

January 2021 - Heather Lyons-Natt

Congratulations to Heather Lyons-Natt, our January 2021 Volunteer of the Month! Heather has been volunteering with us for five years as a run lead for our in-training programs and as an event day volunteer. We can always count on Heather to support us in many ways. Most recently, Heather has kept us anchored to our mission by reminding us of the importance of helping all runners and walkers including those just starting their journeys, which has led us to bring back our Beginners 5K program. Thank you Heather for your continued support of Atlanta Track Club!

Do you remember your first time volunteering with Atlanta Track Club?

I was a participant in the Half Marathon In-Training Program and a group of us decided to volunteer together for the Thanksgiving packet pickup.

What is your favorite Atlanta Track Club event?

This is a hard one for me. Each event has unique experiences to offer to participants and volunteers. It would probably be a tie between the Atlanta Women's 5K and AJC Peachtree Road Race because they both started my involvement with the Atlanta Track Club. The Atlanta Women's 5K was my first Atlanta Track Club race and caused me to join the In-training program for the AJC Peachtree Road Race because of the killer hills at Chastain Park. Growing up in Atlanta, I always heard about Peachtree and all those crazy people doing a 10K on the 4th of July. Like so many, I signed up as a member to get my guaranteed entry to Peachtree. I tell everyone they have to do at least one AJC Peachtree Road Race because it is a unique race experience and for everyone, no matter your pace.



What is one of your best memories from volunteering at any race?

Volunteering with the Atlanta Track Club has provided so many amazing memories. I love being a run lead for the In-Training programs. We get the opportunity to be part of

other running and walking journeys. My favorite memories are being alongside fellow runners and walkers through the ups and downs of their journey and celebrating all their success. I have been able to share in special moments with my training participants including their 1st 5K, 1st Peachtree, and achieving their goals that they did not think were possible. There is nothing like seeing a training participant who did not believe they could achieve a certain goal and celebrating when they achieved their impossible goal.

With the past year hosting the U.S. Olympic Team Trials Marathon, I was able to do something I rarely get to do. I was able to be a crew chief with my husband Joel, who volunteers as well for the Atlanta Track Club. Normally, we are not at the same volunteer location. He is typically on the race course and I am participating in the race. Our course area for the Olympic Trials included the Olympic Rings. I will never forget helping with the countdown to the lighting of the Olympic Torch and being part of Olympic history while representing the Atlanta Track Club.

What is your favorite thing about volunteering with Atlanta Track Club? What brings you back?

Besides making special memories from volunteering, I have met so many amazing people and made lifelong friendships through my volunteering with the Atlanta Track Club. The experiences made while volunteering with others while being able to help the Atlanta Track Club keep me coming back. So many of us working together to make each event the best one yet.

Do you have a favorite volunteer assignment?

Besides being a run lead and helping others with their journeys, I really love working either packet pickup or in a start wave for races.

Do you do any volunteering in the community beyond Atlanta Track Club?

Volunteering is something I have loved doing. I even met my husband through our involvement in a co-ed service fraternity. I have not been able in the past couple of years to volunteer as much as I would like to outside of the Atlanta Track Club. In the past, I have volunteered at my church, and at the Superbowl when it was held in Atlanta.

How many Atlanta Track Club events do you typically volunteer at during the year?

Over my involvement, I think I have volunteered at almost each event at least one except the All Comers Track and Field meets due to my work schedule.

What do you do for a living?

I work full-time in accounting for a full service general construction contractor.

Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for any new Atlanta Track Club volunteers?

I know how hard it can be to get out of that nice warm bed to get ready as it takes us about 45 mins to get to most events; however, I promise you that it is an amazing experience and you never know truly the impact you can make for one person that day by just being there to help.

Tell us something interesting about yourself - an interesting fact or story that will help us get to know you.

When I joined the Atlanta Track Club, I was worried about being with all of these runners as I am a walker. However, I found an amazing group of fellow walkers. We refer to us our group at the "Party in the Back" and joke that we get the most money out of race entry fees. I am a half-marathoner and have earned my Triple Peach and David Jordan Award as a walker. You will probably find me at most Atlanta Track Club events volunteering ahead of time, saying hello, cheering, and giving hugs (now air hugs) to fellow runners and volunteers along the course, and at the finish line cheering in the last of the final runners and walkers coming in.