



ASLAN Youth Ministries

changing the world, one child at a time...

P.O. Box 270 * Red Bank * NJ * 07701 * (732) 741-7824 * www.aslanyouth.org



June/July 2010

Making Every Step Count

I love running. It requires discipline, sacrifice, and determination. Before I really got into it, I always thought running was an individual sport. You didn't really need anyone else to help you out. You were either physically capable of finishing a run or not. It's all about one's own individual ability, right?

See "Every Step" below...

Every Step continued

Well, yes and no. Let me explain: I recently ran my first marathon. Physically, it was one of the toughest things I ever trained for and accomplished. All winter long I ran countless miles through bitter cold temperatures, blizzards, rain, and wind. Sure, I made the decision to get up early in the morning and run. I made sure I ate right and got a good night sleep. I did all that I could do to prepare for the marathon.

The day of the marathon, however, my perspective on what it takes to run a marathon was broadened. At mile 18, as I struggled to stay focused in the 90 degree heat, all I wanted to do was quit. Stop running, walk to the side of the road and give up. But I didn't. The reason I didn't is simple: my brother.

My oldest brother decided to run the marathon with me. He's

Tutoring for Aslan

I started tutoring for Aslan in the fall of 2008. The young lady I work with was 11 years old then and still very much a child. A year and a half later, she is experiencing the tweens and growing up too fast for my liking. I hate the boys that break her heart, and I smile when I remember the tears of a broken heart because I know and hope

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a much more experienced runner than I am: he's run a marathon before, and he coaches high school cross country.

Even though he could easily have run ahead to finish the race in a more respectable time, he stayed by my side and encouraged me to keep going.

Eventually, my brother and I finished the marathon. It was an exhilarating feeling to make it to the end, and I know now that I couldn't have done it without him!

Thinking back on that day, I am struck by how my experience of running the marathon is similar in many ways to that of the lives of many of the kids in our Aslan programs. Aslan kids are all running in the race of life and there are so many reasons to give up, to stop running, and to walk away from life.

Upcoming Events

[Island Nights Tahiti Escape](#)

Join us **July 17** for an elegant evening of celebration to honor Aslan's 35 years of service!

[Jack Reid Memorial Golf Outing](#)

Join us **September 14** for our annual golf outing at Old Orchard Golf Club!

Visit us on the web for more information: www.aslanyouth.org

Recently, my wife Kat was leading our Bible class program in Long Branch. She was handing out flyers for a local gardening program when a little boy asked her if he could give the flyer to his mommy so they could learn to garden together. Upon hearing Kat say yes, Janai,* a bright eyed six-year-old girl approached her and said she also wanted to take the flyer to her mommy so they could learn to garden together. However, she couldn't take it to her mommy because her mommy was in jail.

Kat found out from one of Aslan's volunteers that every night Janai snuggled in bed wrapped in her mom's jacket so she would remember how she smelled.

Who is going to run alongside this girl and make sure she stays in the race? This is what Aslan is doing every

week. Our staff, along with a wonderful group of volunteers, come alongside girls like Janai and dozens of children just like her to encourage her not to give up, to press on towards the goal, and to continue fighting the good fight. Whether it's a little girl in Long Branch, or a boy in Asbury Park or Red Bank, we come alongside each and every Aslan kid and surround them with the love and encouragement they need to transform life's obstacles into opportunities to push on towards the foot of the cross!

by Doug Eagles

Aslan Tutor continued

for what love awaits her one day. I laugh at her funny accents that she and my husband put on while we cook dinner. I wonder at why she chooses to cut the garlic over folding the laundry when I know how she hates the smell the garlic leaves on her hands. I love introducing her to new foods – we have had our firsts with sweet potato fries, broccoli rabe, kale, cod, Greek gyros and more! She wants to

work at the SPCA when she grows up. We were both bummed when we learned that you have to be over 14 years old to volunteer there. We're Facebook friends. I chime in when I see inappropriate comments, but mostly I just check in to see what she is up to and who she is talking to. It feels good to know that I can keep an "eye" on her.

Oh! Did I forget to mention that we do homework? That is how we met. As a tutor, my role easily morphed into that of a mentor. If my young lady didn't show up for a tutoring session, I would go to her house to see where she was. Sometimes she "forgot it was Tuesday," she would exclaim with headphones on while she continued to sing the song she was listening to. When she was failing math, we worked doubly hard. Thankfully, the subject changed to geometry which was surprisingly easy for her. The grades came up and now neither of us has to do summer school. Phew! Yes, we do get together once a week for homework and sometimes

more, but tutoring has gone beyond the books for us.

My husband has been touched by her as well. Every time she leaves our house, he says how we should have her over more often. He too sees how important it is that our young lady sees a husband and wife sharing the work and play in the house. We both cook. We both clean. We all enjoy food! There is no TV in our house, so we entertain each other with stories or jokes and some limited YouTube videos of good clean fun.

My young lady tutors me as well. She teaches me compassion. She reminds me not to judge. She reminds me how beautiful all children are. I feel angry at the injustices I see stopping her, but then I feel empowered when I can show her some possibilities. I know that my dreams for her are not her dreams. I also know that regardless of where her path in life takes her, she will always have these experiences and memories...and so will I.

by Chris



ASLAN Youth Ministries

Come visit us at our new office in Tower Hill:

255 Harding Road
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Please send any donations to:

Aslan
PO Box 270
Red Bank, NJ 07701

or donate online through our secure PayPal account at www.aslanyouth.org

* We've changed the names of Aslan children to protect their identities.