



# Molly Barker

Molly Barker, MSW, founded Girls on the Run in 1996 in Charlotte, North Carolina. A four-time Hawaii Ironman triathlete, she used her background in social work, counseling and teaching, along with research on adolescent issues, to develop the program. Today, there are Girls on the Run councils in over 220 cities across North America serving over 200,000 girls and women each year. ([www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org)). In 2015 the program will serve it's millionth girl!

The “Girl Box,” a phrase coined by Molly, describes the imaginary place many girls go around adolescence, where cultural and societal stereotypes limit choices as well as opportunities. Molly founded Girls on the Run to create a connected and safe “space” for girls to explore the challenges of the Girl Box and the freedom that comes from living outside of it.

Now Molly is heading up The Red Boot Coalition...a project that takes the same message of authenticity and empowerment to the “rest of us” by inviting those who are willing to address the current fear, anger and hyperpolarized state of some of our largest systems: politics, religion, economics and ethnicity, by engaging in dialogue focused on the Eleven Red Boot Coalition Principles. Not afraid to ask the hard questions, Molly engages with humor, poignant stories, and rich demonstrations of the power possible when people collectively give voice and action to love, compassion and curious-inquiry in spite of the perceived chaos, fear and anger around us.

Molly has been featured in many media outlets including People, Runner’s World, Glamour, Shape, Redbook and Woman’s Day. She was selected by Fast Company to the League of Extraordinary Women, Women Truly Changing the World. (<http://www.fastcompany.com/1839862/meet-league-extraordinary-women-60-influencers-who-are-changing-world>.) In July, 2013, Molly was recognized by President Barack Obama and President George H.W. Bush at a ceremony in Washington DC, as a Daily Point of Light. In October, 2016, Molly was recognized by Runner’s World as one of the “Top Fifty Most Influential People In Running.”

Molly has authored two books, “Girls on Track: A Parent’s Guide to Inspiring our Daughters to Achieve a Lifetime of Self-Esteem and Respect”, and “Girls Lit from Within” which is specifically for 3rd – 8th grade girls.

Molly is a positive role model. She enjoys writing, running and yoga but most enjoys the challenges which emerge in her own personal evolution and deep desire to live life outside the Boxes that might otherwise contain her.