

MCRRC Intervals



May 2025

Newsletter of the *montgomery county road runners club*

On the Horizon

Saturday, May 3, 8:30 am

Kids on the Run (\$)
Gaithersburg

Sunday, May 18, 8:00 am

Run Aware 5K (TS)
Bethesda

Monday, May 26, 8:00 am

Memorial Day 4 Mile (CS)
Rockville

Saturday, May 31, 7:30 am

Little Bennett 10K (TS)
Clarksburg

Saturday, June 14, 7:30 pm

Suds & Soles 5K (\$)
Rockville

Saturday, June 21, 8:00 am

Run for Roses 5K (\$)
Silver Spring

Please check our website for
updates: www.mcrrc.org

Board Meetings

Board Meetings are held on the
second Thursday of each month.

Spring Happenings



Photo: Jyoti Bishey



Photo: Rao Tripathani

MCRRC friends embrace spring weather with informal runs to visit the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and the Tidal Basin's iconic cherry blossoms.



Photo: Dan Reichmann

Outgoing board members Sherene Sepehri (vice president), Shlomo Fishman (member-at-large), and Jim Dahlem (member-at-large) receive certificates of recognition at the MCRRC awards banquet on March 23.

Running Social

by Amy Lin

Runners occasionally refer to having a “running spouse,” someone who isn’t a literal spouse but might as well be, given all the time and miles spent together. MCRRC is fantastic for creating not just running friends but running family, and this issue of Intervals provides several perspectives on the connections we make through running, both online and in person.

Before we get to that, congrats to our many award recipients and to our new board members! Many thanks to our outgoing board members, Jim Dahlem, Shlomo Fishman, Libby Miller, and Sherene Sepehri, for their service.

In From the Board, Brian Murphy details his goals for MCRRC in his second term, continuing to reach out to both current and potential members in

multiple ways.

Katelyn Gregory usually focuses on other MCRRC members when she posts to the Club’s Instagram account; here, she offers a personal recap of her east-to-west Disney running adventures.

Runner Profile goes behind the scenes with Yeonho Kim, who has made an impression with his YouTube channel videos that chronicle training, volunteering, spectating, and racing.

Another Club member with a strong online presence, Maria Iman-Santoso, writes of her path to being newly minted as one of MCRRC’s official social media ambassadors and what she hopes to bring to the role.

May our upcoming events and programs bring you new connections—and new family!



2024 MCRRC Awards

Lifetime Achievement Award
Karen Kincer

President’s Awards
Khalil Diab, Lee Firestone, Rachel Miller

Runners of the Year
Open
Ian Morgan, Margaret Sprock
Masters
Monika Schneider, Charlie Stern
Grandmasters
Carol Braun, Frank Perna

Runner of the Year Recognitions
Kathy Cea, Kevin D’Amanda, Paul Jacobson, Melissa King, Hilary Moen, Emilie Ney, Andrei Ridzel, Meg Ryan, Erica Singleton, Adrian Spencer

Mountain/Ultra/Trail Runners of the Year
Adeline Ntam, Mike Edwards

Most Improved Runners
Jonathan Hou, Tracey Stearns

Outstanding High School Runners
Roma Diak, Jefferson Regitz, Nathaniel Swanson

Race Director of the Year
Jefferson Lunsford

Coach of the Year
Jyoti Bisbey

Volunteer of the Year
Dan Reichmann

Volunteer Service Awards
Ken Chia, Jason Lin, Samantha Lin

Journalism Award
Katelyn Gregory

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Have comments or questions? Or want to help?
Contact us at Intervals@mccrc.org.

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Intervals is published bimonthly by the Montgomery County Road Runners, P.O. Box 1703, Rockville MD 20849.

MCRRC is a non-profit, educational organization which promotes personal health and fitness through the sport of running. The club conducts regular running activities, including training sessions races, seminars, and social events.





Setting Goals for a New Term

by Brian Murphy

I'm writing this with spring racing season in full swing. I absolutely love this time of year and get a new sense of invigoration in my running. Spring and fall are incredible in the DC area. I feel as though we suffer through winter and summer, so we deserve a good stretch or two—this winter was one of those that felt almost endless. I've got a couple of big races under my belt, and I've seen a ton of members celebrating their finishes at the area's big events—RRCA Club Challenge 10M, Cherry Blossom 10M, Pike's Peak 10K, etc. I checked off an iconic road race that's been on my radar for a while now: the Carlsbad 5000. Maybe it's a long way to go for "just a 5K," but let me tell y'all, 5Ks are cool too! They're made even better with MCRRC friends ready to join in the adventure. I hope I'll soon have more opportunities to check a few more of these idyllic races off my list.

