



Penultimate supporter, Pilar Diaz, understands the bottom line.

We'd like to thank the following people for their contributions to this newsletter:

Photos	Rosny Mandell Joe Mendoza	Ginny Gibbs Abel Macias
Staff	Marsha Charney Executive Director	
	Rosny Mandell Director of Operations	Nikki Carelli Program Director
	Ginny Gibbs Development Director	Phyllis Newman Program Assistant
Senior Coordinators	Eric Spears, CDS, K-12 Paul Trapani, John R. Wooden H.S.	
Coordinators	Abel Navar, Boyle Heights H.S. Joe Mendoza, Banning H.S. Tom Chavez, Transportation	
Produced By	Leo Veleff - www.istudio12.com	

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Students Run LA

Mission Statement

The mission of Students Run L.A. is to challenge at-risk secondary students to stay in school and to experience the benefits of goal-setting, character development, adult mentoring and improved health by providing them with a truly life-changing experience: The training for and completion of the Los Angeles Marathon.



The Marathon

What an amazing day. From before dawn and into the evening, the City of Los Angeles Marathon was our only focus. The nervous energy of our runners, as we arrived at the **Beverly Garland Hotel** near the start line for check-in, filled us like helium balloons. The obvious good weather lifted our spirits letting us focus on establishing an unhurried pacing strategy. After spirited greetings from Marathon Organizers **Bill Burke** and **Marie Patrick**, County Supervisor **Yvonne Braithwaite Burke**, Honda Executives **Eric Conn**, **Steve Morikawa**, **Rob Alen**, **Susie Rossick** and **Karen Kim**, runners received final instructions from SRLA Leaders before the short walk to the event of a lifetime.

The starting gun fired, and minutes later our sea of runners each in their teal blue singlet and hat began the journey. Next to us were runners just like us who had trained for long months to be ready. Everyone had only one question in mind, "Can I make it? Can I really travel 26.2 miles in a single outing?" Our runners knew that answer was, "YES!"

(Continued on page 6)

The Los Angeles Marathon!



Officer Joel Frias with his runners out on the course.



Holly Craft-Moreno and Ann Pagan of Kaiser Permanente.



Runners making progress.



Pilar Diaz of LA84 gives positive thoughts.



Abel Navar & Tommy Munoz provide Mercedes Parodi some relief.



Runners accept refreshment at Mile 22.



In anticipation of Running Them In



Starting the day at the Beverly Garland Holiday Inn.



Manny Pulido awaits bags and more bags to move downtown.



Exhausted at the end of the day.

Honda's Ice Cream Event



Leuzinger High School students and leader enjoy their ice cream.



SRLA Leaders judge the Inter-Divisional Ice Cream Challenge.



Students cheer on their team at Honda.



Service Division's Dream Girls with Lizeth Vasquez of Banning High.

Honda's Interdivisional Ice Cream Challenge A Real Treat



Dr. Bill Burke and Marie Patrick of the L.A. Marathon, and Supervisor Yvonne Burke enjoy the festivities

I screamed, they screamed, everyone screamed in support of their team during American Honda's 10th Annual **Inter-Divisional Ice Cream Challenge** on February 15th. Management level employees of **American Honda Motor Co., Inc.**'s six divisions once again transformed their staid and professional headquarters into a riotous arena of unrestrained gusto, enthusiastically taking on the challenge to build the biggest, best, and most imaginative ice cream sculpture possible, all to raise funds to provide shoes for SRLA students. Acting as Master of Ceremonies, **KNBC Weatherman Fritz Coleman**, with his customary dry humor, described the scene as a "tropical cyclone of enthusiasm", and so it was!

Before throngs of boisterous and partisan **Honda Associates**, these enthusiastic managers established themes (and dressed to match), all the while rallying their division supporters and creating their ice cream sculptures to showcase their own divisions. Each year a few of our leaders and their students are invited to take part in the festivities, with the leaders serving as judges, and the students as cheerleaders; but this year, several students each had the rare chance to participate along side a divisional team-a fun experience!

