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## Meet more of our 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 many different countries. 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.*



### Love on the Run

Laura Dziama, 38  
Nurse practitioner  
Wellesley, MA

Anything I can do to support the sport of marathoning, I will do. My husband and I met when we were athletes at Boston College, and became a couple as we trained together for Boston. We fell in love with each other while simultaneously falling for the spirit of this historic marathon, as well as the comradery of those who were training alongside us.

I'm extremely passionate about running, and have raced competitively in eight marathons – Chicago twice, Philadelphia twice, Miami once, and Boston (my personal favorite) three times (4/20/20 will be my fourth). My personal record is 2:49:42, which I ran in 2011 in Miami.

I'm running for Team Inspire in support of the amazing 26.2 Foundation, and adore everything they are about. But the main inspiration is my mom, the strongest lady I know. Training for Boston began, in solidarity, the same day she started her treatments for brain cancer. She will be in my thoughts throughout this entire marathon journey until I cross that glorious finish line...all the aches, pains and exhaustion I'm experiencing are nothing compared to what she will endure during her brave battle. Love you, momma!

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

### No Feeling like Boston

Jill Horka, 25  
Account executive  
New York, NY

My dad has run 27 Boston Marathons, so Patriot's Day has been extremely special and close to my heart ever since I was able to walk. The day has always been a

big celebration for my entire family.

I grew up a runner, which ultimately helped me to play collegiate-level lacrosse at Boston University. Since graduating three years ago, I've run two half-marathons in New York City, but I've always known deep down that there will be no feeling like completing Boston. I'm thrilled that I'll be tackling the same 26.2 miles by my dad's side.

My goal is to be just like my father, and to keep the marathon tradition alive in my family.



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



## **Proving the Doubters Wrong**

Courtney Olton, 30

Account executive

North Massapequa, NY

I was 19 and a collegiate basketball player when I was told that I'd never run again. It was 2007 – my freshman year – when I was diagnosed with something called compartment syndrome. It had developed over time, which is unusual because the condition is typically the result of trauma.

For the next two years, I kept getting re-diagnosed with it. I underwent six surgeries on my legs. I became every doctor's and med student's most challenging patient. After the sixth surgery, the doctors told me this was it – that I wouldn't be able to play basketball again. That I would never even be able to run again.

Me being me, I always have to prove the doubters wrong. After a lot of rehab, I started training to run my first half-marathon. That was in May 2015. The night before the race, my best friend was shot in the line of duty, and died two days later. What started as something to prove turned into a way to support and remember him, and to cope with this great loss of love.

Here I am today, having finished 10 half-marathons, and training for my third full marathon. Not one of them hasn't been for him.

[Click here for Courtney'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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