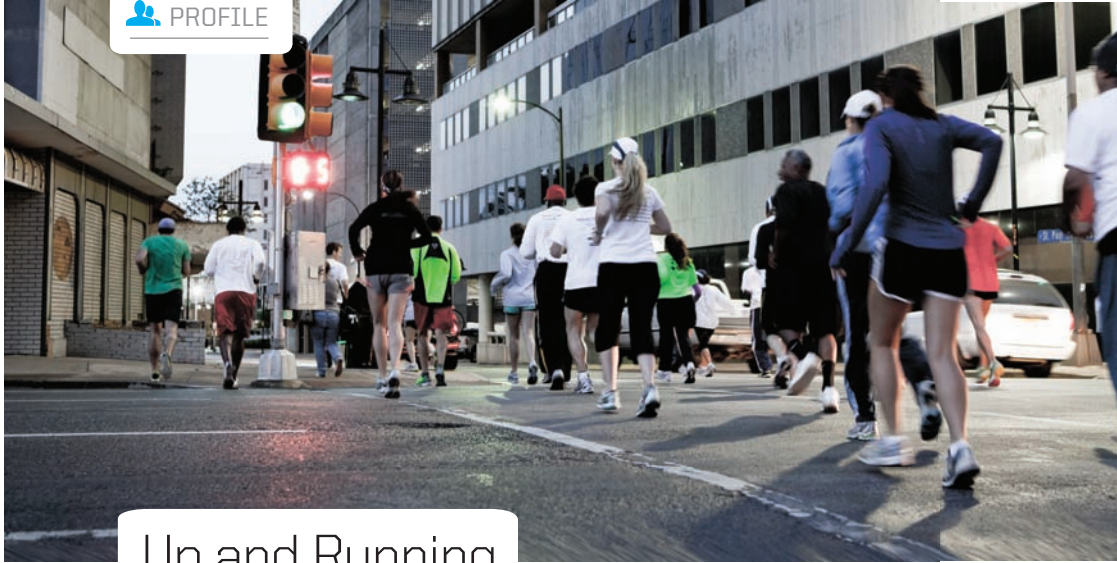


PROFILE



Up and Running

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Despite an economy where charitable donations are hard to come by, Back on My Feet is experiencing success in building a secure financial network through grants and sponsorships from resources like Bank of America and the Marriott hotels.

It costs \$1,800 to sponsor a member and each chapter is responsible for establishing its own revenue goals.

"We operate like a business and have been growing responsibly with our sponsors. We would never put the organization in a place where we'd operate from week to week or month to month," said Mahlum. "National fundraising events like the Stroehmann Back on My Feet 20in24 Challenge and the National Wear Your Sneakers to Work campaign enable us to bring the program to new cities."

To determine which city to establish a chapter in, the organization looks at the prevalence of homelessness and the presence of a running community with races.

"The demand for the program is so deep, we get requests everyday from people to expand to their respective cities," said Mahlum. "We want to provide the experience and the environment for as many people as we can."

—Cielestia Calbay



RACE READY

Editor's picks for best local turkey trots

Briargate YMCA Turkey Trot

Nov. 24

Colorado Springs, Colo.
www.ppymca.org

● Head to the Briargate Family Center YMCA in Colorado Springs, Colo., on November 24 for the 14th annual Turkey Trot. This 5K is more than a guilt-free way to spoon that extra heaping of sweet potatoes on your plate this Thanksgiving; proceeds will support low-income families' participation in programs at the center.

