

## Meet the Nike+ Pace Team



The people behind the large, red "lollipop" signs in Grant Park pace thousands of runners across the finish line each year. Instead of running 26.2 miles with own, personal goals in mind, they run with your goals in mind. They commit their race to helping people they have never met -- runners from around the world-- finish the marathon somewhere between 3:00 and 5:45.

### 3:00

#### **Keith Browning**

Keith was born in California, but currently resides in Lisle, IL. He is a veteran of 56 marathons (and counting!) and has a PR of 2:40:15. He has a series of goal times he'd like to reach personally, and at the same time wants to encourage and pace others to reach their goals. Keith's favorite quote: "I hammered up the trail passing rocks and trees as if they were standing still"

### 3:05

#### **James Grosse**

James has been running since he was 14 years old. He started running like most guys do...because he had a crush on a girl who was on the Cross Country team. He ran for Hope College (Holland, MI) and continues to run competitively. He has run 6 marathons, 3 of those being the Chicago Marathon. James suggests surrounding yourself with people who can keep you honest and accountable and believes training partners are priceless! Fun Fact: He was the paperboy in the Christmas movie Prancer.

## **David Strubbe**

Dave will be pacing the 3:05 group and is very excited to help others achieve a personal best, and hopefully, a Boston Qualifier! He has run 18 marathons, including the Chicago Marathon 9 times, with a personal best of 2:34. Dave has been a member of the Nike Fleet Feet Racing team since 2007 and an active member of the Chicago running community. After the Chicago Marathon he will be racing the Indy Monumental Half Marathon. He also hopes to defend my title as the Fastest Attorney in Chicago at Race Judicata in September.

## **3:10**

### **Matthew Fillips**

Matt has run 20 Marathons total, but the most meaningful to him have been the 4 where he has had an opportunity to lead a friend or pace group and help them reach their goal time. He is looking forward to doing the same for the 3:10 pace group this year!

### **Eric Fry**

Eric will be leading one of the 3:10 Nike Pace Team groups and is excited to help the group reach its goal. Eric is a veteran of 10 marathons, including 3 Boston's, 1 Chicago and countless half marathons. Eric has paced a number of full and half marathons over the years. It has been a highlight of his running experience to help others reach their goals in these pace groups. Eric has 5 years of experience as a high school coach and likes to help his corporate challenge teammates.

### **Rick Garey**

Running and racing have played a major role in Rick's life; setting and achieving goals in HS and college provided much confidence and opened many doors. Rick took a long hiatus from racing after college, but then realized the #1 reason he loved running and racing was due to the friendships that it provides. The camaraderie that accompanies running is like no other. Rick enjoys running with others to exchange stories of success, struggles, and goals. Rick has been pacing for a several years now and knows that having someone beside you to run and pace with provides much needed motivation and will push you to achieve your goals through smart pacing. Rick has run 8 marathons with a Marathon PR of 2:48 set in Chicago.

### **Kenny Miller**

Kenny began running in high school, competing in both cross-country and track, as an alternative to playing football and has been a runner ever since. After college, Kenny began running again to stay active, and to get in better shape. He has run over 170 races to date, including 34 marathons (PR of 2:52), and over 75 half marathons (PR of 1:20). Kenny believes the biggest mistake people can make is starting off too fast. Through his high energy and motivation, Kenny is confident he can help his group achieve their goal time.

What does he enjoy about running? Helping people in reaching their goals, being active, and the camaraderie and atmosphere in the running community. Also, running allows him to eat lots of Peanut M&Ms without too much guilt.

### **Ryan Perrich**

Ryan loves to run and inspire others. Long, short, fast, slow, ripping through trails or pounding the pavement. As an athlete, he continually trains to push the limits of performance potential and complete a variety of goals to inspire others to experience what can be accomplished on two feet. He is a military kid and former soccer player turned competitive runner. Ryan has done numerous races and is an elite

runner in Colorado with regular podium and age group wins. He is passionate about racing and community involvement. He also loves motivating others. He partners with athletes in tandem, and regularly paces marathons to help others meet their goals. Ryan holds a PR of 2:49 from the 2013 Boston Marathon.

