

## Walker's 2015 *Change Shoes, Change Lives* Run and Walk Raises \$46,000 for Academic and Therapeutic Programs for Children, Youth and Families

*Representative Denise Garlick and NESN hosts Elle Duncan, Adam Pellerin, and Lisa Hillary join more than 550 participants at Needham's DeFazio Park for Walker's sixth annual 5K Run and 1-Mile Walk*



*2015 Change Shoes, Change Lives 5K Run and 1-Mile Walk Top Finishers pose with medals and prizes alongside Susan M. Getman, M.S.W, Walker's President and CEO (left) and volunteer emcee Elle Duncan, host of NESN Live and NESN Sports Today (far right).*

**NEEDHAM, Mass.** – On Sunday, September 13, 2015, Walker, a non-profit leader in special education, behavioral health and residential treatment for children and youth, raised more than \$46,000 at the sixth annual *Change Shoes, Change Lives* 5K Run and Walk. The family-friendly, USA Track and Field certified 5K Run and 1-Mile Walk fundraiser drew more than 550 participants to DeFazio Park in Needham, who enjoyed the race followed by a finish line celebration filled with games, raffles, prizes, a magic show and donated food.

“This year’s *Change Shoes, Change Lives* event is a phenomenal achievement for Walker,” said Susan M. Getman, M.S.W., Walker’s President and CEO. “The groundswell of support from walkers, runners, volunteers, and attendees for our mission is inspiring. We are so grateful for all of the support, advocacy and enthusiasm from our local neighborhood and beyond.”

Representative Denise Garlick, State House Representative from Needham, Dover and Medfield, shared encouraging welcoming remarks before cheering on runners and walkers. Representative Garlick has supported Walker’s *Change Shoes, Change Lives* event since its inception in 2010.

NESN anchor, host and reporter Elle Duncan emceed the fundraising event. In that role, she introduced welcoming speakers, enthusiastically congratulated runners as they crossed the finish line, presented the awards to top 5K Run finishers by age category, and called raffle winners. In addition, NESN on-air personality Adam Pellerin and *NESN Sports Today* anchor/host Lisa Hillary joined more than a dozen NESN volunteers who supported the race as Route Marshals through NESN’s employee volunteer program, *NESN Connects*.

“There are certain causes that instantly move you to your core,” said Elle Duncan, host of *NESN LIVE* and *NESN Sports Today*. “From the moment I was educated on the contributions of Walker I was blown away by not only their dedication, but by the incredible children benefitting from their programs and campuses. Being chosen to help champion their cause in any way is an absolute privilege and I look forward to witnessing, yet again, their continued efforts for children throughout Massachusetts.”

The event attracted 241 runners and 201 walkers, who were supported by more than 85 community volunteers as well as dozens of additional revelers. The fastest female 5K finisher was Walker’s Speech and Language Pathologist Lauren Passier of Holliston, Massachusetts, and the top male 5K runner was Andrew Gardner of Dover, Massachusetts. Top male and female 5K Run finishers, for age categories 12 and under, 13 – 18, 19 – 39, 40 – 59, 60 – 75, and 76 and above, received race medals, Marathon Sports gift certificates and 1-month Boston Sports Club VIP passes. Complete official race results are posted on Cool Runnings and runners can check out their time and rank at: [www.coolrunning.com/results/15/ma/Sep13\\_Walker\\_set1.shtml](http://www.coolrunning.com/results/15/ma/Sep13_Walker_set1.shtml)

“We are so grateful to everyone who worked to ensure the success of our sixth annual *Change Shoes, Change Lives* Run and Walk,” said Amy Perna, Associate Director of Advancement at Walker. “Thank you to our tremendous volunteers including our wonderful event planning committee, our official *NESN Connects* 5K Route Marshals, our guest emcee Elle Duncan of *NESN LIVE* and *NESN Sports Today*, everyone who helped at our finish line celebration, and to all of our sponsors and municipal partners who made this event possible.”

The *Change Shoes, Change Lives* fundraiser was organized by a volunteer committee of local Massachusetts residents including: Kristin Bittinger of Dover, Bridget Bradley of Needham, Julia DeMayo of Needham, Kathy DeMayo of Needham, Morgan Fuller of Needham, Hannah Mecaskey of West Roxbury, Callie McKay of Needham, Sue McKay of Needham, Maureen Neelon of Braintree, Marsha Shorthose of Needham, and Andrea Shorthose of Waltham.

The 5K Run and 1-Mile Walk was followed by a finish line celebration featuring food from Café Fresh Bagel, Bertucci’s, JP Licks, Not Your Average Joe’s, Starbucks, Hazel’s Bakery and Volante Farms, carnival games with prizes and giveaways, and magic with Bonaparté -New England’s Hottest Magician.

Walker is grateful for the Corporate Sponsors who have helped to make the annual *Change Shoes, Change Lives* event a success including: Bank of America, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Needham, Boston Sports Club – West Newton, Brookline Bank, The Carpet Workroom, City Wide Maintenance of Boston, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Needham, Dover Pack 52, Louise Condon Realty, Inc., Fitness Together – Newton Centre, Gretchen’s Kids, Inc., Intex Solutions, Inc., LifeLine Ambulance



Service, Needham Music & Dance, Marathon Sports, McKay Architects, Middlesex Savings Bank, Morgan, Brown & Joy, LLP., Needham Driving School, Nigohsian Carpet & Rug, Norfolk Lodge A.F. & A.M., Dave Peterson Design, Roche Bros., Santander Bank, and Ultimate Software.

**About Walker, Inc.**

Founded in 1961, Walker serves exceptionally vulnerable yet resilient children and youth facing complex social, emotional, behavioral and learning challenges. Walker's effective evidence-based and innovative therapeutic and academic programs positively impact nearly 20,000 children and youth each year throughout Greater Boston, the North and South Shore, as well as in Central Massachusetts. Through campuses in Needham and Watertown, community-based clinical and youth development services, professional seminars, consultations and out-posted Walker staff in public schools, Walker's professionals partner with these children and youth, their families and communities to nurture hope, develop lifelong skills, and build their capacity to be successful in their community. To learn more, please visit us at [WalkerCares.org](http://WalkerCares.org) or [Facebook.com/WalkerCares](https://Facebook.com/WalkerCares).

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