It's also the season I start to see more and more members getting together for their training. I love how this works out in the Club. Many MCRRC members take advantage of our formal training programs—spring and summer are our very busy seasons—but also a lot of informal groups gather and get training miles in together.

Many of you know I'm a regular at the Ken-Gar Sunday long run. It's so fun to head out on that run and see so many MCRRC members along the way. As I mentioned, there're the formal pace groups meeting up as part of the training programs, but there's also a ton of people that take those pace groups and extend

them through the "off-season." It's amazing to see how we can keep each other accountable throughout the year and find lifelong friends in the process.

We're also starting off a new board term. I've been serving on the board for seven years now, and this is always a time of mixed emotion. I'm constantly amazed by the people who join the board and sacrifice their free time in a volunteer capacity, all to continue to see the Club thrive. It's always hard to get to know board members so well, establish good relationships, and then see them transition off the board. However, it's also a time of opportunity. We have new board members coming in with new, fresh perspectives, and we're always able to find new ways for continual improvement.

As I'm starting off my final term on the board, I have a few themes in mind to continue good governance over the next few years. First of these is, of course, to continue to be fiscally responsible with members' money. You've heard me and many recent presidents say this: Through the years we have been incredibly fortunate to have great leadership that has put the MCRRC in a financially solid position. We're reviewing and, where appropriate, refreshing Club policies to ensure our dollars are spent wisely, and so that we find ways to appropriately give back to the membership.

Next, I expect us to continue to be good community partners with Montgomery County and all its residents. We can do this by reviewing our interactions with the surrounding community, continuing

our progress in diversifying our reach geographically within the county—especially in areas we historically have less representation—and finding ways to partner and participate within these communities. Of course, our low-cost races and programs are one way to do this; however, I believe there are many more opportunities for us to continue to make an impact.

Thirdly, as a proponent of quality management systems, I believe strongly in the key tenet of continual improvement. As I mentioned before, I think MCRRC is in excellent shape. However, I always think there are ways to do things better. I'll be leaning on our newest board members to bring fresh perspective to see that we do this.

Lastly, as this is my final term, I'll look for ways to plan for succession. Of course, I intend to continue to ensure there's turnover on the board for continued leadership, but also in all aspects of the Club. I want to see us expand the bench in several key areas—volunteers, coaches, race directors, program directors, etc. We have amazing members, and many with such great leadership skills, I think tapping into these skills and seeing MCRRC thrive long into the future should be easy.

Looking forward to seeing you out on the trails and at our next Club event.

—Brian Murphy is the President of MCRRC and a member of the Competitive Racing Team. He can be reached at president@mcrrc.org.

An Epic Coast to Coast Adventure

by Katelyn Gregory

Once upon a time, in a state not so far away, a handful of runner friends arose to the sound of 2 a.m. alarms. It was time for a magical journey to begin! But let's start from the very beginning of this tale, shall we?

We all know that to be a distance runner, you have to be a tiny bit crazy. Some of us happen to be a lot crazy... maybe even a little... *dopey*. As a runner and a Disney lover, running the Walt Disney World Marathon had always been on my bucket list. When I heard about the Dopey Challenge, I was even more intrigued. The Dopey is a multi-event challenge: You do a 5K, 10K, half marathon, and full marathon over the course of four consecutive (and very early) mornings, for a cumulative 48.6 miles. This challenge was introduced to the *runDisney* lineup thirteen years ago and is one of the most popular challenges they offer.

In 2024, after a COVID hiatus, *runDisney* brought back another popular challenge, the Coast to Coast Race Challenge. For this, you must complete any half marathon, the Springtime Surprise 10-Miler, or the full marathon at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, plus a half marathon at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, in the same calendar year. Disneyland only hosts two race weekends: the Disneyland Half Marathon Weekend in January and the Halloween Half Marathon weekend in October. When I mentioned this challenge during a winter long run with Gavin La, his interest was piqued. We looked up the dates for the 2025 races, and much to our surprise (and delight), two of the qualifying half marathons perfectly aligned with our respective birthdays. It seemed like an opportunity too good to pass up. Who wouldn't want to run a Disney half for their birthday? Plans were set in motion, we registered for both race weekends, and our epic Coast to Coast Disney Adventure was born!

