

IRONMAN Karabeth Vanick Joins Team IMF at Kona World Championships to Advance Youth Sports Access

*From Team B*REAL veteran to youth coach, one competitor's lifelong service makes her Kona mission deeply personal.*

QUINCY, MA, UNITED STATES, February 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Karabeth Vanick](#) (KB), a youth triathlon coach, Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker, and IRONMAN finisher, has been selected to join Team IMF, racing at the IRONMAN Kona World Championships in support of the mission of the IRONMAN Foundation. Through her participation, Vanick is working to expand access to sports and active lifestyles for youth who might not otherwise have the opportunity. Her story can be viewed at [GetKBToKona.com](#).



Vanick, who completed IRONMAN Lake Placid in 2024, brings a career rooted in youth development, mental health, and community service to the world stage. As a longtime swim instructor and youth triathlon coach, she has seen firsthand how access to sport builds confidence, resilience, and belief, particularly for children facing financial or systemic barriers.

“

KB understands that when kids are given access and encouragement, sport becomes a powerful path to confidence and belonging.”

*Adina O'Neill, Team B*REAL, IRONMAN, Inclusivity Coach*

“Sport has always been more than competition for me,” Vanick said. “It’s about access, confidence, and showing kids what’s possible when someone believes in them. Racing Kona with Team IMF allows me to extend the work

I’ve been doing in my community to a global platform.”

Team IMF athletes fundraise on behalf of the IRONMAN Foundation, which supports thousands of nonprofit initiatives worldwide, including programs focused on empowering youth through sport. As a partner of The IRONMAN Group, the Foundation prioritizes health, wellness, and active lifestyles, particularly among young people in underserved communities.

Vanick trains under Coach Adina O'Neill and is a longtime member of [Team B*REAL](#), a community known for its inclusive, service-driven approach to endurance sport. Within the team, Vanick is recognized not only for her athletic dedication but also for her willingness to show up for others, normalize challenges, and encourage athletes at every stage of their journey.

"KB embodies what we believe in at Team B*REAL," said O'Neill, coach and fellow IRONMAN athlete. "She doesn't hide the hard parts, and that's exactly why people connect with her. She shows our athletes that challenges are part of the process, that dreams are worth pursuing at any pace, and that there is room for everyone in this sport. Her commitment to kids, to community, and to the future of triathlon is real, and she leads by example every day."

Several of Vanick's current and former athletes say her influence extends well beyond training sessions. "Coach KB makes every kid feel capable and supported," said Brian Lavey, 14, while Melissa Lavey, 13, said the program helped build perseverance and confidence. Haydn Macey, 16, who has trained with Vanick for nearly a decade, described her as "a mentor and role model." Former student Aisling O'Neill, 20, now a college fitness instructor, credited Vanick with inspiring her to pass on what she learned to others.

Vanick said racing in Kona allows her to extend that same support to young athletes far beyond her hometown through the IRONMAN Foundation's work.

Vanick's Kona journey is also deeply personal. Her IRONMAN Lake Placid race was dedicated to her father, who passed away from Parkinson's disease. While he was unable to be present on race day, his belief in her strength and perseverance continues to shape her motivation.

That commitment is mirrored by the unwavering support of Vanick's mother and sisters, whose selfless care during her father's illness reflects the values at the heart of her mission: resilience,



service, and community. Their shared experience reinforces why this effort extends beyond a single race and into creating opportunity for others.

As she prepares for Kona, Vanick is inviting supporters to follow her journey and contribute at GetKBToKona.com, where donations, event participation, and messages of encouragement help advance the IRONMAN Foundation's youth-focused initiatives.

"While I'll be the one on the course, this journey belongs to everyone who believes in the mission," Vanick said. "I'd be honored to carry that support with me all the way to Kona."

About Karabeth Vanick

Karabeth Vanick is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW), youth and adult triathlon coach, and endurance athlete based in Quincy, Massachusetts. She has spent more than two decades working with children, families, and communities through roles as a swim instructor, fitness professional, therapist, foster parent, and volunteer. Vanick completed IRONMAN Lake Placid in 2024 and is a member of Team B*REAL and Team IMF. Her work in sport is grounded in mental health, confidence-building, and expanding access to opportunity through movement and community.

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