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Running For Shelter & Hope

Homeless Man Turns From Heroine to Hero in LA Marathon

Los Angeles, CA (March 11, 2015)- "This is my second chance, a new beginning," says Nick Matulich of his effort to run the LA Marathon. Matulich is 29 years old and he grew up knowing only a life of drug use. Until five months ago, he slept in an open field. He survived by stealing from family, then friends, and when he had alienated them, he stole from strangers. Today, Matulich has found shelter and inspiration at Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission. He began his marathon training in transitional housing there only three months ago.

Matulich did all his training using a treadmill and borrowed sneakers, until a few weeks ago when CEO of Hope of the Valley Ken Craft got him his first pair of running shoes. "When Nick came to our shelter he told me he wanted to follow in my footsteps," explained Craft. "Once we decided to run the LA Marathon together there's no way I would let him do that without a proper pair of athletic shoes! Nick's inspiring all of us right now to put our best foot forward."

"I am running this race as a reminder that I can do what I set my mind to do," says Matulich. "When I cross the finish line I'll prove that I can not only complete a great race, but learn to live sober and off the streets."

In the last five months at Hope of the Valley, Matulich has begun a new clean and sober lifestyle, and has learned about responsibility by helping others clean up. He now runs the shower program at the Sun Valley location and helps other homeless residents by handing out towels, soap, and advice. Having a job has given him a sense of purpose. "I know what it's like to go for weeks without a shower, it doesn't feel good and it's embarrassing and it becomes easy to lose respect for yourself," says Matulich. "I encourage the men here every day by showing them if I can change my life, so can they."

So far Matulich has raised just over \$600 dollars toward his run. He says it's the only way he knows to give back to the shelter that took him in, and taught him the true meaning of starting over. "This is more than a race, this is a commitment to myself and it's a big thank you to the House of Hope."

This is Ken Craft's second year running the Marathon, and this year he has 13 supporters running with him. When Nick stepped up to run by his side, the team was stunned that a man so ragged from just leaving a life on the streets had the inner strength to push himself all the way to the finish line. "I'm so thrilled Nick will be my running partner and so proud of his maintaining sobriety," says Craft. "Nick was dealt a bad hand, but he is learning to play it like a winner!"

[Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission](#) demonstrates compassionate concern for individuals lacking means to provide food, shelter, and clothing for themselves and their families. We believe everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, political persuasion or religious affiliation are entitled to receive essential life services.

Please contact Stephanie Abrams at 323-999-4489 or email news@abramsmanagement.com to arrange for interviews or video

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