The first week of January, we headed

to Florida for the Dopey Challenge. I won't lie; it's intimidating—48.6 miles in four days, plus the miles you accumulate from walking in the parks? That's a lot. However, I was super pumped to have the guidance of the Disney Queen, Icel Kuznetsova, preparing for her fifth Dopey, and the Selfie King, Tom Hu, training for his thirteenth Dopey (yes, he's done it every year since it began!). Although we all stayed in different locations, it was easy to coordinate meeting up before the races started. Icel and Gavin even ended up running most of the races together (friends who coach FTM together stay



Photo: Katelyn Gregory

Katelyn Gregory celebrates her west-coast race finishes in front of Disneyland's Sleeping Beauty Castle.

together—shout out to the 10:30s!).

To say that we were wildly unprepared for the weather would be an understatement. Nothing could've readied me for sub-freezing temperatures in Orlando, of all places. For me to say it was freezing, and to have Gavin agree with me, you **KNOW** it was cold! Were we both still in shorts?

Obviously. Did we regret it? Only while waiting for the race to start—we had to be in the corral by 4 a.m., an hour beforehand. By the time the race started, we were ready to get moving!

Each of the four races starts and ends in the EPCOT parking lot. The 5K and 10K run through EPCOT only. You get to see all the countries, with Disney cast members holding up flags and cheering, and run under the famous EPCOT icon—the giant “golf ball.” Disney strives to make every mile magical, so there are character stops to make sure you don't get bored. I was more concerned with trying to warm up than what characters were around. Gavin, on the other hand, wasn't running fast to get warm but to find his favorite character: Donald Duck. His goals were to have fun during the races, to locate every single variation of Donald, and to take a photo with every duck character possible. (Spoiler alert: If you check his social media, you'll see he absolutely crushed those goals!) For the half marathon, Gavin and his girlfriend, Jamie Oleksa, even dressed as Donald and Daisy! It's safe to say Gavin had a pretty epic birthday this year.

Although the weather was freezing for the 5K, windy for the 10K, and rainy for the half, we couldn't have asked for better marathon weather!

It was an absolutely wonderful day to run. It's magical to run a race simply to have fun—no pressure to hit a certain time or perform a certain way. The full marathon goes through each of the four theme parks and the water park. It's known for character stops, bands, fun sights, and most importantly, the fact that you can hop onto a ride if you're still running when the parks open. That's right, folks. You can ride Expedition Everest in Animal Kingdom at Mile 17, the Tower of Terror at Mile 24, or both! Did I ride them? Absolutely not! (I wouldn't ride them on a regular day, let alone in the middle of a marathon.) But from what I hear from

Gavin and Tom, Everest was a thrilling pit stop! Tom even coincidentally rode the coaster with the same runner as he did last year.

I did stop to take several photos with characters along the way (including pretty much every Disney princess—I'm still heartbroken Moana wasn't there). At Mile 20, I was waiting in line for Lilo and Stitch when I heard a familiar voice call my name, and sure enough, Tom had caught up to me after his rollercoaster ride. It was a cool moment to snap a photo with a member of my MCRRC ohana and run a few miles together even though we were hundreds of miles from home. Running with friends made the miles even more magical.

Finishing the marathon was extra special knowing that I'd completed a crazy challenge and crossed something off of my bucket list. I swore I'd never run Dopey again, because though I was awestruck by the accomplishment, I was exhausted! However, as my first MCRRC coach told me, "Wait at least 72 hours after you finish a marathon before you make any big decisions." The more I thought about it, the less insane it seemed. (If anyone wants to do it in 2027, you can probably get a yes out of me!) If anything, the photo in front of Cinderella Castle with all six medals was worth all the miles.

I didn't have much time to think, as I was on another flight at the end of January to do it all again (minus the marathon—thank goodness!). Gavin and I headed to the West Coast to participate in the Dumbo Challenge—a 10K and half marathon at Disneyland. Because we'd flown so far and we both like shiny medals (who doesn't?), we thought we might as well run the 5K, too. After all, we'd completed the Dopey Challenge, so running 22.4 miles over three days would feel like nothing in comparison!

