

ICMA 2008 Annual Awards Program
Community Partnership Program Award
Post-News Colorado Colfax Marathon

Metro-area mayors -- Steve Burkholder of Lakewood, Ed Tauer of Aurora, and John Hickenlooper of Denver -- worked diligently together for years to create the Post-News Colorado Colfax Marathon with their dream coming to fruition at the inaugural Marathon in 2006. The marathon is run entirely on Colfax Avenue, one of the longest, continuous streets in the nation. It begins in Aurora, at the Aurora Sports Park, travels past the State Capitol Building in Denver and ends in Lakewood at the Colorado Mills shopping center. The purpose of the Marathon is to produce an annual high-caliber marathon (marathon, half marathon and relay) that contributes to the redevelopment of the Colfax Avenue corridor and promotes health and fitness among youth and adults. The event is organized and managed by The Colfax Marathon Partnership, Inc., which is a Colorado non-profit corporation founded by the cities of Aurora, Denver and Lakewood. All net proceeds from the event go to Colorado Kids, a charity dedicated to preventing obesity and promoting fitness for school-age children.

The primary beneficiaries of these funds are the Aurora, Denver and Jefferson County public school foundations. Jay Gershen, Chair of the Colfax Marathon Board of Directors, commented, "Over the past two years, the Post-News Colorado Colfax Marathon has successfully spotlighted the historic and economic benefits of Colfax Avenue. In addition to conducting a successful race, the event has sparked

enthusiasm from the community and successfully engaged the public schools in promoting health and fitness."

The goal of balancing the eclectic culture, which only exists along Colfax Avenue, with the revitalization of this commercial corridor is a unique challenge the mayors of Aurora, Denver and Lakewood all have in common. The mayors see Colfax as an important piece of the community and feel strongly that the revitalization happening along the corridor deserves to be celebrated and promoted. This mutual goal has been the catalyst of the Post-News Colorado Colfax Marathon. The Marathon has helped to raise money to prevent childhood obesity and bring awareness to the importance of fitness for school-aged children during events such as The Mayor's Appreciation Breakfast, Health and Fitness Expo, Inaugural Colorado Running Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and the unveiling of Colorado Colfax Marathon posters.

The Marathon has grown significantly from 2006's inaugural race. In 2007, events included a full- and half-marathon, relay, Municipal Cup relay, Wheelchair Track and Field USA National Championship, and the Colorado Kids Marathon Milers program. The 2007 Colorado Colfax Marathon not only expanded on several events and programs, but also added brand-new ones.

The Kids Marathon Milers program involves students pledging to run 25.2 miles in the months prior to the race, with the last mile completed at the Colorado Mills

Mall. There were over 2,400 participants in the program in 2006, with 1,200 of those completing the final mile at Colorado Mills. In 2007, the number of participants doubled with over 4,000 elementary and middle school students registered, and more than 1,500 of those finishing their final mile at the Colorado Mills on May 19. Recently, *Running USA* named Colorado Kids Marathon Milers program “Best New Youth Running Program.”

Fifteen men fighting to end homelessness and addiction participated in the Marathon in 2007. These men are all participants of the Denver Rescue Mission’s New Life Program. They ranged in age from 20 – 61, and their stories were as diverse as their ages. All fifteen participants trained and completed the race.

Local spectators included businesses, neighborhood groups, churches, residents, and of course, enthusiastic friends and family members of the brave runners. There were over 1,000 race weekend volunteers that participated to assist participants at several of the events. In addition to those volunteers, the Lakewood and Aurora police departments gathered approximately 300 citizen volunteers to ensure public safety along the marathon course.

The 2008 Post-News Colorado Colfax Marathon is pleased to showcase its charity partners this year. Charity Partners are nonprofit organizations who use the platform of the Colfax Marathon to fundraise for their own unique purposes.

Over 15 Charity Partners are already registered. Some of the Charity Partners Include:

- ✓ The Air Foundation
- ✓ The American Lung Association of Colorado
- ✓ American Transplant Foundation
- ✓ Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods, Inc.
- ✓ Colorado Youth for a Change
- ✓ Denver Kids, Inc.
- ✓ Denver Rescue Mission
- ✓ The Fetal Hope Foundation
- ✓ Freedom Service Dogs, Inc.
- ✓ Jeffco Action Center, Inc.
- ✓ Make-A-Wish –Foundation of Colorado
- ✓ Metro CareRing
- ✓ Prostate Cancer Education Council
- ✓ The Second Wind Fund
- ✓ YMCS of Metro Denver

Along with the Charity Partners Program the Colorado Colfax Marathon has a new course in response to comments from runners in last year's race. The course for the full-marathon will start and finish in Denver's beautiful City Park, and will take walkers, joggers and runners along Colfax through Lakewood, and downtown Denver. The half-marathon will be run east along Colfax to

Fitzsimmons, in Aurora, and back to City Park. The course highlights interesting historic sites along Colfax and, of course, views of the majestic Rocky Mountains. In addition, a one-mile fun run/walk event will be held in conjunction with the marathon on Saturday, May 17, for children in kindergarten through eighth grade. Training programs are available for different age groups that include nutrition and training tips.

For the third year in a row Aurora, Denver, and Lakewood envision a successful community partnership and a wonderful event, May 18,2008.