### **Matt Smith**

Matt has run 2:23 at Chicago trying to Qualify for the Men's Olympic Trials and recently competed in the 2015 ITU World Triathlon Championships held in Chicago. He has completed this event 13 times and loves coming back for the thrill of running through the streets of Chicago with 40,000+ runners! This will be his 21st marathon. He invites you to jump in the group and ride the train to your PR or BQ!

## **3:15**

### **Scott Brown**

Scott is a veteran of 16 marathons and has a PR of 2:54. He has completed marathons in seven different states and ran the Boston Marathon in a time of 3:11. He has been a pace leader for three marathons including the 2014 Bank of America Chicago Marathon. At each of the marathons he has paced, Scott has finished within 1 minute of his assigned time.

### **Shawn Palandri**

Shawn officially caught the running bug in the summer of 2008 after a friend duped him into training for the Omaha Marathon. As it turns out, Shawn joyfully crossed the marathon finish line with all body parts intact, and after experiencing the camaraderie and celebration that awaits all marathon finishers, there was only one thing left to do: sign up for another! Since then, Shawn has run over 15 marathons, including Boston five times. In addition to completing many races of varying distances, both on road and off, Shawn is also a two-time Ironman. He has paced numerous half and full marathons, so rest assured he will get you to pay dirt!! Each time he utilized the proven SmartPace strategy to get the group across with time to spare! If you are a part of Shawn's pace group, you can expect a day of fun, laughter, lots witty banter, positivity, and achieving your goal!

## **3:20**

### **Mirek Mateju**

Mirek has completed 29 marathons, including 7 Chicago Marathons. He has a PR of 2:56:17 from the Boston Marathon. Mirek doesn't follow a specific training plan, but instead runs to have fun!

## **3:30**

### **John Sabatine**

John is from Tucson, Arizona and is pacing the 3:30 group. He is a member of the Marathon Maniacs and 50sub4 Marathon Club. This will be his first time pacing at Chicago, but he has completed 40 marathons in the last 6 years, including 12 as an official pace leader. His favorite quote comes from Henry Ford: "Whether you think you can do something, or think you cannot do something, you are probably correct."

## 3:35

### **Mike Cozza**

This is Mike's second time pacing the Bank of America Chicago Marathon and his 3rd time running the race. He ran a 2:56 here in 2013, and is local (he lives near mile 25), so he knows the course pretty well. He will keep you entertained and motivated, or you can tell him to keep quiet! Mike is here to help you achieve your marathon goals. His craziest run would be Running of the Bulls in Pamplona, Spain. Ask him about it on the course!

### **Travis Else**

This year will be the fifth Bank of America Chicago Marathon for Travis and his fourth as a Nike Pace Team member. He has also run the Wisconsin Marathon twice, Grandma's Marathon, Ironman Florida, Ironman Wisconsin, and many olympic-distance to half-Ironman distance triathlons.

### **John Nguyen**

John has run the Bank of America Chicago Marathon 4 times and completed about 15 total marathons. His father passed away 2 days after watching him finish his first half ironman. He fought cancer for 8 years when the doctors gave him 6 months to live. He was the real survivor and true champion. John had the volunteers place the finisher's medal on his father. His father taught him to chase his dream while helping people accomplish their dreams. His motivation for every race he runs, 5k to marathon to ironman, is to see his dad at the finish line. He became a pacer to help people chase their dream.

## 3:40

### **Adam Brouch**

Adam has completed 20 marathons and one 50-mile ultramarathon. He has been a pace leader for 10 marathons, including his first Bank of America Chicago Marathon in 2014 and has a PR of 3:04:14.

He loves pacing because it gives him a chance to meet new runners from all across the country. More importantly, he loves being able to help runners to achieve their goals, whether it be running a PR or qualifying for Boston.

### **Bill Sanders**

Bill has run over 118 marathons and paced 78 marathons. He loves to run to be spiritual, social, and sane. He finds pacing deeply rewarding since he can help others achieve their dreams.

## 3:45

### **Joseph Alagna**

Joseph has completed 18 of the past 19 Chicago Marathons.....skipping 2008 after running the Boston marathon. The 2015 Bank of America Chicago marathon will mark his 16th year as a part of the pace team.

Over the years Joseph has developed his own training plan which incorporates more strength training and a reduced number of running days. He believes it is important for a runner to find what works best for them individually over time and recommends incorporating some type of weight training with marathon training. His motto now is more about Quality vs. Quantity.