The 5K in Disneyland has an incredible course, worth it for more

than the medal. It begins at Sleeping Beauty Castle and ends at the iconic Pixar Pal-A-Round eccentric wheel (formerly Mickey's Fun Wheel). With a 5 a.m. start, we got to see the park illuminated with beautiful lights and Lunar New Year lanterns—definitely my favorite part of the California races. The 10K has a unique behind-the-scenes view of the parks, and the half marathon explores the surrounding neighborhoods of Anaheim and Garden Grove. I can now say I ran a half marathon on my birthday and have taken photos in front of both U.S. Disney castles with my medals. Absolutely worth it!

Two coasts, six parks, seven races, 71 miles of running, eleven shiny medals, and countless race photos later, I can honestly say that our Dopey-to-Dumbo Coast to Coast Race Challenge was one of the most



Jamie Oleksa, Gavin La, and Icel Kutznetsova pause during the Walt Disney World Half Marathon for a photo with Donald and Daisy Duck.

memorable events of my life. Although it's a difficult task that takes ample training, planning, and money, it's an experience that I'd recommend to any Disney fan who enjoys running. No matter where or how far you run, the incredible community we have at MCRRC is always there to support you in your crazy ideas and cheer you on to accomplish epic goals. Everything life has to offer—running included—is

definitely more magical with friends.

Cheers to many more magical miles ahead!

—Katelyn Gregory joined MCRRC in 2023 and has coached in both FTM and WMT. While she enjoys running marathons, her favorite race distance is the half marathon. Aside from running, she also loves baking—specifically cupcakes, which she's always happy to share with her fellow runners.

Ambassador's Journey

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running journey but also how the Club supports and encourages people to start and continue running.

I realize that my role as ambassador is not necessarily to attract new members, but rather to share MCRRC's story with my friends—both runners and non-runners alike—in Montgomery County, other parts of the U.S., and even runners and running groups in my home country, so that they can be inspired by all the great things this club is to offer. Through my platform, I can also offer a glimpse into American life as a grateful citizen of this adopted country.

With MCRRC's numerous races and training events throughout the year, I will have plenty of stories to tell. As a participant, volunteer, trainee, and coach, I plan to share these experiences. This year, I am running a couple of marathons, including two World Majors, which will provide perfect opportunities to spread the word about the Club.

If you would like to follow my journey and learn more about MCRRC, please follow me on Instagram @nia_ntes or on Facebook @NiaNtesImanSantoso. I look forward to connecting with you!

—Maria Iman-Santoso joined MCRRC in 2016 and started coaching in the First Time Marathon program in 2024. Her favorite run is the "three bridges" route from Bethesda to DC, and she especially likes the half and full marathon distances. Outside of running, she enjoys exploring new restaurants and traveling.

Yeonho Kim



by Lisa Levin

Yeonho Kim joined MCRRC after picking up running in 2019 and running two marathons without any understanding of proper training. Starting with the Winter Marathon Training (WMT) program, Yeonho was hooked and has since participated in the Experienced Marathon (XMP), Winter Trail, Speed Development, and First Time Marathon (FTM) training programs. You can often find Yeonho capturing training runs and races on his GoPro, and posting them to his YouTube channel, @runforfun24901. Originally from Daejeon, South Korea, Yeonho moved to Gaithersburg in 2007 after spending time studying in Austin, Texas. Yeonho's wife, Uijeong Moon, still lives in Korea, where she teaches college. Yeonho works as a research scientist at Walter Reed and makes regular trips to Korea to see Uijeong.

Did you run or participate in sports when you were younger?

Growing up in Korea, I had little interest in playing sports and was not encouraged to participate in physical activities. The only time when I was physically active was during my two-year service in the Korean army, when I was in my twenties. Even then, the focus was on meeting the duty requirement rather than improving physical fitness. Looking back, it's almost unimaginable that my younger self would one day become someone who runs regularly, finds joy in it, and even finishes marathons.

When and why did you start running?

The first time I realized I needed some "running skills" was when I kept missing RideOn buses after getting off the train. There were so many times I had to sprint to catch the bus and avoid waiting another thirty minutes for the next one. I also hated gasping for air after even a short run. Then one day, a coworker suggested we run together on weekends along the C&O Canal. I thought it was a good chance to build a skill—a skill that would help me catch the bus. While I still didn't enjoy running for the bus, I saw it as a basic ability that would make my commute and life a bit smoother.