Panicking Poultry 5K

Nov. 19

Boulder, Colo.
www.pp5k.riptidemultisports.com

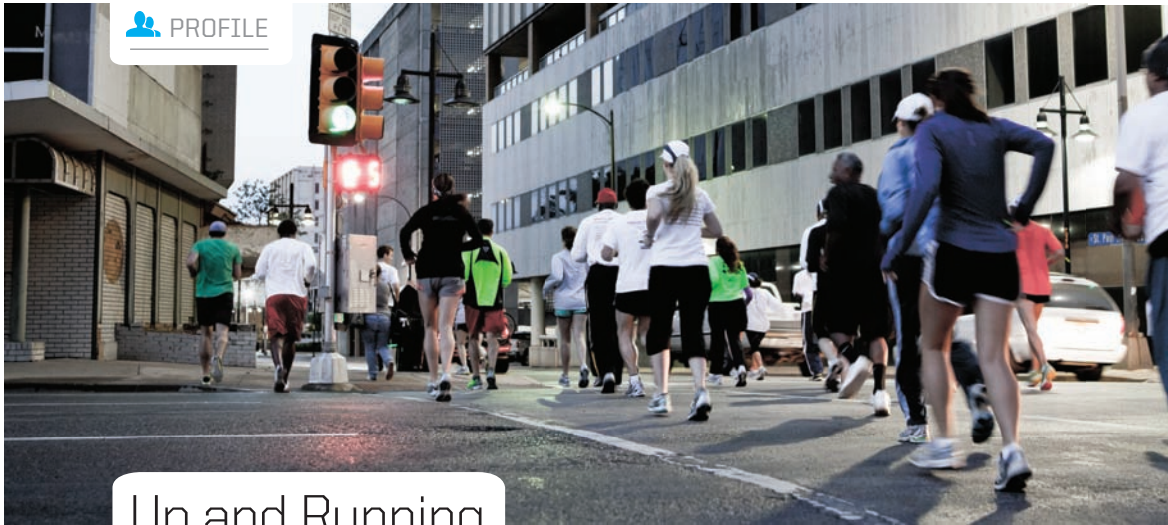
● The Panicking Poultry 5K and kids one-mile fun run in Boulder, Colo., on November 19 donates to the Kids Move Initiative to combat childhood obesity. A zero waste race, organizers will make sure that gift swag, utensils, cups, etc., are recyclable or compostable. The course is relatively flat with mixed paved and dirt terrain, and the post-race party will dish out plenty of food, beer and fun.



ULTRA CYCLING EVENT TO DEBUT IN NEVADA

If a 12- or 24-hour relay ride on desert singletrack, or a single or duo effort lasting six hours sounds like a not-to-be-missed endurance challenge, the inaugural 24 Hours of Bootleg Canyon on Oct. 29-30 in Mountain Bike Park in Boulder City is the event for you. Teams of three for the 12-hour race and teams of up to five for the 24-hour race will ride a lap course overlooking Lake Mead. A barbecue and bonfire with live music will entertain spectators during the event. www.24hoursofbootleg.com

PROFILE



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Determined to make an impact, she called the local homeless shelter with the idea to start a running program. With positive feedback from the shelter and community, she founded Back On My Feet one year later in 2007.

The nonprofit organization currently has eight chapters nationwide, including one in Dallas, and plans to expand to Houston and San Antonio in 2012. It works with local shelters, which are established as individual teams, to organize group runs three mornings per week as a means to build confidence, self-esteem and discipline among the homeless.

At the end of the month, each member's attendance is measured. If he or she has maintained a 90 percent attendance rate for 30 days, there is an opportunity to participate in the Next Steps program, which offers resources such as job training, educational scholarships and housing assistance.

At the end of the six-to-nine month program, the goal is that members will walk away with a better sense of self-worth and that the stigma and stereotypes associated with homelessness will be stripped away.

Kristen Kouk, director of communications and corporate relations for the Dallas chapter, says they're receiving positive feedback from the public and believes the dedication from their volunteers is what drives much of the organization's success.

"For many of our members, this is the first time they've experienced feeling like they're part of a group so the trust built

between our volunteers is crucial," said Kouk. "Our program would not be where it is today if it wasn't for key players in the community."

There are currently 43 members on six teams in the Dallas chapter. Eighteen members have obtained employment and 17 members have obtained housing since it launched in May 2010.

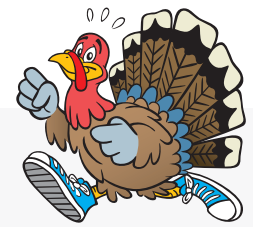
She adds that change doesn't happen overnight and that it takes patience and optimism to run the program; however, the ability to witness members abandon their withdrawn personalities and embrace other people makes the efforts worth it.

"I've witnessed the moments where my teammates have crossed a physical and mental finish line and that's what inspires me everyday," said Kouk.

—Cielestia Calbay

Dallas Chapter's Race Calendar

- Oct. 1 Dallas Running Club's The Loop 15K and 5K
- Nov. 6 Dallas Running Club's Half-Marathon and 5K
- Nov. 12 Help the Homeless 5K
- Dec. 4 Dallas White Rock Marathon, Half-Marathon and Relay



RACE READY

Editor's picks for best local turkey trots

SARR Turkey Trot

Nov. 24

San Antonio

www.saroadrunners.com

● For 35 years, San Antonians have been lining up to complete the annual San Antonio Road Runners four-mile run and walk and kids runs on Thanksgiving morning. This year, a new course and wave start will help separate runners from walkers. Bring along canned food donations and stick around post race for fresh fruit and a drawing—80 smoked turkeys will be given away.

