

CARA CHARITY PARTNER PROGRAM

2025



CARA
CHICAGO AREA RUNNERS ASSOCIATION

Partnering with CARA

CARA annually partners with more than 50 local and national charities to support their marathon based fundraising goals.

When you partner with CARA we go to work to provide your team's runners an incredible marathon experience from training to event day amenities, so you can remain focused on fundraising and recruiting team members.

Partnering with CARA is about more than training opportunities. We expand your recruiting network with exposure to Chicago's largest community of runners. As a partner, you'll receive benefits to reach more runners through in-person and digital activations.

As partners, you can offer the best in class marathon team benefits, so that no matter the size of your team, you can offer the perks runners are looking for when choosing a charity team.

We'll get your runners to the finish line, with the goal of bringing them back for more! The training experience runners have is key in their interest in running again. The CARA experience will help you retain runners as they enjoy an experience that brings them back for marathon after marathon.

FAQ's:

What are the costs?

There are no upfront costs, and you only pay for each runner you register for the program through our "charity-pay" option. Our charity-pay rates are based on a team's total size (details on pg. 4). Charities may also simply offer a discounted rate to their runners for "runner-pay" at no cost to the charity.

Are there team size minimums?

There are no team size minimums. We welcome teams of all sizes. We support charities with fewer than five runners, and team's with several hundred runners.

About CARA

The Chicago Area Runners Association, CARA, is a non-profit organization committed to serving and advocating for the local running community. We are Chicagoland's running club, providing accessible opportunities for all runners to train, race, learn, be social and volunteer.

CARA Facts

- Founded: 1978
- Status: 501c3 Not-For-Profit
- Membership: Over 2,900 members
 - 56% City of Chicago / 44% Suburban Chicago
 - 56% Female / 44% Male
 - 37% Young (Millennial & Younger)
- Engaged:
 - 1,300 Dates of Programs & Events Annually
 - 15,000 Annual Program & Event Attendance
 - 42,000 Volunteer Hours Served Annually By Members
- Connected Community:
 - 27K+ Facebook
 - 9.1K+ Twitter
 - 8.7K+ Instagram
 - 5K+ STRAVA
 - 49K+ E-Mail List

Our 2024 Charity Partners:



CARA Marathon Training Program

CARA runners refer to the "Power of the Group" when they reflect on their experience with CARA. Our program provides the support, community, and accountability your runners need to successfully reach the start line ready to race.

We have long been Chicago's premier group training program, serving newcomers and experienced runners alike. Tens of thousands of runners have trusted CARA to help them successfully complete 26.2. In 2024, CARA trained over 2,700 runners, we are ready to serve your team from their first training run, to marathon day!

Benefits of the CARA Summer Marathon Group Training Program:

- **Training Plan:** Expert designed training plans from Coach and Training Manager James Diamond. With five training plan options (Novice, Novice-II, Intermediate, Advanced, Advanced II, and Run/Walk), Coach Diamond's plans meet your runners at their current fitness level.
- **Locations:** We offer group training at three Chicago locations (Downtown, Lincoln Park, and Montrose), as well as six suburban locations (Darien, Libertyville, Niles, Oak Forest, Schaumburg, and Wheaton). Your team's success is not limited by where your runners live.
- **Group Leaders:** Friendly and knowledgeable group leaders who lead training runs, share their expertise, and who are the foundation of our community.
- **Paces:** Long run pace groups for runners of all levels, including 7:30 to 11:30 pace/per mile run, as well as run/walk paces for 12:00, 12:30, and 13:00.
- **Strength Training:** Weekly video guided marathon strength training plans for all pace groups.
- **Education & Coaching Support:** Weekly e-newsletters provide education targeted to each point in the season. We then get you primed and ready to race with our Final Miles Clinic focusing on getting race ready. Plus, program runners have access to a certified running coach for training questions throughout the season.
- **Ready to Run 20 Miler:** A fully supported 20 miler with thousands of fellow runners, complete with pace leaders, aid stations, medical, and a post-run celebration to remember.
- **PUMA's Marathon VIP Experience:** Indoor amenities near the start line, plus private toilets for CARA runners near the start corrals. Post-run, enjoy a post-race celebration with support from our sponsors!
- **Injury Support:** Your runners have the support of an injury hotline from our partner RUSH Physical Therapy
- **Apparel:** Runners receive a high-quality training tank, and an exclusive finishers shirt after completing the Ready to Run 20 Miler.
- **Online Community:** A private STRAVA community just for CARA training program runners where you can receive training plans, and interact with coaches and fellow runners.

CARA Virtual Program

Your runners come from around the Nation, and the World, and CARA has a virtual program ready to support them where they live.

