

Nov 25

2008 Kids Run the Nation Grant Recipients

Arlington, VA - In 2007 the Road Runners Club of America established the Kids Run the Nation® Fund to provide needed resources to youth running programs around the country as an opportunity to address the growing obesity epidemic with today's youth.

The Kids Run the Nation Grant Selection Panel consisting of David Cotter (RRCA Vice President), Sharlee Cotter (Kids Run the Nation Fund Founder), Dan Kesterson (Youth Runner Magazine), Brent Ayer (RRCA President), Freddie Carlip (Runners Gazette), Libby Jones (Dallas Running Club President), and Nate Jenkins (RRCA Roads Scholar) are pleased to announce the 2008 Kids Run the Nation Grant recipients. The panel reviewed thirty-five applications for programs that collectively serve over 20,000 youth around the country.

The RRCA is pleased to award a total of \$5000 worth of Kids Run the Nation Grants to the following youth running programs in 2008:

ROAD PRIDE – ABRAHAM LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Kingsport, TN

Road Pride is an after-school running program for 3rd through 5th grade students at Abraham Lincoln Elementary School located in Kingsport, Tennessee. Students practice three days a week for two 7-week sessions. As these students participate in the program and work towards accomplishing their running goal, they also learn how to set and achieve goals in other aspects of their lives. The mission of Road Pride is to challenge elementary school students to experience the benefits of goal setting, character development, adult mentoring and improved health by providing them with the opportunity to train for and complete a local road race. The program's goal for the 2008 - 2009 school year is to complete the John Sevier Spring Fling 3K race on April 11, 2009. Endurance rather than speed is the emphasis of the Road Pride program. The children begin by running one minute and walking one minute for a total of eight minutes and gradually build-up to twenty minutes. Each practice starts with a lesson on the topic of the week, which includes safety, running form, nutrition, and more. Road Pride is currently in their second year of operation, and they have over 60 students participating.

WARRIOR RUNNERS/WALKERS Little Rock, AR

Hall High School in Little Rock, Arkansas offers an after-school program, Warrior Runners, to get students out of the inner-city streets and onto the pavement for good health. Each participant has a plan specifically tailored from walking to speed work, as well as proper techniques for healthy running. The training goal for the group is for all participants to run or walk an event during the Little Rock Marathon weekend; most have a goal to run the 5K. The main thing is that all have a goal of having fun while becoming physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy. The objective is for students to learn life-long healthy habits that will not only keep them in shape physically, but also make them feel good about themselves as athletes and community volunteers. Because the student body's free and reduced lunch ratio is well above 65%, many students do not have the opportunity to run with a group or join a gym, nor are they able to purchase running apparel. They do not have the funds for reading materials, runner related documentaries, or nutrition counseling. The program is designed to provide for some of those needs. The program will incorporate the Little Rock



Marathon Weekend in March 2009, as a volunteer activity for the program participants in order to inform others about healthy measures and for the participants to give back to the running community. During this event, program participants will staff water tables, provide music spots, and provide local signs to assist runners.

SMOKE RISE STRIDERS RUNNING CLUB

Stone Mountain, GA

The Smoke Rise Striders Running Club began three years ago as an after-school running program for students at Smoke Rise Elementary School in Stone Mountain, Georgia. Smoke Rise Elementary School serves a diverse student population with 55% of the student population qualifying for free and reduced lunch rates. The purpose of the club is to give the students at the school an opportunity to improve their cardiovascular endurance through a distance running program. The program is designed to supplement the running instruction that is provided during the regular physical education. The club offers an opportunity to run for a longer time period than is possible in the regular P.E. program. The club practices twice a week from January through March and ends with participation in a local 5K and 1 mile fun run. The club has experienced tremendous growth in the last two years with over 75 runners participating in the spring of 2008. The Smoke Rise Striders Running Club is a free program open to all students.

