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'Heated Rivalry' Producers Launch a Real-Life Irina Foundation

The foundation dedicated to championing inclusivity and mental well-being through sports and arts programs is named after th foundation 'Heated Rivalry' characters Shane and Ilya start in Rachel Reid's books.

BY NICOLE FELL SEPTEMBER 29, 2026 7:41PM



Connor Storrie (left) and Hudson Williams (right) in 'Heated Rivalry.' CRAVE/BELL MEDIA

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Heated Rivalry continues to spread some good into the world, this time with the launch of a new foundation.

Executive producers Jacob Tierney and Brendan Brady, through their production company Accent Aigu Entertainment, have launched the Irina Foundation, which will "champion LGBTQIA2S+ and underserved communities through participation in sports and the arts," the company announced Tuesday. The private independent fund will support organizations that create opportunities for the queer and underserved communities to participate, build relationships and foster a sense of belonging.

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Kate Spade New York has helped bring the foundation to life, connecting the organization with other partners, including the men's grooming brand Harry's. Kate Spade will be the the Irina Foundation's inaugural donor with a founding contribution; the men's grooming brand will also be an early supporter.

Inspired by the foundation of the same name that *Heated Rivalry* characters Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov run in Rachel Reid's *Game Changers* universe, and named in honor of Ilya's late mother, the organization was "was founded on the belief that shared participation can create belonging and strengthen mental well-being and resilience in ways few other approaches can," according to a release.

"For many of us, some of life's most meaningful moments happen on a team, in a studio or on a stage —places where we find our people, discover what lights us up and feel like we belong," Tierney and Brady said in a statement. "We've been incredibly lucky to build something we love and along the way find a community that means so much to us. The Foundation is our way of giving back. We're grateful to Kate Spade and Harry's for seeing that vision and helping us make it possible."

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Accent Aigu, along with partners and fans, has helped raise over $1.5M over the past few months for organizations including You Can Play, the New York LGBTQ Center, Rainbow Railroad and more. The Irina Foundation serves as a way to continue that effort.

"We chose the name Irina Foundation because, at the heart of *Heated Rivalry,* Irina represents something much bigger. She reminds us that behind every struggle is a person who deserves to be seen, loved and supported," Accent Aigu president Jayme Alter Wilson said in a release. "The Foundation is our way of honoring that message. We hope to channel the love people have for the world Rachel has created, and for Shane and Ilya, into something that can make a meaningful difference in the real world."

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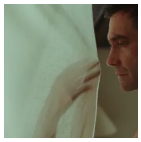
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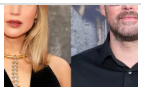
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