## 3:50

### **Bill Beshilas**

Bill has run 15 marathons, 9 of them Chicago and the last 3 as a Nike+ Pace Team member. He has been a CARA 9 min pace group leader for 12 years. Bill believes even splits are the only way to run a race and that is how he paces.

### **Jill Czarnik**

Running her 10th consecutive Chicago Marathon wouldn't be complete if it wasn't something extra special. Jill Since 2008, she has had the privilege to run in the Chicago Marathon team competition for the Nike / Fleet Feet Racing Team. This year, there isn't a competition for her, but a rewarding challenge to make those around her succeed.

### **Rick Ganzi**

Dr. Rick ran has run 104 marathons - including the last 14 Boston Marathons! Over the years he has figured out that with proper training, pacing, and smart race day decisions, mile 26 can actually be a very pleasant experience. He has paced lots of runners over the years at a wide range of different paces, and he loves doing it. This will be his ninth consecutive year of leading the 3:50 pace team at Chicago.

Dr. Rick has been the pace team director for the last 12 years at the Grand Rapids Marathon. His marathon PR is 2:50:44, and he has broken three hours in the marathon nine times, all since turning 40. He recently ran his fastest marathon in seven years, finishing the Bayshore Marathon in 2:57:11 in May of 2015, his first time under three hours since turning 50!

### **Wayne Miller**

Wayne has completed 10 marathons, including 5 in Chicago. He lives at the northernmost point of the race (around mile 7) and gets a great boost running past his home.

### **Matt Zaute**

A lifelong runner, Matt ran his first marathon in Chicago in 2002 and has been devoted to the sport since. This fall will be Matt's 8th Chicago marathon and 4th time as a 3:50 pacer. Having lived and worked throughout Chicago, Matt is intimately familiar with the course and will work diligently to keep his pace group focused and relaxed. Matt is committed to running consistent splits (no fade or negatives) and will do his best to act as a running metronome! While he attributes Big Sur as the most scenic and Boston as the most stirring, the Bank of America Chicago Marathon is his favorite.

## **3:55**

### **Eric Hendrickson**

Eric is returning for the 13th consecutive time as a Nike Pace Team leader this year. He has completed 37 marathons and logged over 30,000 miles of running in the past 15 years. Running keeps him fit for other hobbies including downhill skiing and bicycling. Finishing at goal time or under is priority one for Eric - with plenty of storytelling along the way!

### **Tricia Ruby**

This will be Tricia's 8th year pacing, her 32nd marathon, and hands down her favorite race to run! Chicago has such energy and excitement that she gets the chills every time she's here. She was a one and done marathoner in '04, but after crossing that finish line with nothing left to give, she knew she'd be back because that little part in her head that didn't ache felt the accomplishment and success of completing 26.2 miles and it was a feeling like none other!

## **4:00**

### **George Nietert**

George has run over 60 marathons and has completed the Chicago Marathon 16 times. He has paced the Chicago Marathon thirteen times (3:30 to 4:00 groups) and has paced numerous other marathons in the Midwest area. He believes that running is a great way to connect with other fantastic people who are also in search of a healthy lifestyle. Being part of the Nike Pace Team helps him stay connected to running and be motivated by the fact that he is helping others to achieve their goals and enjoy the results of running, too.

When asked for advice, George says, "First of all, start behind your pacers and then finish ahead of them. Don't allow yourself to get overly excited at the start, bring plenty of energy fuel with you and be ready to run a steady consistent pace. Have fun with the others that are running with you!"

### **Kelly Novak**

This will be Kelly's 6th year with the Nike Pace Team at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon. She is a track coach at St. Gilbert School in Grayslake, IL. Sharing her love of running with others is her passion; she looks forward to running with her group this year and motivating them to the finish line!

## **4:10**

### **Kerl LaJeune**

Kerl is a seasoned long distance runner with 23 completed marathons to date along with many half-marathons and short distance races. Since 2000, Kerl has been a pacer for various Chicago Marathon training programs including CARA, I-Runs, Clocktower Runners and most recently CES. For the past 10 years, Kerl has been an official Nike+ Pacer for the Bank of America Chicago Marathon, which has become a rewarding focus of his yearly running activities. His marathon Plans for 2015 include; Chicago (15th straight) in October and the TCS NYC Marathon. Outside of running, Kerl is a practicing Architect and former Professor of Architectural Design.