That easy start took a big turn during the pandemic. Suddenly, being stuck

inside and sitting around all day made me want to be outdoors, and running became the easiest and safest escape without worrying about getting sick. So, in August 2020, after several months of hiatus, I found myself running alone again, voluntarily! It gave me a chance to reconnect with nature



Photo: Yeonho Kim

Yeonho Kim grabs a quick selfie while spectating the 2024 Marine Corps Marathon.

and really pay attention to how my body and mind responded to the environment and circumstances around me. I loved the experience—watching the initial pain transform into joy during the run. Before I realized it, running evolved from just exercise into a lifestyle, and eventually, a true passion.

What was your first race? What do you remember most about it?

My first race was the Rockville 10K in 2019. As someone who never considered himself a runner, but viewed running as a practical skill, I imagined 10K was the longest distance I could complete without worrying about collapsing. I remember feeling deeply embarrassed as so many runners passed me on the gentle uphill stretch of Gude Drive, where I had to stop multiple times. My first marathon came two years later, the 2021 Baltimore Marathon. I went into it with no real understanding of marathon training or

the complexities of preparing for such a grueling race. Unsurprisingly, I hit the wall hard later in the race and bonked badly. It was a truly humbling experience and made me want to learn more about long distance running.

What inspired you to start recording your training runs and races?

It all started with a simple idea. During the pandemic, as I got into running more often, I decided to snap at least one photo from each run to send to my wife, who was working in Korea at the time. It became a way for us to stay connected and check in on each other's well-being during those tough days. But as my love for running grew, I realized that one photo wasn't enough to really capture the vibe of my runs. So, I started shooting short videos on my phone and uploading them to YouTube to share the full story.

Eventually, this little idea led me to get an action camera, which made filming my runs much easier. Once I started doing races, these videos became an awesome way to document my journey and keep those memories alive. Filming during races also gave me something to focus on, which made tough moments feel a bit less challenging. On top of the personal joy it brings, it's always great when someone mentions my videos. A standout moment for me was when my MCM video—now with almost 5,000 views—was introduced as a course guide for some first-time participants.

Now, with more than one hundred videos on my channel, creating these recordings has turned into a fun and rewarding hobby that also motivates me to keep running.

When did you first record a run or race?

The first run I recorded and uploaded to my channel was my first-ever run on CCT in March 2021. It was a simple and short compilation of route animation and photos that I captured while running. The first race I recorded was the Frederick Half Marathon in July 2021, my first attempt half. I just used my old phone. Despite the shaky clips, it still beautifully captured the excitement that I felt—at least, to me.

Do you have any tips for runners who would like to capture high-quality video of their runs and races?

Image stability is essential when filming during a run, unless you stop to record. However, running is physically demanding, making it difficult to capture smooth footage on the move. Investing in an action camera like a GoPro or Insta360, or a smartphone with built-in image stabilization, can significantly improve the quality of your videos and make it easy. It's also important to choose the right gear, such as a chest mount, head mount, and selfie stick, to carry your camera comfortably without disrupting your run or race. However, extra gear can sometimes be cumbersome or even unsafe while running, it's so important to experiment and find what works best for you. Personally, I prefer filming runs using just a camera and no additional accessories, as it keeps things simple and allows me to focus on my run. How you capture footage matters just as much as the equipment you use. Instead of long shots, capturing shorter clips more frequently often produces better results. When possible, consider using slow motion to add a dramatic effect and enhance the moment. Ultimately, your video tells a story about your run and race. As long as you enjoy the experience, it's a video worth keeping.

You had a big PR in 2024 at the Erie Marathon. What do you think made the biggest difference in your improvement, from 3:33 in 2023, to 3:19 in 2024?

My straightforward answer to this question is probably just what you'd expect: Stick to the training plan, slowly increase your mileage while maintaining higher volumes when needed, eat and drink right, get enough sleep, and do some strength training to avoid injuries. I made sure to check all these boxes and did the best I could within my limits. These strategies definitely worked well for me, just as they do for so many other runners.

But, one key thing that stood out to me this time was FRIENDS. I was lucky to have a group of friends from XMP who were at a similar skill level, lived nearby, and were also preparing for the same race. We began running together more often outside of the program's group runs, including a weekly

Friday run. These runs made training more enjoyable and effective, improving its quality and helping me increase mileage. Our shared commitment kept me motivated and consistent throughout the training cycle.

Which has been your favorite marathon?

