



## Natalie Morales finds volunteering up lifting

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As a runner, I believe strongly in the physical and emotional benefits of the sport. That's why I serve on the National Board of Directors of Back on My Feet, an organization that empowers homeless people to turn their lives around through running. The idea is that giving people a goal they can accomplish allows them to regain their confidence and believe in themselves again. Every time they go out and run, they earn credits toward job training and education.

In July, I ran in a Back on My Feet relay race. Two of my teammates were once homeless and are now on their way to getting jobs. I knew I believed in this organization, but seeing how well these men were doing and realizing I was part of the team that helped them get there was amazing and empowering. I realized how directly I could make an impact and change lives. It's the most incredible, uplifting feeling you can experience.

For me, it's not just about handing a homeless person a dollar, it's about bending down and listening to him — asking, "What do you really need? How can I help?" When you stretch a hand to



someone in need, you're giving a part of yourself to that person. You're telling him, "I believe in you."

With the economy where it is, we're all suffering to some degree. We have to keep in mind the blessings we do have, and make sure we give back and pay it forward. We have to take care of one another — on Make A Difference Day and every day.