This year, the overall theme honored the environment, and keeping it Green. The **ISD Division**, "the Transformers", won First Place and the Spirit Award (given for the most raffle tickets sold) with their members transforming a polluted (chocolate) stream into a clean, duck filled pond. The **Style Award** was taken by the Dream

Girls of the **Service Division**--the first all female team--who were all dressed as geisha's. The **Motorcycle Division's** Trail Savers, who portrayed Shrek, the Princess and Donkey, snagged Second Place, while AHFC Division's "The March of the Penguins", all of whom were unflappable as penguins out on an ice (cream) floe, secured Third Place. C-o-o-o-l!

Each year this wonderful exhibition of corporate community giving and good will is organized by the hard work and generous efforts of the **American Honda Associates Charity Committee**, and to all of you, we extend our great appreciation. The diligence, energy and healthy competition displayed at this event set a positive example for all our students, and for them we say to American Honda, thank you for your most impressive contribution to the participants of Students Run L.A.!



North High School students and leader Jay Estabrook represent SRLA at Honda.

SRLA Welcomes Stephen Morikawa To The Board



Mr. Stephen Morikawa, Assistant Vice President for Corporate Community Relations for **American Honda Motor Co., Inc.**, was invited to become a member of the Board of Directors of Students Run LA by Board President **Mark Shinderman**. Mr. Morikawa has been with American Honda for 30 years, and we are very excited to have him join us in our efforts to provide more students with the benefits of adult mentoring, improved health through physical activity, and the direction to stay in school and graduate. Welcome Stephen Morikawa!

Calendar

June 8 | Gardena 5000

Mile 22 and Running Them In... To the Finish Line and Beyond

The SRLA Mile 22 Aid Station was operational again this year with the intent of supporting, refreshing, and, if needed, rescuing runners who had hit "the wall". With donations of energy bars, energy drinks, water and snacks from **Costco Wholesale**, volunteers and staff were on the scene ready and willing to provide refreshment to all runners in need of a boost. Runners especially appreciated the spritz of **Kool 'N Fit** to ease those aches and pains on knees, ankles, shins and backs, so many thanks to **Kool 'N Fit America** for again providing this much needed and appreciated topical spray. Mile 22 was a popular "watering hole" for everyone across the board, and volunteers were out on the course until very late in the day distributing water and nourishment...and receiving many thanks and blessings from struggling runners for their dedication and support.

Once again, SRLA organized its "Running Them In" program to help some of our students complete the Marathon on March 2nd. Based on the idea that joining someone at Mile 22 – someone with a friendly face and new energy who keeps saying "you can do this!" -- breaks down "the wall" and makes for a great ending to the experience.

There were 35 volunteers from **Merrill Lynch, Kaiser Permanente, Aetna**, the **LA84 Foundation, Sony Pictures, AEG Live**, and the office of **Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke** participating this year. They were at Mile 22 at 2:00 on the afternoon of the Marathon, cheering for all of the runners, but especially for the "sea of turquoise" SRLA singlets. (That's how one person described our students along the course.) Wearing specially designed SRLA t-shirts emblazoned with **Running Them In...To the Finish Line and Beyond** on the back, they spent the first half hour cheering for all of the marathon runners who passed by. Beginning at 2:30, they each identified an SRLA student who was running alone and in some cases struggling, and ran the last 4.2 miles of the Marathon with the student.

Congratulations Chief Seabrooks

Chief Jacqueline Seabrooks of Inglewood receives an SRLA jacket in honor of her promotion and the 4 LA Marathons that she ran with SRLA. Chief Seabrooks trained with the Santa Monica Pal group while she was the Captain for SMPD.



SRLA Board member Fred Mandell provides a soothing spritz of **Kool 'N Fit** for pain relief at Mile 22.

