



## Collegiate Running Association welcoming over 450 college students to inaugural Half Marathon road race championship

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**November 18, 2015 - NORFOLK, VA** – The [Collegiate Running Association](#) is set to welcome over 450 college students representing over 20 states to its inaugural Half Marathon road race championship in Norfolk, VA on November 22, 2015. The race, which will be held as part of the [Blue Moon Harbor Lights Half Marathon](#) hosted by [J&A Racing](#), has more than 2,500 total registrants set to run through historic downtown Norfolk and along the majestic Hampton Roads Harbor. A \$10,000 prize purse will be paid to the top ten men's and women's collegiate finishers, making this the first Half Marathon to reserve prize money specifically for college students. The race will begin at 7:30am and conclude with a post-race party from 8:30am – 1:00pm.

"We are thrilled to bring our first Half Marathon road race championship to Norfolk, VA," said CRA co-founder Jon Molz. "Since the creation of the CRA just over two years ago, many college students have reached out to us requesting a Half Marathon championship. It's an incredibly popular distance to race, both for elite athletes and novice runners looking for a bucket list challenge. J&A Racing and the Blue Moon Harbor Lights Half Marathon have given us tremendous support and we are confident this will be a memorable race weekend for all of our competitors."

"We are extremely excited and honored that the Blue Moon Harbor Lights Half Marathon has been recognized by such an incredible organization as a perfect fit for the first Collegiate Running Association National Half Marathon Championship", said Race Director, Jerry Frostick. "We look forward to welcoming collegiate runners and other student athletes from across the country to experience our vibrant and historic City of Norfolk."

The elite men's race should be a deep and competitive one, as ten men have run under 30:45 for 10k within the last year. Leading entrants include Brandon Lord (64:00 ½ Marathon), Will Christian (65:10 ½ Marathon), Andrew Benford (65:35 ½ Marathon), and Samuel Mueller (66:19 ½ Marathon). On the women's side, Julie Patterson (1:18 ½ Marathon), Bethany Satchleben (16:21 5k, 33:22 10k) and Sarahbeth Jones (16:53 5k) are likely to compete for the top spot on Sunday morning.

"The elite fields have shaped up nicely over the last few weeks and we expect another extremely competitive CRA championship race," said CRA co-founder Steve Taylor. "In addition to high quality athletes, we are also proud to be bringing in great students – both at the undergraduate and graduate level. These are truly some of the top student-athletes in the country; they are lifelong learners and runners and we are glad they are traveling to compete in this championship race, which was created with them in mind. To see athletes coming from Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Texas and elsewhere shows that the CRA is continuing to grow

and by partnering with great events like the Harbor Lights Half Marathon, we know the future will remain bright.”

In addition to the Half Marathon on Sunday morning, the weekend will be filled with exciting events over a three day span in Norfolk. The event kicks off on Friday, November 20 with a Sports & Fitness Expo at the Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center; Saturday, November 21 features the Chartway 5k and Kids Final Mile hosted by Bon Secours In Motion, and will also have a CRA Elite Runner Forum at 3:00pm at the expo; Sunday, November 22 will conclude with the Half Marathon and post-race party. The events also coincide with the 31st Annual Grand Illumination Parade produced by the Downtown Norfolk Council

***Leading college men’s entries as of 11/17/15 are:***

**Andrew Benford** (*Team Run Flagstaff / Under Armour; Coconino Community College, Flagstaff, Arizona*) – Former NCAA D-I All-American for the University of Richmond. Multiple-time Team USA representative in road racing and mountain running. (8:39 3k Steeple, 13:55 5000m, 65:35 ½ marathon)

**Cody Brown** (*Stephen F. Austin University, Texas*) – Undergraduate student majoring in Kinesiology. Aspiring to join the US Marine Corps after college and also pursue professional bull riding. (14:38 5k; 30:20 10k)

**Will Christian** (*Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia*) – Pursuing his ME in Environmental Engineering. Has competed on four World US Military teams in his career. Was the 2004 ACC Champion in the 5000m and has also placed in two CRA championship events. Aspiring to qualify for the Olympic Trials in the Marathon. (14:24 5k, 65:10 ½ Marathon, 2:19 Marathon)

**Ryan Hagen** (*Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, Virginia*) – Studying to be a Doctor of Physical Therapy. Completed undergrad at Virginia Tech. Has great range from the Mile to the ½ Marathon. (4:02 Mile, 14:25 5k)

**Brandon Lord** (*University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia*) – Currently enrolled in the McIntire School of Commerce at UVA. Lord was a three-time NCAA Division I All-American and the 2014 SEC 10k champion for the University of Georgia. (13:43 5k, 29:09 10k, 63:59 ½ Marathon)

**Colby Mehmen** (*Stephen F. Austin University, Texas*) – Undergraduate student and 2015 Southland Conference 10k runner-up. (30:22 10k)

**Samuel Mueller** (*Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama*) – Currently enrolled in the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine. Won the 2015 Great Race 10k in Pittsburgh, PA. Aiming to qualify for the Olympic Trials in the Marathon. (14:24 5k, 29:49 10k, 66:19 ½ Marathon)

*Additional entries include:* **Ryan Foster** (Longwood University, VA and J&A Racing Ambassador – 1:10 ½ Marathon); **Matthew McKenna** (University of Richmond, VA; 30:38 10k); **Faris Sakallah** (William and Mary, VA; 30:48 10k); **Trevor Sleight** (William and Mary, VA; 14:22 5k and 30:40 10k); **Alex Wolf-Root** (CU Boulder, CO; 30:45 10k and 69:44 ½ Marathon); **Johnny Hogue** (University of Richmond, VA); **Alex Lucking** (University of Richmond, VA); **Ryan McGorty** (William and Mary, VA).

**Leading college women's entries as of 11/17/15 are:**

**Julie Patterson** (*Maverick Multisport, Endorphin Fitness; Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond Virginia*) - University of Richmond school record holder in the 10,000m, a standout triathlete that placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 2011 US Collegiate National Triathlon championship and was a member of the USA gold medal winning triathlon team at the 2012 World University Games in Taiwan. Currently pursuing her PharmD/PhD in Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Science at VCU. (34:50 10,000m, 1:18 ½ Marathon)

**Sarahbeth Jones** (*New Balance Richmond; Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia*) – Currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Strategic Public Relations. Holds 11 school records at Augustana College where she completed her undergraduate studies. (4:29 1500m, 16:53 5k, 1:22 ½ Marathon)

**Bethany Satchleben (Fairfax, Virginia)** - Former undergraduate standout for George Mason University, where she was a three time NCAA qualifier and multiple time Atlantic 10 Conference Champion. Placed 2nd at the 2015 CRA 1/4 Marathon Trail Championships in Indianapolis. (16:21 5k, 33:22 10,000m, 1:21 1/2 Marathon)

**Molly Applegate** (*William and Mary*) – Undergraduate student pursuing a degree in Kinesiology. Half Marathon debut. (17:26 5k)

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