



Strides for Peace

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Strides for Peace Hosts 7th Annual Race Against Gun Violence - Virtual!
Bringing together an unprecedented 80+ non-profit, academic, arts, health care and civic organizations to raise funds and awareness for community organizations working towards a Chicago where all can thrive.

WHEN: Saturday, September 19 – 26th. Throughout race week, community organizations, businesses, families and individuals will complete their own run or walk and join the RAGV community virtually via a series of interactive online programs.

WHERE: Throughout Chicagoland and more than 27 states! See below for examples of upcoming RAGV-related events happening locally.

THEME: "CHOOSE HOPE" Our community first responders, the people who live and work in communities facing the greatest challenges, relentlessly serve and love their communities no matter the odds. They deserve and need our support and recognition.

WHAT: The 7th Annual Race Against Gun Violence is Chicago's largest athletic event to celebrate hope and support nonprofit organizations working to end community gun violence. More than a "race," RAGV is a dynamic platform to raise awareness about and funds for community organizations working in the intersection of gun violence, Covid-19 and racial inequity. With more than 50 participating nonprofits, leading civic partners from every sector and concerned citizens from throughout Chicago and across the United States, Mexico and Canada, RAGV is on course to break records in participation and fundraising. 100% of donations go directly to nonprofit community organizations.

RAGV-Related Events

Saturday, 9/19, 10:00AM Chicago Police Officers and 50 Youth District Advisory Council members run together for peace in Columbus Park.

Saturday, 9/19, 10:00AM Chicago Adventure Therapy kicks off their team's participation with breakfast and music before they hit the trail in Jackson Park.

Tuesday, 9/22, 4:00PM BUILD Chicago is hosting a neighborhood walk with youth, staff and supporters, ending with festive color bombs and people sharing "Why They Run" in chalk on the sidewalks in Austin.

Wednesday, 9/23 TENTATIVE Chicago Red Stars join the Race Against Violence and dedicate their practice to the cause of ending gun violence in their beloved city.

Saturday, 9/26, 10:00AM New Life Centers' Running Forward youth team will cap off a 200-mile summer running challenge with a 5k race through Little Village, modeling how to stay positive even in the midst of a pandemic! And members of the Chicago Bulls Community Relations team are meeting to run together along the lakefront trail.

RAGV Attracting Support from Across the Country

History Teacher and Father in Cleveland raises over \$1,000 for RAGV. When his own race to raise scholarships for young African American men was cancelled, Aaron Jeter was looking for something positive to do. He found RAGV and used its peer-to-peer fundraising platform to tap into his network to generate support for peace in Chicago.

Team Boston Being 900 miles away hasn't stopped Boston residents from running for a Chicago where all can thrive. The team captain, Ayesha Dholakia, tells us: "I run for the lives lost in my hometown of Sandy Hook, CT, I run for the community I built while in school in Chicago, and I run for the millions of people affected by violence every day."

Live Stream Choose Hope Celebration

Saturday, 9/26 6-7:30 PM: Strides for Peace Founder as well as Executive Director, plus remarks from the mayor, community leaders, musical performances from the Notes for Peace, a partnership between the Negaunee Music Institute of the Chicago Symphony and survivor group Purpose Over Pain, and 92.3 Radio Personality Hot Rod.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- **HOST COMMITTEE:** Roseanna Ander/University of Chicago Crime Lab; Tom Dart/Cook County Sheriff; Arne Duncan/ Chicago CRED; Hon. Richard Durbin, United States Senate; Kimberly Foxx/Cook County State's Attorney; Deborah Gorman-Smith, UChicago SSA and Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention; Jack Lavin, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce; Hon. Lori Lightfoot/City of Chicago; Jonathan McCormick/Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO; Tareef Michael/WuTang Foundation; Andrea Zopp, World Business Chicago
- **CHOOSE HOPE:** This mini-film series transports viewers to communities on the frontlines of the crisis, providing a window into what is happening on the ground NOW and introducing the hidden heroes who, through their actions, choose hope, no matter the odds.
- **WHY I RUN:** RAGV has always been a metaphor for what drives and inspires people in the fight against gun violence, and this engagement campaign gives voice to a wide spectrum of individuals impacted by gun violence. Highlighting personal perspectives in [videos](#) and with the [written word](#), these voices are our inspiration.
- **COMMUNITY BENEFITS:** Community organizations receive a range of benefits: inclusion in the race fundraising platform, capacity-building support, and direct financial support to ensure community members can participate at no cost and more.

WHY: Gun violence, Covid-19, and racial injustice and inequities are disproportionately impacting the very communities our Race Against Gun Violence (RAGV) was created to serve.

- More than ever, people want to help, to connect to the organizations working to save lives in our city.
- More than ever, community organizations need funds, unrestricted and immediate, to respond to the great and evolving needs.
- More than ever, our city needs a platform to bring people together, to focus on sharing the challenge and witnessing the work of the hidden heroes who give us reason to choose hope.

Our city is hurting and we truly believe we need to give people something positive to DO after they read the headlines, to connect and contribute, by joining the Race Against Gun Violence.

About Strides for Peace Founded in 2014, Strides for Peace is dedicated to increasing collective impact of nonprofits working to end gun violence and create a stronger Chicago. To that end, we work to empower existing community organizations, promote collaboration and elevate solution-driven dialogue of those on the front lines of ending gun violence. We believe all of Chicagoland has a stake in ending gun violence and that by working together, we change more than the narrative of our city — we save lives.



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