma cancer in 2009. After enduring three grueling surgeries including the severing of his right femoral nerve, a bout of chemotherapy and rehab, his right foot began to contract on itself; a neurological muscle movement disorder named dystonia. Now left without the natural control of his foot, Todd searched for a brace that would help him walk and fulfill his dream of running again.

As braces that didn't quite fit the task piled higher in his closet, Todd finally discovered Beth Deloria, a Boston Marathon veteran who had been diagnosed with lower-leg paralysis, through an Internet search in 2012. A perfect storm of birth defects including spina bifida occulta and a resulting spinal injury in 2004 led to her lower-leg paralysis named foot drop. She had found her saving grace with Allard USA's technologically advanced, carbon fiber orthotic named ToeOFF®. Six months after adapting to her brace, Beth would find herself at a starting line once again and run her best time ever to qualify for Boston a third time.

Beth says, “By sharing my experiences and the knowledge I've gained throughout my journey, I might help someone else avoid the frustrations, setbacks and depression I went through.”

“My goal is to aid the woman who helped me by encouraging others with similar conditions so that they can remain active and continue doing what makes them happy,” says Todd.

Today, Beth is able to participate in 15ks to marathons because of her brace, and July 12 will be a kind of homecoming for Todd, beckoning memories of the first of many times he laced up for the Boilermaker in 1986.

Both will compete as members of TeamUP, the first national team of people with lower-leg paralysis who participate in sporting and non-sporting events to spread awareness and encourage others to reclaim their lives.

Among the causes for the paralysis associated with foot drop are cerebral palsy, stroke, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease, spinal cord injury and many other conditions. Dystonia may be hereditary, or caused by physical trauma, infection and other factors. Meet the TeamUP members and learn more about their efforts to help others manage foot drop at: [www.GetBackUPToday.com](http://www.GetBackUPToday.com).

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