



Medford's Lauren Sacco to run Boston Marathon for MBHP

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Medford — Medford resident Lauren Sacco, who serves as Sen. Patricia Jehlen's director of constituent and government services, will run in the Boston Marathon on Monday, April 19 on behalf of the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership. MBHP was given three charity spots in the Marathon by John Hancock Financial Services so runners can raise money to support MBHP's privately funded programs and services.

Sacco's relationship with MBHP began four years ago, when she joined the State Senate staff. She cites prior work experiences with people with disabilities and as a case manager and a job developer, plus her work with Sen. Jehlen, as motivation to support and draw attention to the issue of affordable housing.

"Each of these jobs has shown me that affordable housing is by far the biggest struggle for all people to achieve and maintain," Sacco said. "I am not sure there is a more central problem for people who live in poverty, who are of lower and middle incomes, who have any disabilities, or who are children, elderly or recently unemployed. We could all be at risk of struggling to maintain stable housing. It is that important."

As a Sen. Jehlen staffer, Sacco has referred uncounted constituents to MBHP for assistance, and said she jumped at the chance to be able to lend a hand to MBHP in return.

"Our office has called upon MBHP's resources and expertise on everything from hoarding issues to case management to foreclosures to homelessness prevention," she noted. "They have been so incredibly effective in assisting our constituents despite the excoriating cuts of the economic downturn. I want them to continue this valuable work through these trying times. I am honored to represent an organization that had constantly impressed me with their success on critical matters."

Sacco has been training with co-worker Alayna Van Tassel, who also is running the Marathon for MBHP. Additionally, Sacco runs with the State House Running Club and with family members and friends. While April 19 will mark Sacco's first full marathon, she recently completed a half-marathon and has competed in numerous other races.

Sacco and Van Tassel each set a personal fund-raising goal for MBHP of \$5,000. In addition to their individual fundraising efforts, the two hosted an event in January at a local lounge, conducted a Valentine's Day "BrownieGram" activity, and most recently organized a fund-raiser Flip Cup tournament.

To learn more about and support Sacco, Van Tassel and Team MBHP teammate Jesse Edsell-Vetter, log onto mbhp.org for the link to MBHP's Marathon page and access to the runners' blogs and their online fundraising accounts.