The SRLA Leaders reported great appreciation for the Running Them In volunteers. Both students and Leaders were happy to have all of the Mile 22 volunteers there all afternoon, cheering them on. For some students, their anxiety levels dropped when they saw the Running Them In volunteers. One Leader described her exhausted student really perking up when the "hyper-active adult" appeared next to her, and asked if they could run in together. Other students said that the volunteer runners kept talking the entire time, which took their minds off the miles left to go and suddenly there they were at the finish line. Overall, the SRLA Leaders labeled the Running Them In program inspiring, one that the students loved and one that really helped.

Thank you to the following for recruiting so many wonderful volunteers:

- **Nathan Crair, Merrill Lynch,**
- **Andy Gallardo and Holly Craft-Moreno, Kaiser Permanente**
- **Alexandra Cortez, Aetna**
- **Pilar Diaz, LA84 Foundation**
- **Lani Mathews, Sony Pictures**
- **Karly Katona, Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke**
- **Brianna Frazier, Los Angeles Unified School District**

And thank you to all of the "Running Them In" volunteers for making this effort such a tremendous success:

Danny Agnew, Amber Burga, Rachel Cain, Maria Camacho, Charles Carter, Fatima Castaneda, Rachel Coleman, Alexandra Cortez, Holly Craft-Moreno, Nathan Crair, Robert Crotty, Pilar Diaz, Renee Eckerson, Diane Endara, Brianna Frazier, Reid Freiheit, Lisa Gilp, Julie Grickson, Juan Gutierrez, Priscilla Kania, Karly Katona, Nary Lao, Matthew Lete, Mike Merheb, Krystal Meturst, Dina Meyers, Ann Pagan, Brigida Perez, Veronica Perez, Leila Polintan, Kim Ruan, Adam Scully-Power, Esther Tudor.



Members of the Running Them In team from Aetna cheer on the runners.



SRLA

Students Run L.A.

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Saundra Mandel
Fred and Rosny Mandell
Michael and Louise Mandell
David Mar
Larry Margo
Karen and Barry Mason
Patty McAllister
Colleen McFadden
Betty and Estelle Mednick
Marsha and Steve Mermelstein
Margie Meyer
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Kenneth and Bobbie Miller
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Matt Wyatt
Edward Yang
David Young
Richard and Rita Yu

From the Office

Marsha Rosny Ginny Nikki Phyllis

What a day! March 2nd was another day of triumph for the students of SRLA at **The City of Los Angeles Marathon XXIII**. There were 2744 SRLA runners at the starting line and 99% of them finished the entire course. Congratulations to each of these marvelous students on your efforts and success! And a major thank you for their volunteer SRLA Teacher/Leaders for helping them to achieve this victory!

Once again, many others helped to make Marathon Day so successful:

- **The City of Los Angeles Marathon**, for the 19th time, allowed our students to participate.
- The **Los Angeles Unified School District** for underwriting the bus transportation for our students to get to and from the Marathon.
- The **Beverly Garland Holiday Inn** welcomed SRLA in the morning, so that the students could check in, take our annual photo, and walk together to the Marathon starting line.
- **American Honda Motor Co., Inc.** for making the services of **Ruben Postaer** available to SRLA for the annual poster picture, a daunting task to capture more than 2700 in one shot!
- The **Los Angeles Marriott Downtown** welcomed and cared for our students, their teacher/leaders, their families and friends all day, as the exhausted but ecstatic students returned there after the Marathon.
- Volunteer runners from **Aetna, Kaiser Permanente, LA84 Foundation, Merrill Lynch, Sony, and Staples Center**, who helped many of our students finish the last 4.2 miles of the course;
- **Kool 'N Fit** who donated gallons of their wondrous muscle relief spray for SRLA runners (and any other runner who wanted it) at Mile 22.
- Volunteers from **Alhambra High School, Gamma Zeta Alpha, Kappa Delta Chi, Katella High School JROTC, North High School J's and V's, Pacific Hills School, Santa Monica PAL, Starbucks, the UCLA Anderson School of Business, USC Honor Society**, and many many other wonderful individuals.

Special thanks also go to Sandra Sandoval, Linda Schwab, and Kimberly Dillon for helping to coordinate the work of all of the volunteers!

