



**Team Verge Newsletter**

**[www.teamverge.com](http://www.teamverge.com)**

**Winter 2015-2016**



## **That's a wrap**

Congratulations everyone on all of your accomplishments this year! Thanks for bringing such great spirit to the team!

## **Hello Team VERGE!**

Thank you all for such an awesome 6 months! Since starting this program in June many lives have been changed and friendships formed; physical strength, stamina, and confidence gained; smiles, laughs, a few tears. We've come together as a team and continue to grow and welcome new people. We have 18 active members, 25 who have joined us in total, and there are about 30 other families who have inquired with serious interest. In addition to the Greater Boston West practices, we will be starting practices in the Greater Worcester North area in the spring. In order to support our growth and needs, and develop a fantastic program for everyone, a few parents, coaches, and I have teamed up to form a new organization. We are now Verge Inclusive Athletics, Inc....or Team VERGE. We are nonprofit, and entirely volunteer run. As we move forward in building a quality program, we will be working hard to provide more resources and more opportunities for all!

## Our Mission...and why Verge?

Verge Inclusive Athletics, Inc. is a 501(c)3 (pending) nonprofit recreational and competitive athletic training program that brings people with special needs together with typical peers in endurance running, track and field, wheelchair racing, and walking. Team Verge membership is open to developmentally and intellectually challenged, physically challenged, and typically developing youth and adults, age 6 and older. Family members and friends are welcome and encouraged to join. Our program runs year long, divided into seasons. We participate and compete in mainstream road races, trail races, cross country, and track and field. Team members train in groups and one on one at their ability level under the direction and guidance of volunteer experienced coaches, and are paired with volunteer peer coaches as needed.

Verge Inclusive Athletics, Inc. provides a supportive, educational, fun, and team environment, which inspires and encourages self-belief, discovery, and achievement. Through the fun and challenge of sport, individuals learn social and emotional skills, independence, and gain the confidence and knowledge needed to grow personally and athletically in order to reach their ever-expanding levels of potential.

Verge Inclusive Athletics, Inc. is dedicated to supporting every person's goals whether it is to keep regularly active and social by attending team practices and events, to develop the fitness and skills needed to eventually run for fun or competitively with school teams, or to train as a higher-level competitive athlete.



**VERGE...because we're**

**Busting Barriers.**

**Crossing Thresholds.**

**Making Connections.**

**Expanding Limits.**





## Thank you, Parents!

Parents, you have been amazing. Your dedication, contribution and enthusiasm has made this possible and has given the program a strong foundation from which to grow. It has also shown me the value of family inclusion and I plan to keep this program open to families, not just individuals. We will be working on bringing in volunteers this year to create more opportunities for individuals to spend time with other people and to relieve you running parents so that you may help with other members if you wish, take the day off, or just run for yourselves.

A special thanks to “tall Jack’s” mom, Barbara Jackins, our first parent and volunteer. She was there at the beginning and helped me with the initial outreach. Without her we may not have ended up here. And we wouldn’t have Jack. We love Jack. ☺

## Winter Season

**Winter season starts Sunday, January 10!**

Practices will be held Sundays at 10am, Jan 10-March 20. Our focus through the winter will be on developing strength and skills, and preparing for the outdoor track season and road races. We will also introduce a few field events for those interested.

*Indoor options outside of team practices: Check with your local colleges and town field houses. Many offer open recreational hours to the public or town residents. Harvard has public hours. Lexington field house is open to residents after 7pm (Non-residents pay a \$3 fee). Or hit the treadmill if you have access to one! Our weeknight practice crew would likely suggest an outdoor game of chase.*

Looking ahead: Spring season will start the first weekend of April. We’ll move back outside and return to 3 days a week in the Boston West area. Worcester North, TBD.



## What's next?

- The Board will meet in January to discuss the best ways to approach meeting our goals and realizing the program vision. There will be opportunities for those of you interested to get involved in areas such as outreach, fundraising, social events. More info will come later this winter.
- We will participate in more races this year, giving everyone more opportunities to participate and compete!
- Uniforms! In time for spring season, we will have uniforms for everybody.
- Collaboration with other organizations and experts in order to provide specific resources and education for our members and coaches.
- Bringing in more volunteer help.

## New STORIES section on new website

We will start a blog on the website where families can post stories about their experiences. The idea came up in our preliminary Board meeting. In addition to sharing with your teammates, it would go a long way in showcasing the program to potential members, especially those who are hesitant about joining, as well as to potential donors. I occasionally get pics, videos, stories written at school, etc. It would be fantastic to share these with everyone. The blog is meant to be fun and provide inspiration to others.

If you wish to share, you will be able to post yourself or send to me and I will post for you. If you don't want to share, still continue sending them to me! I love them. ☺

### 2015 MEMBERS (age):

Aidan (6)	Andrew (31)
Jaden (7)	David (13)
Jack M. (31)	Marcus (14)
Jack U. (12)	Max (9)
Neil (14)	Anjan (12)
Tyler (12)	Sachin (12)
Makai (17)	Henry (13)
Tim (9)	Leilah (7)
Will (12)	Annalisse (8)
Karim (6)	Jaquan (7)
Ryan (21)	Kathie (volunteer)
Sophie (10)	





## FINAL NOTE:

Parents,

All season I struggled with the fact that I didn't seem to ever have time to talk with you more about your children. Often times I'd get info from casual conversations Matt had with you on the sidelines. I also wished I could stop at times and focus on individuals more than brief moments, but had to keep rolling with practice. I would very much like to meet with each of you so that we can make this program more productive for each person and create better opportunities for success and growth. Some things will be improved as we get more volunteer help, and we will always be working to improve and change the way we do things as needs change, but I feel that getting to know everyone personally a bit more will go a long way. I had thought to call a parents meeting for a general discussion, but I'd like to meet individually. It will be better for working with your often hectic schedules as well. **I invite each of you to set up a time with me over the winter or before your child starts with us again.** We can meet for coffee, meet at your work, or I can come to your home. Let me know what works for you.



## Verge Inclusive Athletics, Inc.

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## Board of Directors

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