

The Fourth R

Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic, and Running.



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Lend Your Support

The Foundation relies on partners like you to provide tens of thousands of at-risk youth with access to our dynamic and innovative programs. We welcome your support at any level and invite you to participate in our activities and events. [Click here](#) to support NYRRF's multiple programs.

Foundation at a Glance

Children Served: 48,000
Sites: 255
States: 41
Total miles run: 588,995

Dear Friends,



In this time of economic uncertainty, it is both gratifying and heartwarming to know that many of you continue to support our work and, more important, the tens of thousands of underserved children in New York and across the country who rely on our programs. These children depend on our programs as one of

their only means of regular physical activity and, like many of us, are strengthened and encouraged each time they lace up their running shoes.

As we read about economic needs that seem to have no end, please remember that for as little as \$50, you can transform the life of a child. Please continue reading for a few stories about the lives that are being touched by our programs because of people like you. Your investment—by donating \$50, knitting a hat, or volunteering your time at a school—will make a difference in the life of a child. In this tumultuous economy, it's hard to find a better return on your investment.

Cheers,

Cliff Sperber, Executive Director, NYRR Foundation

Come Run With Us!

Is running a marathon on your bucket list? Then run the ING New York City Marathon 2009 with Team for Kids for a life-changing experience that not only benefits your own health but will transform the life of a child. As a Team for Kids member, you'll enjoy unique benefits that will enrich your journey to the

starting line and beyond. Here is what TFK alums have to say about their experience:

“*The Foundation is a great organization that motivates kids to be fit. I ran with TFK last year and plan to join them again in 2009. These kids are our future and we need to give them the tools to succeed in life and be our leaders of the future.*”

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New York City Council Majority Leader Joel Rivera, from the Bronx

“*Running the marathon with Team for Kids made my marathon journey so easy. You guys gave me the resources and the encouragement to succeed in doing this. Thank you for such a special day.*”

Nadia Titarchuk, top New York City female fund-raiser, TFK team 2008

Applications are now available online. Join us for the journey of a lifetime. We will be with you every step of the way. Contact us at 646-758-9693 or teamforkids@nyrr.org.

[Making Dreams Come True](#)

Jontai Williams is one lucky 10-year old. Since meeting Olympian Kara Goucher at the start of the ING New York City Marathon 2008 as one of 10 Foundation youths selected to escort the professional runners to the start, he's had a crush on her. As he held her hand that morning, he was too nervous to speak, so he gave her his best winning smile. Goucher smiled back and gave him her warm-up jersey. She went on to finish third in her marathon debut, and Jontai went home and hung the jersey in his bedroom. He tried to contact her but didn't have an address. When the Foundation staff learned that Goucher was competing at the Millrose Games, they arranged for Jontai to meet with her.



The reunion was captured on ESPN. “She inspires me to run faster,” says Jontai, who runs with the Foundation’s Bronx Flash team. Said Jontai’s mother, “As a parent, this is so healthy for him. It has been very exciting watching him interact with world-class athletes. Goucher gave him the drive to challenge himself to do better.” He must be Goucher’s lucky charm as that night she won the Millrose women’s mile. After cheering her on from the stands, Jontai flashed his winning smile again and added, “This time we are definitely keeping in touch.”

[Foundation Coach Earns R-E-S-P-E-C-T](#)

Coach Melinda Pitter-Paul doesn't have to yell or shout to get her girls' attention—they hang on every word she says. A former national record holder in the 100 yards, Pitter-Paul has a plaque in her honor at the New Balance Track and Field Center at the Armory in Manhattan. Her students have seen the plaque and are in awe of their coach. Through her, they see what they can become. Pitter-Paul ran for Bishop Loughlin High School in Brooklyn, well known for its track and field runners. She became a Foundation

coach last year at P.S. 15Q because she believes that exercise is a key component of every child's education. Her girls are well mannered, well spoken, and willing to work their hardest to please their coach. "Kids need to be exposed to all levels of possibilities and not settle for second best," says Pitter-Paul. "The Foundation gives them that opportunity."

Close-Knit Friends Make Caps for Kids

Thanks to two talented and dedicated friends, the Young Runners Foundation youths at P.S. 246 have snugly gold knit caps to protect them from the cold when they are working out or attending races. When Mary Lou Roosevelt and Heather Nahum, fellow knitters and friends, were looking for a volunteer project, Nahum suggested they knit hats for the kids. A runner and former staff member for the Foundation, Nahum believed that the Foundation's mission was a perfect match for the project. "The Foundation is close to my heart and these kids are very deserving of our hats," says Nahum. Roosevelt and Nahum gathered a group of knitters to knit 17 caps in the school's signature purple and gold colors. The Foundation youths at P.S. 246 were selected because they train outside all through the winter and attend the winter races. They can be spotted wearing their signature socks, one purple and one gold. According to their teacher and coach, Emily Sanderson, "These kids work so hard to better themselves both in the classroom and on the track. They are very deserving of this honor. The hats complete them!"



It's a Fact: Recess Is Crucial

Harvard researchers reported in the January *Journal of School Health* that the more physical fitness tests children passed, the better they did on academic tests. The study of 1,800 middle school students suggests that children can benefit academically from physical activity during gym class and recess. The research suggests that play and down time may be as important to a child's academic experience as

reading, science, and math, and that regular recess, fitness, or nature time can influence behavior, concentration, and grades. In schools that have cut down or eliminated recess, The Foundation's youth running programs are a cost-effective way to keep kids moving. It's not too big a leap to suggest that by supporting the Foundation, our donors and sponsors are helping not only to keep kids fit but also to improve their grades.