As we begin 2020, Achilles International celebrates its history and accomplishments of the past four decades and enthusiastically enters the new one with an eye towards growth.

At Achilles International, our primary focus has always been to bring hope, inspiration and the joys of achievement to all. Since our founding in 1983, we have empowered over 150,000 athletes of all ages and ability levels to participate in endurance events around the globe. This number does not reflect the hundreds of thousands of volunteers, family members and friends who experience the impact of our work through their relationships and their affiliations. In 2019 alone, Achilles reached roughly 15,000 athletes with disabilities around the world including 8,500 children across the United States to whom we brought our Achilles Kids fitness program.

During the past year, we sent delegations to marquee endurance events including marathons in New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Washington D.C., Disney World, Berlin, Tokyo, Medellin, as well as the U.S. Para Triathlon National Championships, among many others. Additionally, over 10,000 athletes participated in Achilles’ own Hope & Possibility® 4 mile races held in locations such as Nashville, New Jersey, Hartford, New York, New Zealand, Germany and Mongolia.

As we transition into the new year and a new era, Achilles occupies a unique position at the intersection of two powerful cultural movements – wellness and inclusion. With these social and cultural winds behind it, Achilles sets its sights on broadening its impact in terms of the number of individuals it serves, the positive outcomes it influences and the awareness it inspires. These objectives will be accomplished through a focus on:

- Partnerships and collaborations that lead to expansion of programs and services
- Development of micro communities through U.S. and international chapter development
- Continued promotion of acceptance of a unified field of athletes in competitive events across the globe
- Thought leadership and advocacy at the local, state and federal levels

In the fall of 2019, Dick Traum retired after guiding Achilles for over three decades. His legacy as the founder and the steward of Achilles remains a critical piece of our history. We extend our deepest gratitude to Dick for building this community, this organization and this movement, all of which have transformed and impacted the lives of so many. He is a true inspiration to us all.

On behalf of the member athletes, volunteers and staff, I want to thank you for your support and your friendship. Armed with both, Achilles enters the new decade poised for transformative growth and impact.

Sincerely,

Emily Glasser
President and CEO
ACHILLES FREEDOM TEAM

For over 15 years, the Achilles Freedom Team has developed a successful national handcycle/running and adaptive sports program for veterans who are wounded, ill, or injured. The Freedom Team has helped with the rehabilitation and recovery of more than 2,000 veterans since its inception in 2004.

In 2019, Achilles hosted 10 Wellness Race Weekends for our Freedom Team athletes, serving 120 unique veterans and their families. Our more experienced athletes participated in marathons in Houston (January), Los Angeles (March), San Diego (June), Detroit (October), NYC (November), Marine Corps Marathon in Washington DC (October), Chicago (October) and Boston (April). The Achilles Hope & Possibility® 4 Mile Race in NYC (June), and the Disney Half Marathon (January), were attended by runners, handcycle, and pushrim racing chair athletes.

Our Freedom Team athletes consistently challenge themselves. One of our members inspired us when he completed the Chicago marathon on his first attempt in a pushrim racing chair. Another Freedom Team member, an above the knee amputee, competed in the first ever Marine Corps 50K, finishing with an average 8:30 mile. Two of our handcycle athletes continue to pave their way to the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo as they reach the podium in competition after competition.

Achilles is honored to serve these men and women who sacrificed so much for their country. The Freedom Team takes pride in setting up our nation’s heroes for a lifetime of success, personal achievement, and optimal health and wellness.

ACHILLES PROGRAMS

TRIACHILLES

2019 was the largest year for TriAchilles to date. The last two races of the season included over 10 new athletes and guides, and new processes were developed for improved training and racing standards for both athletes and guides to ensure a safer and more effective racing environment. Partnerships were expanded with new and existing partners such as Tailwind Endurance and Finish Line PT to provide an expanded offering of training and recovery opportunities to TriAchilles members.

Even when the team hit roadblocks such as the cancelation of the NYC Triathlon, our team rallied by holding our own AWD event at Tailwind where athletes, guides, and charity fundraisers could still ride a virtual NYC Triathlon race course. On the competitive circuit, we had athletes compete at both the national and international level. As successful as the 2019 season was for the team, 2020 is gearing up to be even bigger and better!
ACHILLES PROGRAMS

ACHILLES KIDS

2019 was a very exciting year for Achilles Kids—a free running, walking & “rolling” program for children with disabilities.

Our school-based “Run to Learn” program which began in 1995 in six NYC schools with 75 Achilles Kids, ended the year with chapters in 250 schools in 16 states, reaching 9,000 children with disabilities. In June 2019, almost 9,000 Achilles Kids completed at least 13.1 miles and received half-marathon medals; 7,800 Achilles Kids went the distance by completing at least one marathon and were rewarded with a custom designed marathon finisher medal!

In addition to the medals, Achilles Kids program provides customized certificates for various goal levels (1, 5, 10, 13, 20 & 26.2 miles). We also hold a t-shirt design contest every year and the winning design is proudly worn by thousands of Achilles Kids members.

