



From: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS™

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Hope For The Warriors™ brings heroes' cause to the Chicago Marathon

Two members of Team Hope For The Warriors™ to run race and raise funds in the Windy City

CHICAGO, IL, October 11, 2009—Two members of Team Hope For The Warriors™ will participate in the 2009 Chicago Marathon on October 11, 2009. Dante Martin, a veterinarian from Jacksonville, NC, and SSG Mike Sass, a policeman and Army National Guardsman from Streator, IL, will both race in Chicago to raise funds for Hope For The Warriors™, a national non-profit group that seeks to ensure that no sacrifice is forgotten, nor need unmet for the heroes of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Martin will run with a “high and tight” buzz cut to honor the Marines that he meets every day in his work as a veterinarian near Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, NC. In fact, the buzz cut was part of a fundraising incentive; he issued a challenge to potential donors that the hair would come off as soon as he reached \$2,000 in donations. He’s well past that now and looking forward to race day. A native of Chicago, Martin’s parents still own and operate the Midlothian Animal Hospital and much of his financial support was generated in the Midlothian community.

“I chose to run for Team Hope For The Warriors because of the great people involved in this organization and the cause it supports,” says Martin. A lot of Martin’s customers are in the military and he wanted to give something back. “These men and women give so much for us so that we can live our lives freely here in the United States,” says Martin. “My run is a way to say thank you to them for their sacrifices.”

Streator policeman and Army National Guardsman SSG Mike Sass runs to honor a fellow Guardsman killed in Afghanistan this past March. Sass serves in the Army National Guard, A Co 405 BSB, in Streator, IL. In 2004-05, his unit deployed to Kirkush, Iraq. They didn’t lose anyone, and all went on to separate units. In March, Sass got word that one of the guys he had served with—Sgt. Christopher Abeyta--had been killed in Afghanistan.

“I consider Abeyta a hero as well as everyone else that has served their country and given the ultimate sacrifice,” says Sass. “We cannot forget.” Sass points to the words of President Calvin Coolidge: “A nation that forgets its heroes is a nation destined to be forgotten.” With that in mind, Sass decided to honor his fallen comrade and found a partner in Team Hope For The Warriors™. He reached his \$1,000 goal and will wear the team’s signature jersey on race day.

Funds raised by members of Team Hope For The Warriors™ support injured athletes in competitive events across the country, as well as fund additional Hope For the Warriors™ programs including Warrior's Wishes, Spouse Scholarships, and Hope and Morale trips.

The Bank of America Chicago Marathon attracts runners from all fifty states and more than 100 countries. Known as a fast, flat race, the course starts in Grant Park and offers a scenic tour of Chicago from the waterfront through 29 diverse neighborhoods.

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Hope For The Warriors™ is a national, non-profit group actively seeking to ensure that the sacrifices of wounded and fallen warriors and their families are never forgotten nor their needs unmet, particularly with regard to the short and long-term care of the severely injured. For more information, visit their website at www.hopeforthewarriors.org.