

Non-Profit Spotlight

Via College Cup Challenge

Professional hockey has the Stanley Cup, football has the Lombardi Trophy, and now the Lehigh Valley has the Via College Cup. Teams from colleges and universities across the Lehigh Valley will come together to compete on Sunday, September 13 in the College Cup Challenge as part of the Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via (LVHN Marathon).

"Higher education is a major component of this community," said Paul Pierpoint, LVHN Marathon chair person and dean of

Northampton Community College Southside campus.

"With all these great colleges right here in the Lehigh Valley, this was the first time I can imagine for all of them to come together and compete in something that everyone can be competitive in - running and fundraising."

Ten teams have already registered for the Via College Cup Challenge, a new relay team category added this year to the LVHN Marathon. Last year at this time, 700 runners were registered for the race. This year,

more than 1,330 have registered. Registration is open until August 23, 2009.

"We think we'll have ten, possibly eleven schools involved," said Pierpoint. "We're also reaching out to local alumni associations from colleges and universities across the country."

The LVHN Marathon raises money for a great cause, Via of the Lehigh Valley, and community support is vital for the programs provided for children and adults with disabilities said Pierpoint.

"It's also important for



our Lehigh Valley students to learn now that they are a part of something bigger - that their community extends beyond the walls of higher education and it is important to give back and support your community."

"We're looking forward to race day and seeing all the universities in their school colors, showing how important higher education is to our community."

More than 1,650 walkers and runners participated in the 2008 Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via supported by 400 volunteers. This unique event features a five-person Team Relay, full and half marathon, and 5K Walk. The 26.2 mile course starts at Lehigh Valley Hospital - Cedar Crest in Allentown and takes runners through

the Lehigh Parkway to the Lehigh River Canal Towpath continuing through Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton.

The money raised is specifically marked for Via's Community Connections program. Via's Community Connections helps people with disabilities live and connect in the neighborhoods where they live through recreational and volunteer activities. Community Connections strengthens the community by providing opportunities that enrich people's lives, including a summer program for teens with disabilities. Teens participate in job shadowing and career counseling, volunteer activities in a variety of inclusive settings, and a series of recreational and team-building activities.

This unique event features a five-person Team Relay, individual run, Half Marathon and 5K Walk. Registration for runners closes on August 23, 2009. Walker registration continues up to 10am on Sunday, September 13, 2009. Volunteer, register or donate online at www.ViaNet.org. Questions: Via@ViaNet.org or 484-893-5389.

