

Beat: Sports

## **NON-PROFIT CHAMPION OF ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES - ACHILLES - EXPANDS TO CUBA**

### **EMPOWERING ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES**

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**USPA NEWS** - Achilles International, a global non-profit that has been empowering athletes with disabilities since 1983, today announced it has expanded to Cuba and is in the process of opening a chapter in that country's capital city, Havana....

Achilles International, a global non-profit that has been empowering athletes with disabilities since 1983, today announced it has expanded to Cuba and is in the process of opening a chapter in that country's capital city, Havana.

Aided by the U.S. government's removal of constraints on travel by American citizens to the once forbidden island, Achilles president and founder, Dr. Richard (Dick) Traum competed in the 2015 Havana Marathon on Sunday, November 15th. Joining Dr. Traum in Havana were Achilles board member, Chloe Malle; long-time Achilles volunteer and guide, Robert Russo; and Achilles director of international chapters, Gerle Shagdar. Malle and Russo guided disabled runners from Cuba.

In 2015, Dr. Traum competed in his 25th New York City Marathon following open heart surgery earlier in the year. Dr. Traum is no stranger to overcoming adversity. On Memorial Day in 1965 he lost his right leg in an accident when he stopped to refuel his car at a service area along the New Jersey Turnpike. In 1976, Traum was the first above-the-knee amputee to complete a marathon on a prosthesis, and a short time later founded Achilles in New York City to help others with disabilities compete in marathons and other long distance races.

Achilles International is a worldwide not-for-profit organization that encourages all people with disabilities to participate in running events and other athletic activities alongside the general able-bodied public. Achilles has expanded to chapters in 15 major U.S. cities and 42 countries, including Canada, Japan, Ecuador, Mongolia, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, and most recently Cuba, to name just a few.

The Achilles Kids Program provides an opportunity for achievement and recognition to over 10,000 underserved children with disabilities at hundreds of public and private schools in NYC and throughout the nation. In association with the Friedman Diabetes Institute, Achilles staff and volunteers offer training, support and encouragement to people with disabilities related to diabetes.

Membership in Achilles International is free and includes race entry, coaching, workouts, team tee shirts and the organization's digital newsletter, 'The Achilles Heel'

Source : Achilles International

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