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Meet the Marathon team!

Team Inspire 2020 will be the largest Boston Marathon team, by far, that the 26.2 Foundation has ever fielded – 65 runners from as far afield as Indonesia and Hong Kong. In return for their invitational entry (and their generous fundraising efforts on our behalf), we asked them why they run. This is what they said. Over the next few months we'll be sharing other team members' stories, as well.

'Run Desi Run'
Prasad Pradala, 48
Psychiatrist and researcher
Little Rock, AR



"I belong to the growing Indian-American population. Although we're known for producing doctors and engineers, we're less well known for also producing the highest rates of heart disease and other vascular risk factors such as diabetes. Unfortunately, the Indian-American community has been slow in taking up physical activity, while continuing our age-old, carb-rich diet.

I took running seriously when an otherwise-healthy 43-year-old friend had a massive heart attack. I started a running group called 'Bhaag Desi Bhaag,' which translates to 'Run Desi Run.' 'Desi' ('countrymen') is a friendly way we refer to one another from the Indian subcontinent.

Marathon running taught me to believe in myself. On December 28th, 2013, I and my running mates were run over by a newspaper van while training for the Little Rock Marathon. I had seven vertebral fractures, elbow and scapula fractures, and scalp injuries.

It took me nearly three years to feel one-hundred percent but, thanks to running, I'm in the best shape of my life. I proved it by improving my marathon time by 35 minutes at Chicago in 2016. I kept at it, and bettered my time by five minutes this past fall at the New York City Marathon.

Nothing gives me more pleasure than inspiring others. The Bhaag Desi Bhaag group is back and training for the Little Rock Half Marathon. All of our teammates achieved their personal record by running their first-ever 10-mile run last weekend. We were interrupted by the accident on an eight-mile run in 2013 and I get emotional thinking of the recent milestone. I like talking about our recovery and inspiring others to never give up on their dreams. Can't believe that I'll be running the Boston Marathon soon and hope that my teammates can do it in the near future."

[Click here for Prasad's fundraising page.](#)



'Running Has Completely Saved Me'

Nicole Thomas, 43

Teacher

Laurel, MD

"Running has completely saved me. I began running at the lowest point in my life. And the more I ran, the more I began to gain confidence in myself. The more confidence, the happier I became. I didn't feel alone anymore. The depression was slowly leaving.

I completed my first ultra marathon, body in pain, yet proud of my accomplishment. The next morning, I woke up to my then-husband's hands around my neck. That day he tried to harm me. My children witnessed it and did everything to help me get him off me.

We left. We left everything. But I never felt scared, alone or defeated, because of the strength I'd gained mentally and physically through running. At that moment, I vowed to be a voice for helping others through running, charity and life.

I've completed nine marathons and two ultra marathons, and all of the World Majors except Boston. Representing Team Inspire and the 26.2 Foundation will be an honor."

[Click here for Nicole's fundraising page.](#)

'The Fabric of My Life'

Kimberly Chisholm, 45

Development Officer

Worcester, MA



"Having grown up in Hopkinton, the Marathon has always been special to me and is part of who I am. From walking up to the town common as a kid to watch the start, to running the Athens Marathon as an adult, the Marathon will always be woven into the fabric of my life.

In 2013 [the year of the bombing], I ran Boston and was stopped 24.67 miles into the race. I hadn't felt a strong desire to run again until this year, when the opportunity arose to be a part of Team Inspire. I understand the importance of the 26.2 Foundation and the work they're doing to build the International Marathon Center (IMC).

What resonates most with me about the IMC is that it will be multifaceted - education, athletics, the museum - and will absolutely have an impact locally and globally. I'm excited to share that impact with donors.

I can't imagine what it's going to feel like to be running down Boylston Street toward the finish line on April 20th, knowing that I'm supporting the Foundation's goals - to honor, celebrate and inspire those who compete in this great sport."

[Click here for Kim's fundraising page.](#)

The 26.2 Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to promote and support the sport of marathoning, as well as health, wellness and economic-development initiatives through investments in innovative programs on local, regional, national and global levels.



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