The Marine Corps Marathon is hands down my favorite. Sure, running past Washington's iconic landmarks is pretty special—it's enough to make MCM a favorite for lots of runners. But for me, it's not about the monuments. What really sticks in my mind is the moment during the 2022 race when Club members recognized my MoCo singlet and cheered for me. Back then, I didn't know many people in the Club, and running a marathon still felt like a personal, solitary battle. I never expected to feel such a real connection with spectators or to have them cheer for me personally. But in that moment, for the first time, it felt as



Yeonho Kim cruises into the finish chute at Mesa Marathon 2025 in Mesa, Arizona.

if I wasn't just running a marathon—I was running in my backyard, among people who truly supported and understood me. It was a powerful, transformative experience.

To top it off, I managed a four-minute PR that day, which made the day even more unforgettable. Since this is one of the few races where I get to exchange cheers with many friends, not just random spectators, from start to finish, it holds a special place in my heart. Wanting to stay involved with this amazing event, I returned in 2023 to cheer on other runners, and in 2024, I volunteered. Someday soon, I hope to run MCM again with my family cheering me on.

Is there a marathon you'd still like to do?

YESSS, BOSTON! Running the Boston Marathon is a dream I can't wait to make a reality one day. I've heard it's so much more than just a race—it's a celebration, a tradition, and a dream all rolled into one. The road to Boston won't be easy. I have to improve my time, stay fit as I get older, or both. Regardless of whether I make it or not, the journey itself will be something that I'll look back on with pride for years to come.

What do you love most about running?

I love how running gives me the space to clear my mind, push my body to its limits, and then rewards me with lessons and the joy of accomplishment. It transforms ordinary moments into meaningful stories.

What advice do you have for runners who have already completed a few marathons and are looking to improve their finish time?

TRUST THE PROCESS. A lot of experienced runners have told me this, and honestly, it didn't click right away. But now, I've come to truly appreciate its meaning. Marathons are long, but the training? Even longer. Improvement doesn't happen overnight—it takes time, effort, plenty of sweat, and moments of frustration. Stay consistent, keep putting in the effort, and trust that all the hard work will pay off.

—Lisa Levin has been with MCRRC for more than a decade. She is a member of the Competitive Racing Team and co-founder of Run Farther & Faster.

An MCRRC Ambassador's Journey

by Maria Iman-Santoso

It took me a week to convince myself to answer the question: *Why do you want to be an MCRRC social media ambassador?*

Looking back to late 2016, I remember registering for MCRRC's Winter Half Marathon training program. My goal had been to finish the Rock 'n' Roll DC Half Marathon in under 2:30. After four years of trying and training solo, I finally achieved that goal with the program. It was then that I became hooked on the Club and became a regular participant in its training programs like First Marathon Training, Winter Marathon Training, and Winter Trail. These programs not only helped me become a better runner, but they also helped me improve in many social aspects.

As someone who came to the U.S. in my mid-thirties, with English as my second language, running with others in my pace group became a way to build my confidence in speaking. After all, you cannot stay silent while running twenty miles in a group, right? Conversations with fellow runners allowed me to connect with people from different backgrounds, and my favorite topics to discuss were culture, food, and of course since we shared the same passion for running, marathon experiences—whether local or abroad.

Training alongside the same core group of runners for several seasons also created deeper social connections

beyond just running together. Amid the busy demands of work, family, and my community, I was fortunate to get the opportunity to form new relationships. During the pandemic, when my connections to work and community felt severed, I found solace in virtual runs and virtual interactions with my fellow runners. These interactions became essential for maintaining my physical and mental health. When we were allowed to run in a small group while maintaining

social distance, my weekend runs with my “bubble” running family became something I truly looked forward to.

When I lost my mother to COVID-19 and could not return to my home country, running, though not a complete cure for my grief, helped ease the loneliness and sorrow. The support from my family, friends, and especially my running community, was invaluable during that time.

Given all the amazing benefits I have received from MCRRC, it should have been an obvious decision to give back by applying for this opportunity. However, feelings of doubt and hesitation made me reluctant to fill out the application. Would I be a good fit as a social-media ambassador? Could I do the role justice? Eventually, I decided that I owed so much to the Club, and this was the least I could do with my skills. While I may not be a heavy social media user, I enjoy sharing stories about my work as a TV producer, my love for culinary exploration, and, of course, my passion for running, on my Facebook and Instagram.

One of the main reasons I mentioned in my ambassador application is MCRRC's diversity—and I believe I represent that diversity. I want to show people that running is for everyone, no matter your background, your goals, or your pace. I am excited to share not just my personal



Photo: Siwei Luo

Maria Iman-Santoso executes one of her famous post-run jumps after the 2024 Parkway Classic ten-miler in Alexandria, Virginia.

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