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Keeping a mother's promise: 13.1 meaningful miles

KANSAS CITY, MO, October 10, 2012 – On Saturday, October 20, Kim Palmer will take to the streets of Kansas City for a 13.1-mile run a lifetime in the making. The Blue Springs, Missouri, mother of two is among the thousands participating in the half marathon run that is part of the eighth annual Waddell & Reed Kansas City Marathon, With Ivy Funds. Her journey to the starting line, however, hasn't been easy, as she explains in her own words...

"I have always been overweight. My parents owned a restaurant when I was a child and we were never taught portion control or how to eat right. I learned at an early age to use food for every occasion.

"Yet I always wanted to be a runner. In high school track, however, I had to do the long jump, shot put and discus due to being overweight. At the same time, during my sophomore year in high school my dad was diagnosed with leukemia. I was devastated. This only added fuel to my fire with eating as I was unable to deal with his illness in any other way. My father died my senior year.

"The turning point came years later when my mother was diagnosed with small cell-cancer. Prior to her death she made me promise to take care of myself and lose weight. She died in July 2009, and I started taking my health seriously in January 2010. I started small by going to the gym with my husband for 30 minutes at a time, eventually working up to two hours.

"Some time later, a good friend and I were talking at our husbands' Christmas party in 2011. At this point I had lost 100 pounds, and had always said if I were able to lose that much I would become a runner. Inspired by my friend to get serious about running, I started on the treadmill and then joined her and another runner and started running outside. I was hooked.

"I then decided I would try a triathlon before I did a half marathon, so I signed up for the WIN for KC Women's Triathlon. It was so inspirational to see women of all shapes and sizes competing. I was not the fastest, but I did it, and that truly was all that mattered. This has led me to my final goal: the half marathon. I cannot wait to accomplish this as well. While I may not be the fastest, and may even be last, what matters most is that I try.

"In the last few years, the most important thing I have gained is my ability to do things with my two boys and my husband. Before my weight loss I hated physical activity, and now I look forward to it. I would tell anyone who thinks they can't run to remember this: Do not give up, as the beginning is always the hardest."

The Waddell & Reed Kansas City Marathon, With Ivy Funds includes a full marathon, half marathon, five-kilometer run, marathon relay, and 1.2-mile "kids' marathon." For more information about the races and related events, visit KCmarathon.org.

About the Kansas City Sports Commission

The Kansas City Sports Commission & Foundation benefits the Kansas City region through sports by creating, attracting and managing major sporting events for Kansas City. And, promote the lifetime benefits of sports for youth through educational initiatives, tournaments and clinics.