

January 4, 2012

*Dear Race Directors and running friends,*

This is a letter of thanks to all of you for the extraordinary outpouring of support for the running shirts campaign for Youth Villages and their Running Program.

Never in my wildest imagination, would I ever have dreamed the response would be as it has been. The running community across the globe has come together to provide the absolute coolest, highest quality, off-the-charts magnificent running shirts for the kids at Youth Villages.



This effort has been in the works since last June, and I apologize that it has taken this long to circle back around with all of you who have responded, but ... the shirts have continued to come in this entire past 7 months!! Packages and boxes weekly from every corner of the planet – actually from All 7 Continents!!!!!! I wanted to report to all of you the results of this effort, and encourage you for the future as well.

As you all are aware, Youth Villages is a nonprofit organization in Memphis, Tennessee here in the United States, who are a national leader in helping children who struggle with the effects of abuse, neglect and trauma. These difficulties are certainly not unique to only American children. World over, there are children who need compassion, attention, love, and care. I hope that there are loving, caring people serving families and children with similar needs elsewhere as well.

These shirts that have been sent are bringing much joy into the lives of these children. There could hardly have been a more basic need for kids who are in a running program. Your kindness to these children you've never even met, or probably never will, has resonated with them, and they are encouraged and inspired by your generosity. Lori O'Brien, the Director of National Development at Youth Villages has shared that these shirts (and the sports bags, finisher medals, and assorted other gifts that have been sent) are being "treated like gold." Lori, affirming my own sentiment, stated that **"it is amazing how so many people are reaching across continents to help these children have a better life."**

Because I think you might find it fascinating and inspiring yourself, I want to list from where and what races shirts have been sent in response to this effort!!!!!! **Shirts have been received from:** North Pole Marathon, Antarctic Ice Marathon, Gold Coast Airport Marathon (Australia), Dublin Marathon (Ireland), Mt. Kilimanjaro Marathon (Tanzania), Great Pyramids Marathon (Egypt), Amsterdam Marathon (Netherlands), Recife Marathon (Brazil), Wachau Marathon (Austria), Macleay River Marathon and Trial Bay Triathlon South West Rocks (Australia), Quito Marathon (Ecuador), München Marathon and Freiburg Marathon (Germany), Reggae Marathon (Jamaica), Bahamas Marathon (Bahamas), Milano City Marathon (Italy), Ironman 70.3 Pays D-Aix (France), Pichi Richi Marathon (Australia), Manor Run to the Beat Basel (Switzerland), BHP Billiton Liberia Marathon (Liberia), Accra International Marathon (Ghana), King of the Hill Mountain Marathon (Hong Kong), Cyprus Marathon (Cyprus), The Dead Sea Ultra Marathon (Jordan), Cologne HRS.de Business Run (Germany), Brussels Marathon (Belgium), Hokkaido Marathon, Ohme Marathon, Tokyo Marathon, Sainokuni City Marathon, Saitama Marathon, and various other road races (Japan), Singapore Marathon (Singapore), Marathon Warszawski (Poland), Cayman Islands Marathon (Cayman Islands), Spirit of the Marathon Chiang Mai (Thailand), Macau Galaxy Entertainment International Marathon (Macau), Penang Bridge International Marathon (Malaysia), Bahrain Marathon (Bahrain), Achilles International (Brazil), Khon Kaen International Marathon (Thailand), Istanbul 2012 IAAF Indoor World Championships (Turkey), and from Canada and the U.S.A.: Land Between the Lakes Triathlon, Paavo Nurmi Marathon, Big Sur International Marathon, Fountain Lake 5, Med City Marathon, Glenville Days 5K, Morin Lake Days 10K, April Sorensen Memorial Half Marathon, Hood to Coast Relay, Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossom 10K, Run Crazy Horse Marathon, Harlan County Health Systems 5K, Wulfman's Continental Divide Trail 14K, LaCrosse Fitness Festival Youth Races, Premier Fitness Bike Tour, La Crosse Marathon, Three Rivers 5K, St. Clare Health Mission Half Marathon, Albert Lea Cross Country Running Camp, Marathon to Marathon, Iron Girl Event Series, Scenic Mountain Triathlon, New Balance Girls on the Run 5K, Reindeer Romp 5K, Raleigh Rocks Half Marathon, Run For Chance, High Country Challenge, Prince of Wales International Marathon (Alaska), Run for a Reason (Houston, TX), Snail Run Vadnais Heights, Waseca Triathlon, Northern Lakes Run, Rochester Triathlon, Gopher to Badger Half Marathon, Time to Fly, Falls Duathlon, Get Ready to Rock 20 Mile, St. Croix Valley Triathlon, Deadwood Mickelsen Trail Half Marathon, Snickers Marathon Energy Bar Marathon, Albany Georgia Marathon, Running Fit Martian 2011 Invasion of Races, Borgess Run for the Health of It Half Marathon and 5K, Tony's Run Bristol Bay, Country Music Marathon, Rock 'n' Roll Seattle Marathon, Keybank Vermont City Marathon & Relay, Gansett Marathon, Minnkota Challenge 5K, Swan Lake Half Marathon, Waterloo Marathon (Ontario, Canada), Xterra Hawaii, Go! St. Louis Marathon, Fargo Marathon Relay and 5K, Eugene Marathon, Gecko Gallup (Pearl Harbor, Hawaii), High Street Mile, Twisted Ankle Trail Run Marathon, Rails to Trails Half Marathon, Ottawa Kids Marathon, Alexandria Running Festival Half Marathon, Yuma Territorial Marathon & Half Marathon, Cowtown Marathon, T-Con 5K, Bozeman Classic 5K and 10K, Rochester Running Camp, Kentucky Derby Festival Marathon, Bridger Ridge 20.7 Mile Bozeman Montana, Team USA Olympic Shirts, Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon, Manchester City Marathon, St. Patrick's Day 5K Toronto, and the Boston Marathon, Half Marathon, 5K, and 10K!!!!!!

