

ING Announces Fundraising Campaign to Support Free Running Program for Miami Dade Kids

by Yahoo-Finance

ING Miami Marathon and Half Marathon on Jan. 28 to be stage for fit kids; Orange shoelaces show a community are 'tied' to physical fitness

ING, a global financial services company and title sponsor of marathons worldwide, announced today a new fundraising program to get more people involved in helping Miami Dade kids get and stay fit.

In addition to ING's corporate commitment of \$2 million to support running programs for at least 500,000 kids across the country by 2010, the company announced today plans to raise even more money for school-based running programs for kids in Miami-Dade in conjunction with the ING Miami Marathon and Half Marathon, to take place next Sunday, Jan. 28.

The new fundraising campaign was created to encourage running enthusiasts and the community at large to show their support for kids' fitness. Those who make donations of \$10 or more - online at OrangeLaces.com or at retail locations in Miami during race week - will receive a special pair of orange shoelaces to show they are "tied" to supporting kids' running programs.

ING's corporate donation, plus community support through fundraising, will help sustain the popular school-based running program known as the ING Run for Something Better, which is offered free of charge to all middle schools in Miami Dade County.

"The sport of running helps build stronger bodies and minds, which can help build better communities," said Ricardo Lopez Valencia, ING's senior vice president of Diversity Marketing. "ING is committed to help ensure every child gets a healthy start to life through fitness, and now we want everyone to get involved."

"I encourage everyone in Miami - whether they are running the marathon or cheering - to wear their orange laces as a visible way to show their support for their local kids," said Valencia.

Among those participating in the program in the 2006-2007 school year, 80 Allapattah Middle School students, age 11 to 13, have been inching closer to finishing a full marathon. Each week for 15 weeks, the students ran about 1.5 miles and will cross the ING Miami Marathon finish line in their "Final Mile" alongside professional athletes and nearly 12,000 runners on race day, Jan. 28. To commend their effort, 2004 Olympic silver medallist Lauryn Williams participated in a pep rally with the students this morning.

In today's world of poor nutrition and less active lifestyles - concerns that may contribute to childhood obesity - ING is using its position as a sponsor of marathons worldwide as a platform for helping more kids get fit through running.

ING Run for Something Better, funded by ING and managed by the FIT MIAMI Foundation, in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, was kicked-off in August 2005. The program is part of ING's commitment to the ING Miami Marathon and the community of south Florida. It allows Miami-Dade County Public Schools to create a strong focus on physical activity and healthy lifestyles while supporting the physical education curriculum already established in the schools. The program encourages children to lead active and healthy lifestyles while engaging them in a goal-oriented program.

NOTE: The orange laces will be used to fund youth fitness programs in select markets. The amount of an individual's contribution is tax deductible, less the cost of the merchandise, valued at \$1. Funds will be managed and allocated by the ING Foundation.

ABOUT ING

ING is a global financial institution of Dutch origin offering banking, insurance and asset management to over 60 million private, corporate and institutional clients in more than 50 countries. With a diverse workforce of over 115,000 people, ING comprises a broad spectrum of prominent companies that increasingly serve their clients under the ING brand.

In the U.S., the ING family of companies offer a comprehensive array of financial services to retail and institutional clients which include life insurance, retirement plans, mutual funds, managed accounts, alternative investments, direct banking, institutional investment management, annuities, employee benefits, financial planning, and reinsurance. ING holds top-tier rankings in key U.S. markets and serves over 14 million customers across the nation. For more information, visit www.ing.com

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