

CONFIDENT LIVING WITH VISION LOSS

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For Immediate Release

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**Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired's Team With A Vision Takes On
First Ever Boston Marathon Virtual Event**

BROOKLINE, MA – For over 25 years, Team With A Vision (TWAV) has run the Boston Marathon with a common cause: to raise funds and awareness for the [Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) (MABVI). Undeterred by the 124th Boston Marathon's transformation into a virtual experience due to Covid-19, Team With A Vision kept training and raising funds and now will participate in the Boston Marathon Virtual Event September 7-14.

[Team With A Vision](#) is composed of Boston Qualified Athletes in the Para Athletic Division, the Adaptive Programs, and the Boston Athletic Associations' Official Charity Program. Throughout the week, team members, including 24 blind/visually impaired athletes, their sighted guides, and ten charity runners, will participate in the Boston Marathon Virtual Event by running 26.2 miles where they live around the country and the world. There is no time limit to complete the race, but it must be completed in one continuous attempt.

Participants in this year's virtual Boston Marathon include:

Martin Coster, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts – Martin runs as a charity runner for Team With A Vision. Martin is a veterinary ophthalmologist who has devoted his life to improving vision in animals and helping the owners of blind or visually impaired animals to find ways to adapt. He has worked at Angell Animal Medical Center, where, for the past 12 years where he has participated in a Service Dog Eye Exam event performing free eye exams on service dogs. "I meet so many blind and visually impaired people through this work, and it is so rewarding to help them by ensuring their guide dogs can see."

Jen Tusi, Raynham, Massachusetts - Jen began running when she was 20 and had run ten marathons so far. She plans to do more. "An organization such as MABVI is near and dear to my heart. My niece, Suzannah Dangelo, is 12 years old and legally blind. When she was a toddler, she was diagnosed with neurofibromatosis type 1. She developed benign tumors on both of her optic nerves and had to go through chemo at the age of 3 to stop them from growing. She does not let it slow her down. She hopes to run the Boston Marathon herself one day. It is e a tremendous honor and privilege to fundraise and run the marathon on her behalf."

Drew Campbell, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada – Drew is a passionate runner. He has run 4 World Majors (New York, Chicago, London, and Tokyo). "My younger brother is legally blind in one eye, and I saw the challenges that vision limitation contains. He is fortunate in the support around him (when required), but not everyone has that. I'm fortunate to have strong vision but would like to support those who may not."

Jennifer Herring, Hamilton, NJ – Jennifer has been a member of Team With A Vision since 2009, she will be taking on her 17th Boston Marathon in front of friends and neighbors in her home community of Hamilton NJ. A lifelong runner, Herring remembers reading all about her favorite runners while in college. Jennifer's perennial success in the visually impaired division of the Boston Marathon gave her the opportunity to meet Katherine Switzer, Joan

Benoit, Bill Rodgers, The Hoyts, and a couple other legends. Herring loves the Team With A Vision community and wants to run as long as possible because “it gives so much to us and it really moves us and others with more than just our legs but our hearts and souls”!

Mike Castle, Paris France – Mike has run the Boston Marathon 12 times, won the Visually Impaired Division 5 times, and was on the original *Team With A Vision*. The last time Mike ran Boston with the team in 2004, he moved to France after growing up in Detroit and living many years in Ann Arbor. After a long hiatus and moving abroad, Mike decided to return in 2015 to defend his title and relive the Boston Marathon excitement.

MARATHON WEEK EVENTS

Sunday, September 6 - Team With A Vision LIVE Celebration hosted by NPR's Peter Sagal

Join *Team With A Vision* to Celebrate a year of resiliency, community, health, and running. Hosted by Peter Sagal from NPR's *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!* and former Boston Marathon TWAV Guide. Special guest for the event, Ultra Marathoner, Mirna Valerio, "The Mirnavator", will share her very personal story of overcoming negative voices that say she does not belong. The evening will also feature many interviews with runners, volunteers, and supporters of Team With A Vision.

During a special presentation, the 2020 Kara MacDonald Aspire Award will be presented to Marla Runyan, the Para Athletes Manager for the Boston Athletic Association. The award was created to celebrate the life and work of the late Kara MacDonald and her dedication to athletes with disabilities. Through her work with the Boston Athletic Association, Kara MacDonald was an early thought leader for and valuable contributor to athletes with disabilities, establishing policies and procedures that are in use today. Runyan, a two-time Olympian, and Paralympic gold medalist uses her experience to move para-athletics forward at the B.A.A. and create more competitive opportunities, educating the running community and initiating programs that recognize their achievements. The award will be presented by last year's recipient, Joe Walsh, President of Adaptive Sports New England. **This free Livestream event is Sunday, September 6, at 6:00 PM EST <http://bit.ly/TeamWithAVision>**

Wednesday, September 9 - From Melbourne to The Rockies: A Chat With Jaryd Clifford and Molly

Quinn Australian Paralympic double World Champion and World Record holder, Jaryd Clifford and United States Association of Blind Athletes' new C.E.O., Molly Quinn, will participate in an online forum sharing their experiences as two pillars in the communities of disability and sport. This event is being co-presented by [United in Stride](#), an online database created to unite runners who are blind or visually impaired with guides across North America, and Achilles International. **This free ZOOM event is Wednesday, September 9, at 7:00 PM**

Monday, September 14 - MARATHON WEEK TEAM CELEBRATION

The Team With A Vision Boston Marathon Virtual Experience will be capped off with an online event celebrating and sharing runners' experiences from the past year and running 26.2 miles in their hometowns. Videos from every runner that ran will also be shown. **This is a free Livestream event that will take place Monday, September 14, at 6:00 PM EST.**

Sponsors for the 2020 Team With A Vision Boston Marathon Team include:

[Healthy Vision Association](#)

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Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

The Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (MABVI) is the oldest social service organization in the country that serves adults and seniors who are blind or visually impaired. MABVI's dedicated staff provide high-impact, cost-effective services, including vision rehabilitation, adjustment to vision loss, peer lead support groups, and assistive technology training to those who are aging into vision loss. MABVI also partners with community and medical groups and grateful to hundreds of volunteers.

Team With A Vision

Team with A Vision is proud to be a part of the Boston Athletic Association Charity Program.

Team With A Vision has raised visibility and critical funds for the Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired for over 25 years. Our international team is made up of Boston Qualified athletes in the Para Athletic Division and the Adaptive Programs, and Charity-bib runners. While some visually impaired runners have enough sight to run on their own, most are tethered to guides who provide verbal cueing along the course.

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