

Marine Corps Marathon Announces Healthy School Award Winners

Northern Virginia Elementary Schools to receive grant and nutritional snacks from Sodexo

QUANTICO, VA (November 29, 2017) – The Marine Corps Marathon Organization, and its partner Sodexo, are announcing the Healthy School Award winners that include five Northern Virginia elementary schools. Each of the schools has earned the award as the result of their overall student participation at the MCM Kids Run presented by Virginia529. The MCM Kids Run was held Saturday, Oct. 21 in Arlington, VA, the day prior to the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon (MCM).

Claremont Immersion School in Arlington, VA had the largest participation of any school with 332 elementary students completing a mile run with the Marines. Other schools located in the City of Alexandria, VA and in Fairfax County, VA also had significant numbers of students participate in the one mile, just-for-fun MCM Kids Run. These schools included:

James K. Polk Elementary, Alexandria – 327 students
Taylor Elementary, Arlington – 318 students
Lynbrook Elementary, Springfield – 239 students
George Mason Elementary, Alexandria – 223 students

Healthy School Award presentations to occur in January will include a \$1,000 grant for each school from Sodexo, which will also distribute healthy snacks to the student body. For the past eight years, Sodexo has rewarded the schools while also inspiring new generations of runners.

“Sodexo is a company where our teams are dedicated to improving the Quality of Life for people we serve daily across the country. Part of that commitment is a focus on the health and wellness of children,” explained Deborah Roberts, CEO, Sodexo Government, North America. “Sodexo sees an opportunity to fight childhood obesity by helping children to make healthier lifestyle choices, which is why we proudly support the MCM Kids Run, and sponsorship of the annual Healthy School Award.”

Also as part of the Healthy School Award, the National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) will sponsor the “Jump with Jill” live show at each winning school. “Jump with Jill” is the world’s-only Rock ‘n’ Roll nutrition show that uses music and dance to celebrate healthy habits.

“Educating children about developing healthy habits is a major target area for the NWPB, and these education messages focus on eating fruits and vegetables and exercising,” said Stephanie Barlow, Senior Director of Communications at National Watermelon Promotion Board. “The MCM Kids Run allows us to serve kids fresh watermelon after they’ve completed their one-mile run, offering rehydration and replenishment packaged in kids’ favorite fruit – watermelon! Our partnership with ‘Jump with Jill’ takes those healthy eating messages further by teaching lifelong lifestyle choices in the most fun way possible, a live rock show where they get up to dance and sing about Nature’s Candy, Superpower Vegetables and more. It is our honor to bring these shows to the winners of the Healthy School Award.”

*Healthy School Award continued
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The MCM Kids Run included 3,600 kids ages 5 to 12 running one-mile in the North Pentagon parking lot with U.S. Marines cheering and motivating them along the way. Many local schools bring large groups of students to participate. This year, 14 elementary schools in Maryland and Virginia brought 2,081 students to the MCM Kids Run.

MCM Kids Run participants enjoy a full day of festivities that includes Camp Miles, the free interactive health and fitness area geared for kids. The event also featured the National Watermelon Promotion Board's Watermelon Queens who provided fresh watermelon for the kids.

***About the MCM Kids Run:** The MCM Kids Run presented by Virginia529 was held Saturday, Oct. 21 in Arlington, VA. The MCM Kids Run coordinated by the Marine Corps Marathon Organization was sponsored by Sodexo, Silver Diner, NBC4, Navy Federal Credit Union and the National Watermelon Promotion Board. #RunWithTheMarines*

***About Virginia529 College Savings Plan:** Virginia529 makes higher education more accessible and affordable for families and individuals. With more than \$66 billion in assets under management and 2.6 million accounts as of September 30, 2017, Virginia529 is the largest 529 plan available. Three flexible, affordable, tax-advantaged programs—Prepaid529SM, Invest529SM) and CollegeAmerica®—and early commitment scholarship program SOAR Virginia® assist students of any age in reaching their higher education goals. For more information on Virginia529's college savings options, visit Virginia529.com or call 1-888-567-0540 to obtain program materials. These include information on Virginia529 programs, investment objectives, risks, charges, expenses and other important information; read and consider them carefully before investing. All investments are subject to risk, including the possible loss of the money you invest. Virginia529 encourages prospective participants to seek the advice of a professional concerning any financial, tax or legal implications related to opening an account. For residents of states other than Virginia: your state or the beneficiary's state of residence (if different) may sponsor a 529 plan that offers state income tax and other benefits not available to you through Virginia529 College Savings Plan. ©2017 Virginia College Savings Plan. All Rights Reserved.*

***About Sodexo USA:** Sodexo USA is an American business that is part of a global, Fortune 500 company with a presence in 80 countries. Delivering more than 100 services across North America that enhance organizational performance, contribute to local communities and improve quality of life, Sodexo is a leading provider of sustainable, integrated facilities management and food service operations. It employs 123,000 Americans at 12,500 sites across the country and indirectly supports tens of thousands of additional U.S. jobs through its annual purchases of \$9.2 billion in goods and services from small to large American businesses. In support of local communities across the U.S., the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation has contributed close to \$30 million over the past 20 years to help feed children in America impacted by hunger. To learn more about Sodexo, visit SodexoInsights.com and connect with us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/SodexoUSA) and @SodexoUSA on Twitter.*

With more than 40 years of experience working municipal, state, federal and military clients, Sodexo's Government segment and its nearly 3,000 employees improve the Quality of Life for the people it serves at 150 military and U.S. Federal Government locations in 26 states. Headquartered in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, Sodexo provides a variety of integrated food and facilities management solutions and is the nation's largest federal foodservice contractor – serving 45.6 million meals annually with a focus on wellness and nutrition.

***About National Watermelon Promotion Board:** The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB), based in Winter Springs, Florida, was established in 1989 as an agricultural promotion group to promote watermelon in the United States and in various markets abroad. Funded through a self-mandated industry assessment paid by more than 1,500 watermelon producers, handlers and importers, NWPB mission is to increase consumer demand for watermelon through promotion, research and education programs.*

Watermelon is a multivitamin unto itself, with each serving providing an excellent source of Vitamins A and C and a good source of Vitamin B6 with only 80 calories. Watermelon consumption per capita in the United States was an estimated 15.9 pounds in 2016. Watermelon consumption in the United States was approximately 5.1 billion pounds in 2016 according to Agricultural Marketing Service, an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture. The United States exported an additional 348.7 million pounds of watermelon. For additional information, visit www.watermelon.org.

For additional media information, please contact Sandra Osborn-Peters, MCM Communications Coordinator, at 703 784-2357.