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Billie Jean King, Arthritis Foundation, Ad Council and USTA Launch Arthritis Campaign; New Ads Debut at US Open

One in five adults in the United States has arthritis; yet survey finds few individuals with arthritis feel very confident that they know the best way to manage their pain

NEW YORK, NY, August 31, 2011 – Billie Jean King is joining the Arthritis Foundation, the Ad Council and the United States Tennis Association (USTA) to launch a new public service campaign to fight arthritis—the leading cause of disability in America. The ads, which debut at the US Open today, highlight the power of movement and activities, such as tennis, walking, biking and swimming, as weapons in the fight against osteoarthritis (OA). They will premiere on TV screens and PA announcements and in signage and collateral materials throughout the US Open in the Arthur Ashe Stadium.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in five adults in the U.S. has arthritis; however, research from the Ad Council shows only 16 percent of those with arthritis strongly agree that they are very confident they can manage their pain.¹ The message of this year's campaign is that movement and physical activity can help relieve arthritis pain and in some cases delay the onset of symptoms.

Billie Jean King, who has OA, stars in the ads. A chronic condition characterized by the breakdown of the joint's cartilage, OA is the most common of the many forms of arthritis. King has had OA since her twenties and had both her knees replaced last year.

¹The Ad Council survey was conducted online within the U.S. on its behalf by Harris Interactive from October 28 to November 9, 2010, among 734 adults ages 55 and older who have osteoarthritis. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For a full methodology, including weighting variables, please contact Ellyn Fisher: efisher@adCouncil.org.

"I decided to get involved with this campaign because I really believe in the message," said King. "Tennis is my weapon of choice against arthritis because it's what I love to do the most as far as exercise."

"If you have arthritis, don't think you should become sedentary. It's just the opposite—think positively and make sure you move. Take a walk in the park, play tennis, or take a hike. Do whatever works for you but keep moving," King added.

Currently 50 million people of all ages, including 300,000 children, have arthritis, and the CDC estimates that 67 million people could be affected by 2030. OA affects about 27 million Americans. Moreover, arthritis can be a substantial barrier to utilizing physical activity to help manage conditions like diabetes and heart disease. Already affecting more than half of adults with diabetes or heart disease, the numbers are expected to increase.

"Arthritis is common, costly, disabling and often thought to be a reality of the aging process that cannot be changed," said Arthritis Foundation Chief External Relations Officer, Debra Neuman. "Through this campaign we aim to educate people that you can change the trajectory of osteoarthritis and the impact it has on your life."

Created pro bono by ad agency Y&R, the *Fight Arthritis Pain* campaign aims to empower and encourage those living with OA to take simple steps that can change the course of the disease and improve the quality of their lives. The new television, radio, print, outdoor and Web ads focus on the power of movement and activity to fight arthritis pain and reduce the disability of the disease.

"We are proud to continue our efforts with the Arthritis Foundation to empower all Americans who have arthritis (or are at risk) to find their weapon in the fight against the pain," said Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Ad Council. "When we tested these new concepts in focus groups, audiences found them to be both powerful and motivating. We're grateful to the USTA and Billie Jean King for all of their support in helping to communicate that sports such as tennis can be both fun and beneficial."

As a result of the new partnership with the USTA, the campaign will be featured throughout this year's US Open. The tennis-themed TV ads will premiere on screens both inside and outside the tournament, PA announcements will promote the campaign, print and outdoor ads will be featured throughout the grounds, and information about how to fight arthritis pain will be included in collateral materials distributed at the event. Additionally, USTA will feature content about the campaign, along with the new Web banners, on their website, USTA.com, and social media channels. Furthermore, ESPN2 and the Tennis Channel will be airing the new PSAs during the tournament.

“Billie Jean King is a true sports icon and great ambassador for tennis, and she is the perfect spokesperson to encourage those affected by arthritis to find their weapon to keep moving,” said Jon Vegosen, Chairman of the Board and President, USTA. “Tennis can be played at any age, and is a sport that promotes a healthy lifestyle and well-being for all participants.”

All campaign elements direct audiences to visit www.fightarthritis.org to assess their risks and learn simple steps they can take to reduce arthritis pain and increase mobility. Also, a social media program will help extend the reach of the campaign messages, which includes a contest on the [Arthritis Foundation’s Facebook page](#) where participants will submit photos of themselves playing tennis. Visitors will have the opportunity to vote on the winning photo and the winner will receive a package of tennis gear donated by Wilson.

“We’re really proud of our work with the Arthritis Foundation,” said Tom Sebok, president & CEO, Y&R New York. “Helping raise awareness for such a prevalent disease and empowering those with arthritis to take action is incredibly important. We hope this campaign will make a positive difference in their lives.”

The Ad Council is distributing the new PSAs to more than 38,000 media outlets nationwide. The ads will air and run in advertising time and space entirely donated by the media. Since the *Fight Arthritis Pain* campaign first launched in February 2010, media outlets have donated more than \$43 million in time and space for the ads and over 4.5 million people have visited the campaign website.

Arthritis Foundation

Striking one in every five adults and 300,000 children, arthritis is the nation’s leading cause of disability. The Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the impact of this serious, painful and unacceptable disease, which can severely damage joints and rob people of living life to its fullest. The Foundation funds life-changing research that has restored mobility in patients for more than six decades; fights for health care policies that improve the lives of the millions who live with arthritis; and partners with families to provide empowering programs and information.

The Ad Council

The Ad Council (www.adcouncil.org) is a private, non-profit organization with a rich history of marshalling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. Having produced literally thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day, the Ad Council has effected, and continues to effect, tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives.

USTA

The USTA is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the U.S. and the leader in promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level -- from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. A not-for-profit organization with more than 750,000 members, it invests 100% of its proceeds in growing the game. It owns and operates the US Open, the highest attended annual sporting event in the world, and launched the Olympus US Open Series linking 10 summer tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns the 90-plus Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S, and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic Games. The USTA philanthropic entity, USTA Serves, provides grants and scholarships and helps underserved youth and people with disabilities. For more information on the USTA, log on to usta.com, "like" the official Facebook page facebook.com/usta or follow @usta on Twitter.

Y&R

Y&R is one of the world's leading global marketing communications companies. The agency's work spans the communications spectrum and reflects the transformation that digital has driven across all media. We bring together the most experienced and most passionate leaders in strategic planning, channel planning, digital proficiency, and creative to create exceptional storytelling campaigns that build strong connections between our clients and their customers all around the globe.

Young & Rubicam has 186 offices in 90 countries around the world. Its clients are some of the world's most prestigious global brands, including Virgin Atlantic, Xerox, Revlon, Campbell's Soup Company, Colgate-Palmolive, Danone, GAP, Land Rover, MTV, LG and Telefonica, to name a few.

Billie Jean King

Named one of the "100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century" by *Life* magazine and a 2009 recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Billie Jean King has long been a pioneer for social justice. She is recognized for spearheading the women's movement in tennis and for her lifelong pursuit of equality in sports and in life. King has won 39 Grand Slam titles during her career. She led efforts to form the Virginia Slims Series and founded the Women's Tennis Association. She empowered women and educated men when she defeated Bobby Riggs in one of the greatest moments in sports history.

In 1974 King co-founded World Team Tennis, the revolutionary co-ed professional tennis league and that same year she founded the Women's Sports Foundation to advance the lives of women and girls through sports and physical activity. In August 2006, the National Tennis Center, home of the US Open, was renamed the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in honor of her accomplishments on and off the court.

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