RUNNING TO ACHIEVE

Tuscaloosa, AL

Arcadia Elementary in Tuscaloosa, Alabama is taking an active role in working towards the prevention of childhood obesity and illiteracy with the implementation of an after-school running club called Running to Achieve. Arcadia Elementary is a Title I school with nearly 53% of the student population receiving free or reduced price lunch. The mission of Running to Achieve is to introduce students to running, to promote healthy lifestyles, and to promote academic achievement. Running has been proven to help children do better in school, manage stress, and reduce childhood obesity. The program targets students who are usually unable to participate in such programs due to financial constraints. Meetings will involve an academic support component including writing letters to famous runners, reading about runners, reading about nutrition, keeping a running journal, logging miles and using the log for math problems, and interviewing a local runner. The end goal will be for students to participate in the Mayor's Cup 5k race and 1 mile fun run in May.

ELDORADO COMMUNITY SCHOOL STRIDERS

Santa Fe, NM

The Eldorado Community School Striders in Santa Fe, New Mexico is the first school-sponsored athletic club for elementary-school-age students in Santa Fe history. Founded in 2008 by a 4th grade teacher at Eldorado Community School, the club's format is simple, the kids keep track of the laps that they run each Wednesday on the school's track and record the total on note cards. At various milestones—five miles, 10 miles, 26 miles, etc.—they receive prizes. Throughout, they receive encouragement and advice from guest coaches, including some of the best runners in the world, the Kenyans who train in Santa Fe as members of the local AmeriKenyan Running Club. The club ran one week with Jynocel Basweti, the Kenyan who won the 2008 Denver and Richmond Marathons. Needless to say, the kids were inspired and thrilled. To date, the club has doubled in size since it started in September. Many of the young runners, boys and girls, have reached the ten-mile mark and a few are closing in on their 26-mile marathon distance.

TAMPA BAY YOUTH RUNNING

St. Pete Beach, FL

Found in 2005, the Tampa Bay Youth Running program, under the direction of Beach Charities, Inc., is designed to promote the good health and well being of the over 1800 children enrolled in the program. The program is broken down into school based sites, and these sites are selected amongst the Title I status schools in the Tampa Bay area. Teachers and parent volunteers lead the program activities, which are 12-weeks in duration with 15 to 45 minute sessions held three to four days a week depending on the site. The students receive incentives for their participation and for achievement of goals. As part of the program, children of all fitness levels run or walk a cumulative distance of 26.2 miles over the period of the program and they participate in 1 mile events like the Gasparilla Junior, the St Pete Beach Classic and the Bay to Bay road race.

GULLET GATORS RUNNERS CLUB

Bradenton, FL

B.D. Gullet Elementary School in Bradenton, Florida opened its doors in 2007 with an immediate goal of ensuring that physical fitness and wellness would be a foundation of the school. In November of that year, the Gullett Gators Runners Club was founded. The program is a before school youth running program that runs from 7:45 – 8:30 AM on a homemade quarter-mile track in the back field of the school. The program is offered for five months during the school year. Students in kindergarten through 5th grade are eligible to participate, and there were over 100 children participating in the program's first year. As a group, the children logged over 1159 miles. As part of the program, the participants earn collectible feet tokens for the laps they complete.

GIVE TO THE KIDS RUN THE NATION FUND

The Kids Run the Nation grants are funded through the generous contributions from running clubs, events, individual donors, and corporations. Please consider making a contribution to the Kids Run the Nation Fund, today! 100% of your contribution will be invested in the Kids Run the Nation Fund, and your contribution is tax deductible.

Give online at <http://www.active.com/donate/Getmoving>

Mail your check to:

Road Runners Club of America

1501 Lee Hwy, Ste 140

Arlington, VA 22209

Memo line: Kids Run the Nation (KRN)

For more information about the Kids Run the Nation Program visit, <http://www.rrca.org/programs/kids/>.

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About RRCA:

The RRCA is the national association of running clubs, running events, and runners. The mission of the RRCA is to promote running as a competitive sport and healthy exercise. The RRCA achieves their mission by promoting the common interests of its members by providing educational opportunities, programs, and services. The organization's membership consists of over 988 running clubs and events that represent over 180,000 running club members in the US.

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