Our funders continue to provide generous support for our ever-expanding program. We are pleased to welcome two new donors to the SRLA family: **Costco Wholesale** and the **Sidney Stern Memorial Trust**. We also want to acknowledge all of the donations that SRLA has received since our last newsletter, including

- **American Honda Associates Charity Committee**
- **Costco Wholesale**
- **J.B. and Emily Van Nuys Charities**
- **Milken Family Foundation**
- **Sidney Stern Memorial Trust**
- **Sterling Foundation**
- **Weingart Foundation**

We also received a tremendous response to our end-of-the-year solicitation. The individual donors are listed elsewhere in the newsletter. Thank you again to all!



SRLA

Paul & Eric

Incredible! Sensational! Fabulous!

You, our Marathon Leaders, are our heroes. What you have done can never be captured in words. You took a number of students, most without any running experience, and few who had ever set or stuck to achieving any real goal, and brought them through the experience of completing the City of Los Angeles Marathon. Where few dare to even try themselves, you brought thousands. Your selflessness and dedication to these young runners is deserving of the highest praise of the land.

So, if we ever climb Mount Whitney, we'll yell your names out loud and clear! Until then, we hope our shouts of joy and praise will let you know in a small way just how rare and incredible you are. You have given your students the finest example of leadership. You have taught them how to go beyond when it was easier to quit. You have shown them that the impossible can be made possible through courage and the execution of a plan...and that school success is had the same exact way!

Our task is not over, however. Now is the time to encourage your students to talk about their experiences. They need to vocalize to each other and to you what they have come to realize about the training and the actual marathon. From each other they will gain an even greater appreciation for all they can do. They will remember and better internalize the feelings of joy and pride in the accomplishment that is theirs' forever.

We cannot thank you enough for all that you have done. Students Run LA exists because you make the effort and generate the energy that helps your students' believe in themselves...even if no one else did.

You truly embody the concept of Hero, and we honor you, our Marathon Leader.

Eric Conn Sets Sail

Casting suits and neckties overboard, **Eric Conn**, a valued, long time member of the SRLA Board of Directors, and executive of American Honda Motor Co., has set sail into retirement. All of us here at Students Run LA wish Eric smooth seas, bright stars and a keen reckoning ahead.



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SRLA

Students Run L.A.

In Memory of Jeannie Cheung

Jeannie Cheung, an experienced Los Angeles marathoner, passed away earlier this year. Students Run L.A. was honored by her family's request that donations in her memory be made to SRLA.



Jeannie took up running when her first daughter went to college. And she loved it! Her first marathon was the City of Los Angeles Marathon, but she went on to complete more than fifty marathons. A member of the LA Leggers, Jeannie knew of SRLA because she saw our students running around the community, at local races, and at the Marathon.

Jeannie was enthusiastic about sharing her enjoyment of running. She encouraged runners of all ages and ability levels to lace up their shoes, stretch, and start jogging. And speaking of shoes, Jeannie's were a source of great pride and enjoyment to her. She loved her running shoes and had quite a collection. Students Run LA is proud to be able to purchase running shoes for 114 students next year with the donations that have been made in her memory.

Thank you to the following individuals for making generous donations to Students Run LA:

Herbert and Gloria Berger
Junior Cachero
Edmund Cheung
Natalie and Mervyn Cooper
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Edward Yang
Richard and Rita Yu

SRLA Student Focused Website

Leaders, tell your students that they can access our Students Run LA website specifically designed for them. www.srlastudents.com

Send us articles and pictures for our newsletter!
Email to eric@srla.org, or mail to:
SRLA, 6505 Zelzah Ave., Reseda, CA 91335

Thank You

Friends of Students Run LA!

Once again, many generous individuals have come through for us. Listed below are those who have made donations to SRLA since November 2007. We appreciate your support and, on behalf of all of our students and their volunteer teacher/leaders, we thank you and welcome you as Friends of Students Run L.A.

