FROM SRLA STUDENT TO STAR LEADER:

JOSH'S FULL-CIRCLE JOURNEY



As a 10th grader at Sherman Oaks Center for Enriched Studies, Josh Brown joined Students Run LA (SRLA) because a friend who was "always busy running" recruited him to sign up. He went on to complete three LA Marathons in high school, an experience that stayed with him long after he crossed his final finish line.

Years later, Josh found his way back to SRLA, this time as a Leader.

Today, Josh is a history teacher at Poly High School in the Northeast San Fernando Valley and has coached with SRLA since 2018. What began with a hallway conversation with a fellow teacher wearing an SRLA shirt has grown into one of the program's largest sites, with approximately 75 students regularly attending practice and about 40 completing the marathon last year.

This season, Josh was honored as an SRLA Star Award recipient for the outstanding leadership and commitment he brings to his students and the program.

For Josh, "going the extra mile" means keeping students at the center of everything he does. He sees SRLA as more than a running program, it's a place where students build character, learn commitment and resilience, and discover what they're capable of. He gives students opportunities to lead stretches, choose routes, and help shape their team's culture.

Yvonne is one example. After trying SRLA twice without reaching the finish line, she returned for her senior year determined to try again. Waking up at 4:30 a.m. to catch the bus to practice, transportation became a major barrier. Josh and his co-Leader stepped in, arranging rides with a parent so she could keep showing up. After three years of trying, Yvonne finally crossed the LA Marathon finish line this March. She has since been accepted to a UC campus.

For Josh, that is what SRLA is really about - the lessons students carry far beyond race day.

At graduation, he tells his seniors:

"This medal represents what you're capable of. If you were able to run a marathon, you can do anything."



For a former SRLA student who returned to help the next generation go the distance, Josh's journey has come full circle. And in every student he encourages to take one more step, he continues to go the extra mile.

2025– 2026 SRLA Leaders Snapshot	645 total leaders	54% female	46% male	<1% nonbinary

BY THE NUMBERS

Together, we're building a community of runners and a generation of resilient, confident, and connected young leaders.

3,818 STUDENTS SERVED

99% FINISHED THE LA MARATHON

47%* OF LA MARATHON FINSISHERS WERE GIRLS

90% TITLE 1 SCHOOLS

99% GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL

96% PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE

60% WERE NEW SRLA STUDENTS

80% OF STUDENTS WERE LATINO

95% PLAN ON RUNNING AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

*Outpacing the LA Marathon overall, where women represented 40% of finishers.

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TOGETHER, WE RUN FORWARD

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25/26 | IMPACT REPORT

TOGETHER, WE RUN FORWARD

Every season brings something new.

This year, SRLA students faced rain, record-breaking heat, personal challenges, and unexpected obstacles. But they kept showing up.

They trained together. They supported one another. They kept moving forward.

Because at SRLA, we know that the journey is stronger when we take it together.

99%
of SRLA students completed the LA Marathon

72%
of surveyed students reported improvement in feeling supported during difficult times





"My teammates encouraged me during difficult runs, my coaches constantly reminded me of what I've done to get here and my family supported me through every mile. Being in SRLA was one of the first times I had everything I needed to succeed."
Stephanie, Senior at Legacy High School

THE MILES STAY WITH YOU: ALEXA'S JOURNEY BEYOND SRLA



Alexa Zuniga ('25) began her SRLA journey in seventh grade at Edison Middle School and continued running with SRLA at King Drew Magnet in high school. Along the way, she accomplished something incredible: completing six marathons before the age of 18.

After graduating from King Drew Magnet in June 2025, Alexa continued her journey across the country, enrolling at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Now a sophomore pursuing a bachelor's degree in Health Science and Physical Therapy, she is on the path toward becoming a physical therapist.

Even thousands of miles from Los Angeles, Alexa has remained connected to the SRLA community.

"If anyone had told me a year ago that I'd still feel so connected to SRLA, I wouldn't have believed them," Alexa said. "I honestly owe a lot of that to Lucero Nava, Alumni Coordinator, and Aby Catalan, Program Manager, who never hesitated to reach out and always made me feel welcomed and supported."

Alexa's experience reflects the heart of SRLA's Alumni Program: building a community that extends far beyond graduation. Through the program, alumni have opportunities to stay connected, build meaningful relationships, pursue their goals, and navigate the challenges of life after high school.

"Being part of the alumni program has allowed me to connect with so many people, build friendships and a community that will last a lifetime," Alexa shared. "Even though I'm no longer an SRLA student, my connection to the program hasn't faded, it's only gotten stronger."

Alexa's story is a reminder that an SRLA journey doesn't end at graduation. The miles, relationships, confidence, and community stay with our students, wherever their paths take them.

2026 Senior Snapshot

Nearly **100%** graduated or expected to graduate from high school.

96% plan to attend college

78% identified as first-generation college students

95% plan to continue running after graduation



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Students don't run alone. They are surrounded by coaches, volunteer Leaders, families, alumni, and community partners who help them keep going.

72% improved in their ability to listen to and support others

67% improved in turning to others for support when facing problems

Approximately one-third of students showed improvement in trusted friendships, shared values, and conflict resolution.

- 39% improved in feeling that they share the same values as their friends
- 36% improved in resolving conflict productively with family and friends

" Joining SRLA has led me to cross paths with so many wonderful people who have inspired me and whom I have also inspired. Running and interacting with a community, such as the running community, has boosted my confidence and desire to pursue self-improvement. To myself, self-improvement is the act of chasing one's fulfilling goals and aspirations. And it also involves uplifting those around me. I have grown from prioritizing myself to ensuring that I prioritize helping those around me."
Joel, Senior at Eastside Senior High School

WE PERSEVERED

From rain at the 15K to record-breaking heat at the LA Marathon, this season tested our SRLA runners. But the challenges didn't stop there. Students navigated school and community disruptions that added another layer of uncertainty to an already demanding year.

Still, they showed up.

They trained through the rain. They pushed through the heat. They leaned on their teammates, Leaders, and community when things got difficult. And when the path forward wasn't always clear, they kept moving.

Because perseverance isn't about having an easy road. It's about continuing to take the next step—even when it's hard.

And together, our students did just that.

71% of surveyed students improved in responding to changes in their lives with a positive attitude

71% improved in self-confidence



"My teammates taught me the importance of being close, especially in tough times, because it really encourages us to push ourselves, even when one of us starts to fall apart, we help each other. Even with the SRLA season ending, we still have each other's backs. I learned that the connections we make stay with us for a very long time, it isn't something we can buy."
Brenda, Senior at Animo Locke High