I was able to actually visit Youth Villages on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, and run with a number of the kids at one of their campuses. It was an extraordinarily inspiring day. Lori O'Brien took me on a tour of their Bartlett Campus and their Dogwood Campus. I also met a number of the Running Program mentors and volunteers. The next day (December 3<sup>rd</sup>), I ran the St. Jude Memphis Half Marathon with one of the teens in their program – his first official long distance race of that magnitude. We finished side by side, stride for stride in 1:48:26. In my 37+ years of running, I've never had a more inspiring moment. He was wearing one of the shirts sent for this effort (Run for a Reason, Houston Texas) ☺ Apart from this running shirts effort, I had also wanted to provide some funds for other Running Program needs at Youth Villages, including Race Entry Fees, quality running socks and shoes, running shorts, etc. I did a direct mail fundraising appeal, and 156 people across the country responded with \$11,239.40 that I was able to personally hand to Lori O'Brien at Youth Villages. And so – between your tremendous kindness and generosity to send all these shirts, and these gracious donors to provide this money, the kids in the Youth Villages Running Program are so blessed.

As you can imagine, shirts wear out, and new kids will be entering the program and being inspired to run and keep in shape and set and reach goals, and embrace all of the positive elements from running. More shirts will eventually be needed and will be most welcomed. If any of you have additional shirts you would be willing to send in the future, can I ask you to please send them this time directly to Youth Villages. I know that Lori and her team will be tremendously appreciative, and you can be assured that they are absolutely worthy of your continued support.

Send any quantity, any size(s) of running/race shirts in the future directly to:

**Youth Villages  
Attn: Lori O'Brien  
3320 Brother Blvd., Memphis TN 38133 U.S.A.**



Lori O'Brien, Director of National Development, Youth Villages, Memphis, Tennessee U.S.A.

Thank you, thank you, thank you! I am so utterly humbled by your momentous response to this running shirts effort. \*\*\*Note: The Youth Villages Running Program also gladly receives any left-over Finisher Medals, race bags, etc.

A very Happy and Blessed New Year 2012 to you all. And, may each of your races enjoy GREAT success and increased participation. **Keep inspiring the multitudes in this great sport of RUNNING !!!!!!!**



Sincerely,  
*Bryce*  
Bryce Gaudian

*Thank You  
Alexandre!*  
*X*

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P.S. Enclosed is a page of pictures of some of the shirts that were received. These are some of the most amazing running shirts I've ever seen!! The kids at Youth Villages are encouraged and inspired beyond words!!!

**THANKS AGAIN ☺**