

# News Release

Contact: Beth Wagner, (617) 425-6691

beth.wagner@mbhp.org

April 6, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Van Tassel to run for MBHP and affordable housing**

BOSTON – Alayna Van Tassel never thought she'd be a runner, much less a marathoner – as a child she wore corrective leg braces to help her walk better. But on April 19, she will run 26.2 miles on behalf of the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership.

Van Tassel is running Boston's 114<sup>th</sup> Marathon to raise money for and increase awareness of affordable housing in one of three charity spots donated to MBHP by John Hancock Financial Services.

As Sen. Patricia Jehlen's director of budget and policy, Van Tassel has seen first hand the economy's impact on housing and homelessness.

“Working in the Massachusetts Senate, I have seen all too frequently how easily something unexpected – such as fire, illness or job loss – can quickly lead a family to homelessness,” she said. “It is one of the most devastating effects of our current economy. As budget director, I know that homeless shelters are not the answer to this problem, and they cost more money than homelessness prevention.”

Supporting MBHP can change that paradigm, Van Tassel said.

“I have seen first-hand how MBHP can find stable housing for some of the most difficult cases,” she said. “They work with families who, often through no fault of their own, face foreclosure, eviction and homelessness. I have seen them work miracles. I want to make sure MBHP can continue doing this amazing work!”

As a relative new-comer to the world of running, Van Tassel's year-and-a-half of serious training and race running has landed her spots in several 5K races, a 7.5-mile road race, and two half-marathons. Encouraged by co-worker and fellow Team MBHP marathon runner Lauren Sacco, Van Tassel will take on Boston's famous race with dual purpose.

“I now view running as not only a way to help myself but also a way to help others,” she said. “Running a marathon isn't easy – if it was easy, everyone would do it. It's about hard work, dedication and training. Running 26.2 miles will be a challenge, but knowing I am running to keep a roof over people's heads will help me every step of the way.”

A native of Natick, Van Tassel now lives in Newton and regularly spends early mornings training on parts of the Marathon's route, including the nearby “Heartbreak Hill.”

*everyone deserves a place to call home*



# News Release

Contact: Beth Wagner, (617) 425-6691

[beth.wagner@mbhp.org](mailto:beth.wagner@mbhp.org)

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

To learn more about and support Van Tassel, Sacco and Team MBHP teammate Jesse Edsell-Vetter, log onto [www.mbhp.org](http://www.mbhp.org) for the link to MBHP's Marathon page and easy access to the runners' blogs and their online fund-raising accounts.

\*\*\*\*\*

MBHP is the state's largest regional provider of rental housing voucher assistance. We serve homeless, elderly, disabled, and low- and moderate-income individuals and families. Our region spans Boston and 29 surrounding communities: Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Braintree, Brookline, Burlington, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Lexington, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Newton, North Reading, Quincy, Reading, Revere, Somerville, Stoneham, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Wilmington, Winchester, Winthrop and Woburn.

Our mission is to ensure that the region's low- and moderate-income individuals and families have choice and mobility in finding and retaining decent affordable housing; all of our programs and initiatives are designed to encourage housing stability, increase economic self-sufficiency, and enhance quality of the lives of those we serve. To achieve our mission and to promote efficient service delivery, we work collaboratively with a broad array of service providers and neighborhood-based organizations.

We believe that everyone deserves a place to call home.

For more information, contact MBHP Communications Manager Beth Wagner at (617) 425-6691, or log onto [www.mbhp.org](http://www.mbhp.org).

###

*everyone deserves a place to call home*