Kerl's belief is that the culmination of the long training leading up to a race is more significant and rewarding than the actual race itself.

### **Lauren Ortiz**

Lauren is a Chicago local and loves running! She has been running for 35 years. Her first marathon was Chicago in 1989. She didn't run another until 2006 and has run 23 since then. She started pacing for the Chicago Marathon in 2009 and has a great time doing it! She has paced the 3:50, 3:55, 4:00, 4:10, and 4:15 groups. She is obsessed about keeping a steady pace and strives to hit it right-on every mile!

She has run Boston twice and has a PR of 3:36 from the Indy marathon. She became a Marathon Maniac in 2014 when she ran 3 marathons in less than 90 days! Though she gravitates towards running, Lauren has also done 5 triathlons, including one half ironman. She looks forward to helping her group achieve its goal in Chicago and making it a memorable event!

### **Aaron Schneider**

Aaron has finished each of the last 15 Chicago Marathons. Aaron joined the pace team in 2005 and been part of pace teams ranging from 3:45 to 4:15. This year Aaron will be pacing 4:10 for the third year. In his 20's, Aaron was an avid road marathoner often doing more than 15 marathons a year. The Chicago Marathon has always been a favorite of his, and he says that out of all the major marathons that he has completed, the Chicago Marathon is by far the best running event in the country. Over the last decade Aaron has taken up trail running; competing in 50 and 100 mile running events. Aaron has completed 32 ultra distance running events, but still makes time every year to come back to Chicago to be a pace leader for the Chicago Marathon. By far the highlight of his annual running events is helping others achieve their goals at the Chicago Marathon.

### **Eric Smith**

This will be Eric's third year pacing the Chicago Marathon and 28th full marathon. He believes it's a great experience to help participants meet their goal in completing the 26.2 miles by providing words of encouragement and maintaining a consistent pace for the entire race. He would recommend anyone running a marathon for the first time to consider starting with a pace group to ensure the first few miles are run at a pace that is manageable which helps ensure the legs are still strong to push through the last few miles.

### **Steve Vargas**

The 2015 Bank of America Chicago Marathon will be Steve's 36th overall marathon and his 11th time running the Chicago Marathon. He loves running and being a pacer. He finds that the thought of helping people and pushing them to achieve their dream of running a marathon then crossing the finish line to be exhilarating.

## **4:25**

### **Sean Brennan**

Sean began running in 2009 following the death of his father of a heart attack. His doctor told him that if he did not start eating right and exercising, he could be in jeopardy like his dad. In the short period between then and now, he has run 38 marathons and 2 ultra marathons. He has also lost 40 pounds and maintained his weight. Sean will be returning to Chicago in 2015 to run his 5th Chicago Marathon. This will be his fourth year in a row as a member of the Chicago Marathon Nike Pacing Team. "It is an honor to be a part of this elite team of runners. We always have so much fun during the race!" Sean's PR is 3:14:15 set in 2014. He ran Boston on April 20, 2015 for the first time. "I cannot believe how far I have come,

having run my first marathon at over 4:15. I am living proof that anyone can achieve their running goals, if they are willing to put in the time and effort."

## 4:30

### **Jerry Vondruska**

Jerry is a high school health teacher and athletic trainer with a master's degree in Exercise Physiology. He has completed a marathon in all 50 states and has run a total of 104 marathons so far. He has been a pacer for the Chicago Marathon for the last 14 years. He likes to help others run their best and to enjoy all that Chicago has to offer.

## 4:40

### **Marie Bartoletti**

Marie has run over 10 Chicago marathons and over 310 total marathons, pacing over 260 of them. She ran a marathon in every state in two years. Marie is also an ultrarunner: She has run Western States (100 miles) and Badwater (135 miles) and numerous other 100 milers. She has completed 10 Ironman Triathlons, including qualifying for and competing in World Championships in Kona, Hawaii. She is currently 57 and teaches Phys Ed in the Pittsburgh, Pa. area.