Anonymous
Isaac and Linda Adatto
Ana Antolin
Michael Appell
Asan Askin
Joan Atlas
Nancy Badger
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2007-2008

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Students Run L.A.

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Weingart Foundation

NOTE: 93% of all donations go directly to the SRLA program; only 7% is used for management and fundraising.

(Continued from page 1)

What we saw on the course was a gaggle of spectators, many of who were SRLA family and friends. Even those not there to support us quickly took up the call to encourage our SRLA runners. It was easy for

them really; we were everywhere. In fact, being 2750 strong, our group was more than 10% of the total number of participants! We also saw and heard musical groups who came out early to provide entertainment. Some were a little bit country, and some were a little bit rock and roll. Some just brought out a guitar and played for the

spirit of it all. Of course, running with us for a time were the serenading Elvis's. Complete with a full stereo sound system, these guys dress and sing as Elvis Presley. Add to that the Running Bananas and we had some pretty entertaining diversions.

However, no amount of diversion can lessen the reality of what it takes to complete the full marathon course. By the middle miles, our SRLA runners were showing their training. While others had started to fade by mile

14, our runners were beginning to focus. The looks of determination, the willingness to encourage each other, and the dedication to push onward were evident. We were still receiving great adulation from the crowds and

even more so from the incredible volunteers at the special **Honda Water Station**. It was a quick chance for us to thank those volunteers for the help they have given us (we're running in the **Saucony** shoes they helped provide), as well as for them to see the awesome group they so generously support!

Shortly after the mood elevator from Honda,

however, the realization of just how long the Marathon course is sets in. A month before, at mile 14, we only had four more miles to push through. Now we had 12.2! Yet our runners didn't flag, they continued on and just got tough.

Gratefully, just when it seemed we could take no more, our SRLA staff and volunteers created a special aid station for us at the hilltop of mile 22. It was just at the critical juncture after the toughest miles were behind us, yet before we tackled the four that can

break a runner. At the station, our runners were given additional support including **Kool 'N Fit** pain relief spray for knees and calves before given spirited and heartfelt encouragement to carry us forward. At our station were also a number of volunteers who formed the "Running Them In" group. These adults teamed up with some of our struggling runners to help pilot them in the final four miles. Without those gracious and dedicated people, a number of our SRLA runners would not have been able to continue.

Revitalized, encouraged, and reminded that we could accomplish our heroic goal, we set out to tackle the final four miles. The first part of those miles contains the incredible site of the skyscrapers of downtown Los Angeles from the 6th Street bridge. Running across the bridge, looking at the city just ahead and knowing our finish line is in there was heartening. Plus, it was slightly down hill and that helped even more! With a bit of momentum from there, it was a matter of reaching deep, focusing on completing our goal and keeping our feet moving forward.

And move we did. We ran some, walked some, and limped some. We laughed a little and maybe even cried a tear or two, but we kept moving forward. And then it happened. We rounded the corner from 7th



Joel Frias, SRLA Leader at LAPD Foothill YPU, is ready for 26.2!



Belvedere Middle School students make SRLA visible at the marathon.



SRLA Board Member, Nathan Crair, and colleagues at Merrill Lynch Beverly Hills at mile 22.



SRLA Leader Diane Kantack celebrates her birthday on Marathon Day with her students at King Middle School.



Students Run L.A.

Street onto Flower and there it was—the finish line. 26.2 miles ago, we asked ourselves if we could do it. Could we complete the course? For 99% of our runners who crossed the line to earn their medal, we knew. Oh yes we can!

Returning to the **Los Angeles Marriott Downtown** to check-in, get some lunch and our prized SRLA Finisher's Sweatshirt, and reunite with our running friends and partners, we can truly let ourselves feel the pride of our accomplishment. Forever more, with the medal in our hands, and the journey in our hearts, we now know we have what it takes to be successful: Have a goal, train for it, and never give up until it is achieved.

We are Students Run LA, and we ran a marathon today!



Photo courtesy of Abel Macias

Celeste O'Neill of Hawthorne High School still has energy for fun at the finish line.