Capital One Bank Dallas YMCA Turkey Trot

Nov. 24

Dallas

www.thetrot.org

● This 43-year-old trot is one of the largest in the country for good reason—its fun-for-all festivities include a 5K run and walk, an eight-mile run, wheelchair race and lively celebration that includes clowns, pony rides, live music and a bounce house in downtown Dallas.

Thunder Cloud Subs Turkey Trot

Nov. 24

Austin, Texas

www.thundercloud.com

● Organized by beloved Austin sandwich shop Thunder Cloud Subs, this year's 22nd annual turkey trot will feature a new course beginning on the South 1st Street Bridge. Start your Thanksgiving morning off right with either a five-mile run, one-mile walk or "Kids K."

Photo by Kristy Cantile

PROFILE



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Determined to make an impact, she called the local homeless shelter with the idea to start a running program. With positive feedback from the shelter and community, she founded Back On My Feet one year later in 2007.

The nonprofit organization currently has eight chapters nationwide, including the founding chapter in Philadelphia as well as a branch in Boston, and there are plans to expand to New

York in 2012. The group works with local shelters, which are established as individual teams, to organize group runs three mornings per week as a means to build confidence, self-esteem and discipline among the homeless.

At the end of the month, each member’s attendance is measured. If he or she has maintained a 90 percent attendance rate for 30 days, there is an opportunity to participate in the Next Steps program, which offers resources such as job training, educational scholarships and housing assistance.

For Boston chapter member Brian Doucette, the program has not only helped him find two jobs, but also a network of people who keep him physically and spiritually balanced.

“They really keep an eye out for you. If I didn’t have their support, I wouldn’t have the mental and active strength to be able to walk confidently into job interviews,” said Doucette.

At the end of the six-to-nine month

program, the goal is that members will walk away with a better sense of self-worth and that the stigma and

stereotypes associated with homelessness will be stripped away.

“When we lace up our sneakers each day and step out on that run, we are all equals. We all struggle together and bond as a team regardless of our races, educational levels and socioeconomic statuses,” said Bridget Horne, director of communications and corporate relations for the Boston chapter.

She adds that change doesn’t happen overnight and it takes patience and optimism to run the program; however, the ability to witness members abandon their withdrawn personalities and evolve makes the efforts worth it.

“There are challenges that grassroots nonprofits face every day in a highly competitive market, not to mention the highly emotionally charged topics we encounter with our members. But to get to know them as teammates, runners and people—not as cases or clients—makes failure not an option,” said Horne.

—Cielestia Calbay

Boston Chapter’s Faves

Running Route
Wollaston Beach path
Norfolk County, Mass.

Upcoming race
Bay State Marathon and Half-Marathon
Oct. 15 and 16
www.baystatemarathon.com

Photo by Kristy Carille

PROFILE



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The nonprofit organization has eight chapters nationwide including Baltimore and Washington, D.C. It works with local shelters, which are established as individual teams, to organize daily group runs three mornings per week as a means to build confidence, self-esteem and discipline among the homeless.

At the end of the month, each member's attendance is measured. If he or she has maintained a 90 percent attendance rate for 30 days, there is an opportunity to participate in the Next Steps program, which offers resources to job training, educational scholarships and housing assistance.

There is hope that at the end of the six-to-nine month program, members will walk away with a better sense of self-worth and that the stigma and stereotypes associated with homelessness will be stripped away.

"We're not afraid to address concerns like what they should talk about when asked about their experiences in jail during a job interview, so to be able to make them feel comfortable to talk about those things is really gratifying," said Gretchen Gates, program director for the Washington D.C. chapter.

There are currently 87 members on 10 teams in the Baltimore and Washington D.C. chapters. Seventy-six members have obtained employment and 35 members have found housing since Balti-

more's launch in March, while 37 members have obtained employment and 23 members have found housing since Washington D.C.'s launch in March 2010.

The Atlanta chapter is scheduled to launch in November. Jackie Truncellito, program director for the Baltimore chapter, says change doesn't happen overnight.

"You can't just go from zero to 60 when you're training for a marathon, so seeing them use running as a positive force in their lives is rewarding," said Truncellito. "Watching these guys come out of their shell is a beautiful thing, but it's the positivity among volunteers that really helps them move forward."

—Cielestia Calbay

Baltimore Group's Faves

Running Route:
Inner Harbor Park
Baltimore

Post-run Spot:
Sam's Bagels
3121 Saint Paul St., Suite 6
Baltimore



On the Race Calendar

Baltimore Chapter: Oct. 15, Baltimore Running Festival

D.C. Chapter: Oct. 31, Marine Corps Marathon

Photo by Kristy Carlie; Bagels by iStockphoto.com/Floorije

PROFILE



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The nonprofit organization currently has eight chapters nationwide, including Chicago and Indianapolis. It works with local shelters, which are established as individual teams, to organize daily group runs three mornings per week as a means to build confidence, self-esteem and discipline among the homeless.