### **Kay Drew**

Kay has finished a marathon in every state, running the last a few weeks before her 50th birthday. She still needs a marathon in Africa and Australia to finish the continents. The 2015 Bank of America Chicago Marathon will be her 116th marathon. She has been a pacer at Chicago since 2007 and finds it to be truly rewarding. She enjoys answering questions at the expo is almost as much as running. Her advice to first-time marathoners: The crowd, the music and the atmosphere at the Chicago Marathon starting line get your heart racing and make it very difficult not to start too fast. Stay with your pacers, and you will be smiling at the finish line!

### **Ken Martin**

2015 marks 10 years of running for Ken. The 2005 Chicago Marathon was his first marathon and he's been a pacer since 2007. He has run over thirty marathons, five 50ks, and four 50 milers. While he enjoys running, the biggest thrill for him is training others in distance running and celebrating victories they never believed they could achieve.

## 4:55

### **Jim Ballard**

Jim is a Chicago Native. He started running in 1975 after he served his country in the US Marine Corps and he has been running ever since. Jim will be running his 81st Marathon and 24th Chicago Marathon. He is the 4:55 pacer along with his wife Linda whom he met running 35 years ago. Jim now resides in Chandler, Arizona.

## **Linda Ballard**

Linda began running 37 years ago in 1978. This will be her 81st marathon and 24th Chicago Marathon. She met her husband, Jim Ballard, while running and they have been married for 33 years. She currently lives in Arizona but will always consider Chicago to be home.

## **Paul McLeland**

This year will be Paul's 5th Chicago marathon and 9th marathon overall. It will be his 2nd year as pacer for the 4:55 group. He coaches track and field at West Chicago H.S. and is always grateful for the ability to run.

# **5:00**

## **Tom Moran**

2015 will mark Tom's 20th consecutive time running the Bank of America Chicago Marathon. It will be his 15th time as part of the pace team and his 26th overall marathon. He is the former president of CARA, the Chicago Area Runners Association. Tom met his wife while training for the Chicago Marathon. She still holds the house PR by a minute.

# **5:10**

## **Dave Bintz**

Dave has been a Chicago Pace Team Leader since 1999. In those days, he was leading the 3:50 Team. He considers himself the epitome of the saying "Pace Team Leaders never die - - they just take slower assignments." In the DFW area, he has been coaching marathoners for several years and got the nickname "Colonel Mustard" from when he lead the Dallas Running Club trials in the efficacy of using yellow mustard to treat cramping during a marathon. Dave says, "It works. Take two packets when symptoms occur and repeat as necessary. I will be carrying four mustard packets at this year's marathon."

## **Trisha Palma**

Trisha is excited to be back for the 4th year pacing the 5:10 group. Trisha is a Chicago native and has completed countless running events from the 5k to ultramarathon distance, pacing numerous events in between. Trisha, also known by her fellow pacers as the "cheerleader" of the group, calls the Chicago Marathon her favorite marathon! In true cheerleader spirit, Trisha will ensure a fun race experience by motivating and helping participants reach their 5:10 goal. As an added bonus, Trisha likes to give participants a one of a kind tour of the neighborhoods the race goes through.

# **5:25**

## **Dominic Gagliardi**

Dominic grew up and lives in Hobart, Indiana, just outside of Chicago. Since beginning running around 1999, he's completed close to 50 races of marathon distance or longer, as well as numerous races at other distances. He has been a pacer for numerous marathons and coached several runners completing their first distance races. Dominic really enjoys pacing because he gets to meet so many new runners and share with them his love of this great lifestyle.

## **Tom Perri**

Tom has completed over 1,400 races, including more than 320 marathons. After completing a marathon in all 50 states in 2007, he currently needs three more states for his second time through the 50 states. Tom has paced over 255 events throughout the US and enjoys pacing the marathon distance the best. Tom will be pacing the 5:25 group for his third time this year and will make sure you have some fun while motivating you to succeed in your running goal.

## **5:45**

### **Brian Herro**

Brian has completed 32 marathons and 5 ultra marathons. His first marathon was in Zurich Switzerland. He has been training and coaching in the Chicago area since 2003. Utilizing a run/walk program has helped him stay injury free since 2004.

### **Alice Farmer**

2015 marks Alice's 18th Chicago Marathon and 58th Marathon overall. She has completed three half Ironman races, fourteen 50Ks, one 50 miler, and is currently training for her first full Ironman in Tempe, Arizona (Ironman Arizona) in November.