

NEWS

Contact:

Emily Gallagher 212.423.2287 | egallagher@nyrr.org
Media Relations Department, New York Road Runners

For Immediate Release

Thousands of Runners to Celebrate the New Year in Central Park at the Emerald Nuts Midnight Run

Elite athletes from the NJ-NY Track Club including Christian Thompson, Liam Boylan-Pett, Ashley Higginson, and Delilah DiCrescenzo will look to capture their first win of the new year

New York, December 21, 2012—As 2013 draws near, thousands of New Yorkers and runners from around the country will start off the new year on the right foot at the 34th annual Emerald Nuts Midnight Run in Central Park on December 31. Among the top competitors this year are many elite athletes from the NJ-NY Track Club, coached by the legendary Frank Gagliano, it was announced today by NYRR president and CEO Mary Wittenberg.

A Central Park tradition since 1979, the Midnight Run offers runners, families, and spectators a way to ring in the new year in a healthy and high-energy way. Featuring the only fireworks display in Manhattan that evening, the Emerald Nuts Midnight Run makes a bold statement in a city filled with countless New Year's Eve celebrations and festivities.

"The Emerald Nuts Midnight Run is the most invigorating way anyone can spend New Year's Eve," said Wittenberg. "The music and dancing, outrageous costumes, and amazing fireworks display over Central Park in conjunction with the start of the race are so unique and fun--not to mention that you wake up feeling great! It is a wonderful event."

"We look forward to partnering with NYRR for a ninth straight year, especially in such an iconic New York event," said Craig Tokusato, Senior Vice President of Marketing at Diamond Foods, Inc. "The Emerald Nuts Midnight Run will be a great way to start the new year in a fun, healthy, and safe environment."

The party begins at 10:00 p.m. with music and a massive dance party, followed by a creative costume parade and contest at 11:00 p.m. When the clock strikes midnight, fireworks will light up the night above "nutty" runners who will complete a brisk four-mile loop through Central Park. Halfway through the race, they will have the option of toasting the New Year with a glass of non-alcoholic champagne at the two-mile mark.

A field of professional athletes will race for a prize purse of \$2,000, including \$500 apiece to the male and female winners. Two standouts from the NJ-NY Track Club, Christian Thompson and Liam Boylan-Pett, will be top contenders in the men's field. Thompson, 24, of Elkins Park, PA, finished third in the 10,000 meters at the Pac-12 Championships earlier this year. Boylan-Pett, 27, of New York, NY, placed second at the 2012 Cork City Mile in 3:58.38.

Other top athletes in the men's field include:

Landon Peacock, 25, of Blowing Rock, NC, the 2011 Emerald Nuts Midnight Champion, running on behalf of Zap Fitness/Reebok

Dustin Emrani, 28, of Kings Point, NY, running with the NJ-NY Track Club, the 2009 Maccabiah Games champion at 800 meters

Timothy Ritchie, 25, of Brighton, MA, a team member of the Boston Athletic Association, fifth at the 2011 Manchester Road Race

Philip Cawkwell, 23, of New York, NY, a local athlete who competes with the New York Athletic Club and has a 5000-meter personal best of 14:10.58

The women's field is comprised of both Emerald Nuts Midnight Run veterans and others who will be new to the experience this year. NJ-NY Track Club teammates Ashley Higginson and Delilah DiCrescenzo will headline the competition. Higginson, 23, of New Brunswick, NJ, is a recent Princeton graduate who placed fourth in the 3000-meter steeplechase at the 2012 Olympic Trials. DiCrescenzo, 29, of New York, NY, is coming off a win at the 2012 Manchester Road Race on Thanksgiving Day.

"I'm very excited to participate in the NYRR Emerald Nuts Midnight Run," said DiCrescenzo. "I've wanted to do this for a couple of years, but I've always been out of town. I'm glad I'll be able to race, because it looks like a blast and Central Park is a course I know well. I expect it will set the tone for the year where my focus will be on self-improvement, pursuing healthy habits, and exploring new distances and events. I'm thankful for the role the NYRR will play in helping me and 5,000 other runners get 2013 started with a bang!"

Other top contenders in the women's field include:

Allie Kieffer, 25, of Boulder, CO, third in the 2010 Emerald Nuts Midnight Run

Heather Wilson, 22, of Annandale, NJ, winner of the 2012 Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference 1500 meters, running with the NJ-NY Track Club

Esther Erb, 26, of Bowling Rock, NC, winner of the 2012 Broad Street 10-Mile, with a 16:47 personal best for 5K on the road

Renee Tomlin, 24, of Highland Park, NJ, fourth in the 1500 meters at the 2011 NCAA Championships, running with the NJ-NY Track Club

Nicol Traynor, 23, of Whitehouse Station, NJ, a NJ-NY Track Club runner and the 2012 Atlantic 10 3000-meter steeplechase champion

Lesley Higgins, 32, of New York, NY, a 2008 Olympic Trails steeplechase qualifier and the 2001 NCAA indoor mile runner-up, running for the New York Athletic Club

About NYRR

New York Road Runners was founded in 1958 when a small group of passionate runners vowed to bring running to the people. Over the past 54 years, NYRR has grown from a local running club to the world's premier community running organization. NYRR's mission is to empower everyone, of all ages and abilities—beginners and competitive athletes, the young and the

elderly, adult professionals and underserved schoolchildren—to improve their health and well-being through the power of running and fitness.

NYRR's races, community events, instruction and training resources, and youth programs give hundreds of thousands of people each year the motivation, know-how, and opportunity to start running and keep running for life. NYRR's premier event, the famed ING New York City Marathon, attracts the world's top pro runners and committed amateurs alike while also raising millions of dollars annually for charity and driving economic impact for the City. But NYRR is equally committed to the runners of tomorrow, passionately providing youth fitness programs that educate and inspire more than 100,000 kids in underserved communities in New York City, all 50 states, and around the world.

Headquartered in New York City, NYRR implements a unique nonprofit model that teams contributed and earned income to make all its efforts possible. To learn more, please visit www.nyrr.org

Diamond Foods

Diamond Foods is an innovative packaged food company focused on building, acquiring and energizing brands including [Kettle® Chips](#), [Emerald® snack nuts](#), [Pop Secret® popcorn](#), and [Diamond of California® nuts](#). Diamond's products are distributed in a wide range of stores where snacks and culinary nuts are sold. For more information visit our web site: www.diamondfoods.com.