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## FITNESS UNIVERSITY

After a brief hiatus, this year's 12<sup>th</sup> Fitness University Program, has proven once again, that it can only come to fruition with a little help from its friends. As the books close on the end of yet another successful program, all I can say is "thank you!" to each and everyone of the Striders who came out to help at one, or perhaps several of the running clinics held throughout the Spring and Summer months, and also for the help provided at Finals Day on Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> of July. A special thanks goes out to Shaun Scanlon, Steve Moland, Mike Levesque, Chip and Sandy Geisler, as well as Bob Pelletier, Terri Beiter, and Kevin Reynolds for the incredible amount of time and effort spent in contributing to the success of Fitness University 2002. Each one of these people did what they had to do, and did it with sincere conviction, and a genuine desire to be a part of the team. Their level of commitment should not go unnoticed. In today's hurried lifestyle, with parents and adults trying to find an equal balance between career and family, each one of us walks a very



thin and compromising line when venturing into the depths of volunteerism. It's difficult to make the commitment to tackle additional tasks other than the aforementioned. It tends to put people in a rather compromising position when asked to make the commitment to be a volunteer. I understand how that feels, and do not discredit anyone for having elected not to commit. Fitness University is truly an incredible experience to have the privilege of directing. It really is a great way

to give back to the children of the community. As I walked around the field at Pennichuck Jr. High School Sunday morning, I was looking forward to the moment when the Dean of Fitness addressed the crowd of children, parents and grandparents and put the wheels in motion to begin the day's activities. Once the stretching got underway for the "Little Mini Marathon" I found it difficult to peel the smile off my face. It was such an incredible adrenaline rush. As the day progressed, the smile on my face became even more pronounced. A smile that was not only apparent on my face, but on the faces of both Skip Cleaver, and Regina Jacobs as well. Even when the primary power generator failed to continue to provide power, it didn't matter. Even when the secondary power generator ran out of gas, it didn't matter. Even with the last minute elimination of the 4 x 100, and 4x 200 relays, it didn't matter. Fitness University has a pulse and life of its own. It doesn't become affected by anyone or for that matter any thing that may present an obstacle.

I am amazed at the insight displayed by those members of the Striders back in 1989, when Fitness University was still in its infancy stages. I have read of so many articles describing programs launched by other running clubs, as well as members of the running community that have one or several of the components of the Strider's Fitness University program. But to the credit of the Striders, I have not come across one that incorporates all of the components. The Striders have set a standard that has yet to be equaled or surpassed by anyone else. And for that I am proud to have had the privilege and honor of serving as the Director of the Fitness University Program for the past several years, and look forward to doing it again next year!

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the generous support from Southern New Hampshire Medi-

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