The Chicago chapter, which currently has 36 members on four teams with 150 volunteers, have spent so much time with one another that they consider each other family.

"They've not only given me poise and a can-do type of attitude, but also a sense of identity and the opportunity to be a part of something socially," said Wahid Rashad, one of the founding members of the Chicago chapter. "We have our fights and disagreements but we're always there for each other."

Rashad, who comes from the Lawson House YMCA in downtown Chicago, was a mortgage broker who'd invested in real estate before the market crashed. He says being with the program has "made him believe again," and that he's even lost 29 pounds since joining the group in September 2010.

At the end of the six-to-nine month program, the goal is for members to walk away with a better sense of self-worth and that the stigma and stereotypes associated with homelessness will be stripped away.

"While meeting an individual's basic needs such as food and housing is important, we believe that rebuilding the self-esteem and dignity that's lost through the process of homelessness is equally important," said Meredith

Weber, director of communications and corporate relations for the Chicago chapter.

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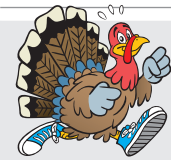
As of August, the Chicago chapter has raised \$12,204 for the Bank of America Chicago Marathon this month and another \$5,000 for the Santa Hustle 5K race in December. Learn more at <http://chicago.backonmyfeet.org>.

Back on My Feet Chicago Chapter's 2011 Race Calendar

Oct. 9
Bank of America Chicago Marathon
www.chicagomarathon.com

Dec. 3
Santa Hustle 5K race
www.santahustle.com

RACE READY



Editor's picks for Chicagoland turkey trots

Turkey Trot Chicago
Nov. 24, Chicago

Join more than 5,000 runners and walkers in Lincoln Park for this annual 8K on Thanksgiving. Bring canned goods for the Greater Chicago Food Depository. www.turkeytrotchicago.com

North Shore Turkey Trot
Nov. 24, Highland Park, Ill.

Touted as one of the Midwest's most beautiful courses by organizers, these annual 5K and 10K races take runners on a tour of Highland Park near Lake Michigan. Registration is online only and gives participants the option of donating to A Safe Place. www.northshoreturkeytrot.com

Schaumburg Half-Marathon Turkey Trot and 5K

Nov. 26, Schaumburg, Ill.
Torch all those turkey day calories with this half-marathon through the Busse Woods Forest Preserve. A portion of all entries is donated to the Special Olympics Illinois. www.allcommunityevents.com

To submit an item for [On The Radar] e-mail: Sgratewold@competitorgroup.com.

PROFILE



Up and Running

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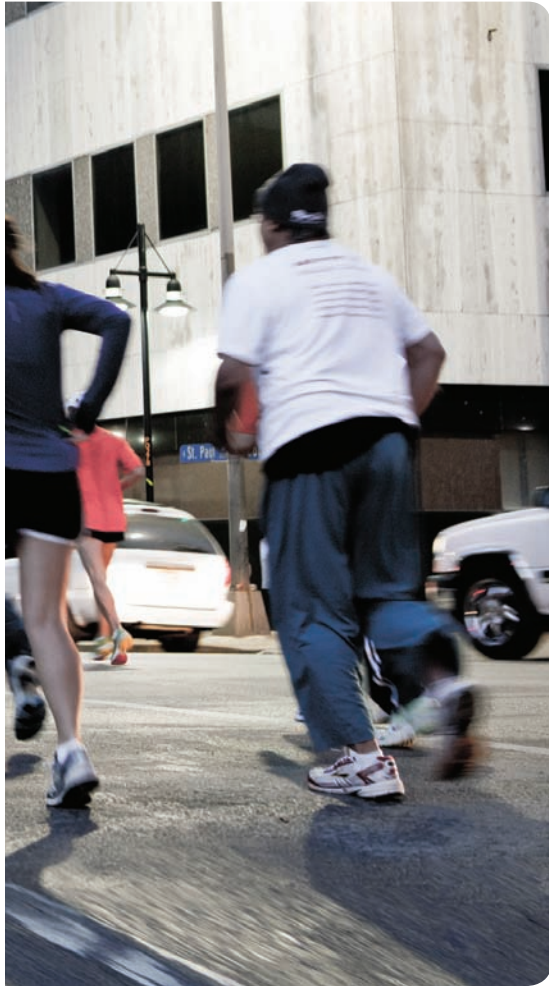
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Photo By Kristy Carlile

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