

October 2020 - Nicole Lock

Congratulations to Nicole Lock, our October Volunteer of the Month! Nicole's favorite volunteer position is working as a year-round Run Lead for all three training seasons, and she's been with Atlanta Track Club since 2014. Thank you very much for volunteering with Atlanta Track Club!

Do you remember your first time volunteering with Atlanta Track Club, and what brought you back again?

My first time volunteering with Atlanta Track Club was as a Run Lead for the 2014 Women on the Move training program. What brought me back was the joy of seeing so many participants do something they never imagined they could do - finish their first 5K. For many, it was their first time getting active through walking or running. Our first training session was a very cold day with lots of icy patches to navigate on the course. An intimidating first day for first-timers, but they kept coming back, and their determination made me determined to keep coming back as a volunteer to help others reach their goals.

What is your favorite Atlanta Track Club event?

Assuming you mean besides the AJC Peachtree Road race J...The Invesco QQQ Thanksgiving Day Half Marathon. The course is an amazing historic tour of Atlanta - and running 13.1 miles is the perfect way to earn your turkey (and the pie at the finish line!)

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

At the Thanksgiving Half one year, a group of us were under the Olympic Rings just before the finish line cheering for participants. When we would see an In Training participant coming down the course, or when Coach Amy would text us and tell us to be on the lookout for a participant nearing the finish line, we would yell out their names, maybe even join them for a few yards on the course to encourage them, and cheer like crazy. It was such a fun day collectively celebrating accomplishments.



A second memory would, of course, be the 2020 Olympic Team Trials Marathon. I was a part of the men's start wave team. We had a great team with an incredible leader, Enrique Tomas. Working together to get 685 athletes across the start line and watching history in the making will be a memory I will cherish for years to come.

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

My favorite thing about volunteering with Atlanta Track Club is the community that is fostered. I have made many lifelong friends, and their encouragement and accountability are priceless. Especially in this season of social distancing, helping people find ways to connect with others is so important. Virtual In Training has provided that for many people. I'm currently serving as one of the Facebook Moderators for Virtual In Training for Peachtree, and it's been a great tool to remind participants that they do have a community in these uncertain times - that we're in this together, and we'll get through it one mile at a time.

What brings me back...When I first started volunteering as a Run Lead, I thought it was about helping people cross the finish line. But now I realize it's about helping people get to the start line where suddenly that first race/new distance/dream race is now the victory lap because they've put in the work and they know they're ready. That's what keeps me coming back: seeing people stretch themselves - physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually - to be and do more than they ever thought possible, and the privilege of being a part of that journey with them.

What other organizations do you volunteer for and why?

I have volunteered with Atlanta Community Food Bank to help address hunger and food insecurity in our community. While in-person opportunities aren't always possible in a pandemic, we try to support them financially and other ways that we can.

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

Keep coming back. The (ROI) return on investment is incredible. I hope I've had an impact on participants as much as they've had an impact on me.

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

I am a Presbyterian pastor in Atlanta. I've also run 20 half marathons and 6 marathons. Apart from In Training runs, my favorite training run was a run through the tea fields of Kenya while on a mission trip. The altitude there is no joke - 3 miles felt like 10!