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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Miami Beach Chamber Sister Cities Committee Sends Local Runners to Sister City Fujisawa, Japan for Annual Marathon

MIAMI BEACH, FL (February 3, 2023) --- The Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce Sister Cities Committee takes pride in nurturing relationships with Sister Cities around the globe. Fujisawa, Japan, Miami Beach's oldest Sister City relationship of 65 years, extended an invitation to host two of our residents in their annual marathon 10-Mile race.

Local resident **Dr. Chad A. Perlyn**, MD, MBA, FACS President of **Nicklaus Children's Pediatric Specialists** and 10-year-old son **Merritt Perlyn** were chosen by the Miami Beach Chamber Sister Cities Committee, co-chaired by **George Neary** and **Moni Cohen**, to represent Miami Beach. Merritt designed his race logo which featured both the City of Miami Beach logo and Fujisawa logo, a running shoe decorated with the American flag and wings as well as the Japanese rising sun, seen below. He also took it upon himself to raise funds for the Miami Beach Chamber Education Foundation by collecting logos of local companies and professionals such as Sweat 440, The Jills Zeder Group, Michael Reyes and Jill Hertzberg and adding them to his racing uniform. In total he collected \$1,250 for the organization.

On January 12th, to wish Chad and Merritt luck on their journey, the South Beach Run Club hosted by **Nike Miami**, led their 200+ group of Thursday-Night runners to the Miami Beach Fire Station on Pine Drive for a "Run-Off" where over 30 of our city's Fire Rescue Department greeted them with blazing lights from several fire trucks, fire bells ringing and sirens wailing. It was an electrifying moment that was memorialized by a speech and gift from **Miami Beach Fire Chief Virgil Fernandez** to Merritt.

As chief of the City of Miami Beach Delegation, the Chamber's Chief Operating Officer, **Enid Rodriguez**, gave an official address on Saturday, January 21, 2023 at the official courtesy visit to Fujisawa City Hall. The Fujisawa delegation hosted a welcome party which was attended by delegations and runners from other sister cities such as Boryeong City in South Korea and Matsumoto City in Nagano Prefecture in Japan.

The official Race took place on Sunday, January 22nd . Merritt finished his race in an astonishing

70 minutes. During the rest of the Sister Cities trip, the Miami Beach delegation toured the city of Fujisawa and even visited a local elementary school, Shonan Gakuen Elementary School, where Merritt shared plans about how Miami Beach is navigating environmental issues and implementing resiliency throughout the city.

About Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce

The Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1921 to promote the economic well-being of Miami Beach's citizens, to improve the quality of life for the entire community and to communicate the view of the business community on major issues of public policy.

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