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## Via of the Lehigh Valley Sharpens Focus On Core Mission Delivery

July 21, 2021 (BETHLEHEM, PA) – Via of the Lehigh Valley announced today that to sharpen focus on its core mission, it will no longer host the Via Marathon or Via All-Star Basketball Classic.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has led us to make difficult decisions to ensure we continue to fulfill our mission of helping people with developmental and intellectual disabilities reach their full potential within new financial and safety constraints,” said Lisa Walkiewicz, President and CEO of Via of the Lehigh Valley. “It is vital that Via devote its resources to providing our life-sustaining services to support the most vulnerable members of our community so that we come out of this pandemic stronger than ever.”

“It requires an enormous commitment of agency resources to plan and execute the Via Marathon and the Via All-Star Basketball Classic,” said Michael Keller, Chair of the Via Events, Inc. Board of Directors.

“With the uncertainty of the last 18 months, we made the difficult decision not to hold the Via Marathon or Via All-Star Classic in 2020 and 2021. After careful consideration and deliberation, we determined that we could no longer devote the extraordinary resources needed to put on these events in the future.”

“We are proud to partner with Via of the Lehigh Valley to ensure that people with developmental and intellectual disabilities live fulfilling lives as vital members of our community,” said Ken Szydlow, Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer of St. Luke’s University Health Network. “We will continue to support this mission and encourage other Via event sponsors to join us.”

“We are so thankful to all of our community partners who shifted their event sponsorships to directly fund our services,” Walkiewicz said. “We truly appreciate all the support of everyone in our community who cares about our mission.”

“This support helps fill the gap between government payments and the true cost of providing our essential services. We hope that other sponsors and supporters of the St. Luke’s Via Marathon and Via All-Star Basketball Classic will take the opportunity to continue their support of our mission by providing direct financial support of our services.”

### About Via of the Lehigh Valley

Serving our community since 1952, Via helps people reach their full potential. Via provides services to 1,250 children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in Lehigh, Northampton, Carbon, Monroe, Bucks and Berks counties. These services include vocational exploration, community employment, educational activities, volunteer and recreational opportunities for teens and adults, and early intervention therapies and inclusive education for young children. Visit [www.ViaNet.org](http://www.ViaNet.org) to learn more about Via’s services and how you can help.

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**Via’s Mission: Helping the people we serve reach their full potential.**

*The official registration and financial information of Via of the Lehigh Valley, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania, 1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*