We offer two virtual program options: Virtual Local and Virtual Out-of-Area

- 18-Training Plan
- Education & Coaching Support
- Ready to Run 20 Miler (included with Local Option Only)
- PUMA's Marathon VIP Experience
- Injury Support
- Online Community

Training Program Fees

When the charity agrees to be invoiced for their team's program registrations (i.e. "Charity Pay Rate"), fees will be as follows:

Level	Participation Total	Group Training Rate	Virtual Local Rate	Virtual Out-of-Area Rate
Diamond	100 or more	\$125.00 (43% Discount)	\$115	\$80
Gold	50 to 99	\$150.00 (31% Discount)	\$115	\$80
Silver	25 to 49	\$160.00 (27% Discount)	\$115	\$80
Bronze	24 or Fewer	\$170.00 (22% Discount)	\$115	\$80

Charity Pay Details and Explanations

- Group training discount is based on the pre-discount public group training rate for new CARA members of \$229. Pre-discount rate for Virtual Local Option is \$155, pre-discount amount for Virtual Out-of-Area Option is \$115.
- Partner level is determined by the charity team's total "charity pay" training program participation in CARA (group training only, all training programs) over the past three seasons.
- Charity partners receive discounted charity-pay rates on a la carte registrations for team runners not enrolled in the training program as follows: Ready to Run 20 Miler: \$55 (Full-Priced Rate \$80), Marathon VIP Experience: \$45 (Full-Priced Rate \$75).
- Charities will be invoiced for fees between October 15 - December 1.
- **Charity partners receive the same discount percentage on all CARA training programs. CARA training takes place year-round with winter half marathon, winter full marathon and spring half marathon training programs.**

Alternative Runner Pay Option

- Charity teams may offer CARA training program registration or a la carte registration to the Ready to Run 20 Miler or Marathon VIP Experience to their team's runners as "runner-pay" where runners pay their own registration fees directly to CARA for a discounted rate of 15% off public rates. This discount may not be combined with any other discount offer.
- Runner Pay Fees are as follows:
 - **Group Training:** \$195.00
 - **Virtual Local:** \$132.00
 - **Virtual Out-of-Area:** \$98.00

Haku Registration Process

1. Charity team coordinators will receive an email invite to access your **Partner Account**. This account will look vary similar to your Chicago Marathon Haku account. Please login using those same credentials.
2. Once logged in, you will see your account dashboard. This will give you a glance at your number of allotted entries, registered participants, and registration activity.
3. Inside the **Allotment** tab, you will find your unique registration link. You can copy the link and share it with the people you want to join your group. You will view essential details such as registration amount, number of allotted entries, registered participants, and last day for participants to register.

Partner Opportunities

CARA will work to help your charity team gain exposure to our community of runners, in an effort to aid in your recruiting and fundraising. Opportunities as follows:

Official CARA Charity Partner

Right to use CARA's primary logo and marks with approval
Right to CARA as the charity's "Official Training Partner"

Charities of the Month

This program highlights 1-3 charity partners every month. Inclusions may be used for any of the following: Team Member Feature, Charity Mission Feature, Team Recruiting Promotion. The Charities of the Month program is on a first come first serve basis. Inclusions will include highlights on CARA's social media pages, in our weekly newsletters, and have their own dedicated e-blast.

Website

Charity will be included on CARA website charity partners page with charity logo, link, charity description/mission, contact info and a listing of all bibs charity has available.

On-Site Activations

Opportunities to activate on-site at CARA programs and events.

- A free booth space, participant newsletter recognition, and PA announcements at event.
 - Must provide **15 volunteers** to receive opportunity at Lakefront 10 Miler & 5K & Ready to Run 20 Miler.
 - Must provide **5 volunteers** to receive opportunity at Toyota Miles Per Hour, Spring Trail Chase, & PUMA's Chi-Town Miles.
- Become the host of one of our on course Cheer Zones
 - Must provide **10 volunteers** to receive opportunity at any of CARA's 2025 events
- 'Go Run: A free booth space and PA announcements on mutually agreed upon program dates. Must be present with table space to qualify for PA announcements. **No volunteer requirement.**
- Enjoy a free booth space at PUMA's Marathon VIP Experience on marathon day! Charities must reserve their booth by Wednesday, October 1, 2025. **No volunteer requirement.**



Power of the Group!

We all know that running is more than running. Running brings people and communities together. This is never more true in Charity Running. When a runner commits to running 26.2 miles they are embarking on a journey of self-fulfillment and personal achievement. When they also decide to use that effort to raise funds for a cause that is important to them, they are making those miles even more meaningful.

Founded in 1978, the Chicago Area Runner's Association (CARA), has been advocating for the running community for over 45 years. CARA is also a non-profit who has been working with other non-profits and community organizations (such as the Women's Sports Foundation, Chicago Park District, Chicago Police Department, and the Illinois Governor's Council on Physical Fitness) to provide access to running throughout Chicagoland.

Additionally, as a fellow non-profit, CARA understood the important role charity running played for our charity partners. We are committed to providing training and a meaningful marathon experience. In 2024, CARA supported over 1,200 charity runners!

Why Train with CARA?

- We have a world-class training program and over 45 years of experience. Hal Higdon developed CARA's training programs. CARA currently employs two sub 3-hour marathoners on the coaching staff.
- We're a non-profit too! We understand the impact charity runners have on your ability to fulfill your mission.
- We are also in the community working along side our charity partners; fulfilling our mission of making running more accessible to underserved neighborhoods through our FREE 'Go Run and Run Crew programs. By working with CARA, you are supporting our mission, too!
- The Power of the Group! CARA's group trainings give your runners an opportunity to connect with and be motivated by others on a similar journey. Our Ready to Run 20-miler is the only completely supported, point-to-point training long run on the lakefront and typically includes over 2000 others in marathon training.





Contact Us
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Our mission is to advocate for the running community, and to provide opportunities for runners to train, race, learn, be social, and volunteer

Founded 1978 - 501c3 Not-For-Profit Organization