Team Achilles Kids continues to grow with workouts in Central Park and the JCC. The JCC is a fun and exciting activity-based running program that is structured for any child with a disability, ages three through 21. The Central Park Training program meets two to three times per month to train, build teamwork, and instill life-skills through accountability and goal-setting. Kids participate in mainstream races ranging from one mile to a half-marathon.

At any given workout throughout the year – from the coldest of winter days to the peak of the summer season, 20 to 45 children attend the advanced training workouts. We are especially proud that TEN of our Achilles Kids completed at least one major half-marathon this year and one of our Achilles Kids “graduates” completed his 11th NYC Marathon in November.

With joy, determination, and dedication to running, our Achilles Kids members are inspired to strive for ever bigger goals and in the process, improving their health, fitness, and self-esteem.
DOMESTIC CHAPTERS

St Louis, Tucson, and Northwest Arkansas joined us this year to bring the total chapters in the U.S. to 31. Achilles New Jersey held its first Hope & Possibility race which included a virtual run attended by enthusiasts from as far away as New Zealand. Achilles Nashville sent 35 members -- both athletes and guides -- to the Palm Beaches Marathon where they rocked the neon yellow and were interviewed as a team by local CBS news.

Philly Achilles had a very successful Broad Street 10-miler in May, followed by a road trip to NYC in June for Achilles NYC’s Hope & Possibility®. The chapter traveled north in October to participate in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Half Marathon and capped off the season with the Philadelphia Marathon weekend hosting 20 athletes and 40 guides - both local and from other U.S. chapters.

The most important accomplishment of 2019 is the creation of the Chapters Policy and Procedure Manual which will ultimately strengthen Achilles throughout the United States.

In 2019, the New York City chapter of Achilles saw tremendous growth and continued to gain momentum and structure. In addition to maintaining relationships with our veteran athletes at weekly workouts and races, we were very pleased to welcome in more than a dozen new chapter athletes who are committed to overcoming barriers and achieving new goals.

Based on feedback from athletes, more social events and gatherings were added to the mix and the chapter celebrated as a team after successful events like the NYC Half, Brooklyn Half and Hope & Possibility.

The NYC Marathon saw 60+ area athletes cross the finish line with almost no DNFs — a testament to improved training of athletes by their guides, coaches and chapter directors. After a down year in 2018, the Achilles Team Challenge bounced back raising over $35k for the chapter.
INTERNATIONAL CHAPTERS

We continued developing our International chapters, this year welcoming chapters in Panama, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands to our community bringing us to a total of 51 international chapters in 26 countries with over 2653 members and over 2620 guides and volunteers.

Achilles plays a crucial role in sports diplomacy for people with disabilities around the world, enhances cross-cultural understanding and opens new avenues of dialogue and collaboration between individuals and nations.

This year our team members had a presence in several international marathons including Berlin, London, Budapest, Krakow, Oslo, Auckland, Sydney, Rio De Janeiro, San Paulo, Medellin, Miami.

The Brazilian Chapter was legally registered this year and continued to partner with the Rio de Janeiro marathon. The chapter enabled more than 300 disabled members to complete the race this year.

In Berlin, a team of 46 Achilles members, guides, and charity entrants from 8 countries crossed the finish line in the 2019 marathon.

Achilles kids Mongolia ran programs in 6 schools for children with special needs, and successfully held their 3rd annual Kids "Run for Fun" event in Ulaanbaatar. The President of Mongolia, Khaltmaagiin Battulga, praised the chapter for its tremendous impact in the country’s disability rights at the Hope and Possibility Mongolia opening ceremony in Ulaanbaatar.

Achilles Colombia is an official partner of the Medellin Marathon organizers. More than 250 Achilles members and their guides including seven Freedom Team members crossed the finish line at Medellin races on September 8th. Twenty recently wounded members of the Colombian Police joined Achilles Colombia and completed their first race. Several Achilles Colombia members were beneficiaries of prosthetic donations through the "Prosthetic Project."

Since 2011, Achilles members and volunteers provided used prosthetic parts to build and provide prosthetics to over 250 victims, including 145 people in rural areas.

Chapters continue to communicate with each other to extend their activities. Members of the New Zealand and Japan chapters visited Achilles Australia and completed Sydney marathon as one big team.
The 17th Annual Achilles Hope & Possibility race was held on Sunday, June 23rd, 2019 in Central Park, NYC. The race sold out with 7,730 participants and included more than 3,000 spectators and hundreds of volunteers.

An Achilles RUNtalk was held at the NYRR Run Center to kick off the race weekend. A panel that included Achilles athletes, staff and board members provided insight and information about our programs as participants picked up their bibs for race day.

There were over 405,000 social media impressions and over 6 million hashtag usage impressions linked to this race.

The New York City Marathon

Sponsored by The Moody Endowment, 245 Achilles athletes and 251 guides/support runners participated in the 2019 NYC Marathon.

The Achilles Awards Dinner hosted 400 guests from around the world. U.S. chapters and international chapters met in separate sessions beforehand and mingled during dinner to exchange ideas, experiences and successes from the past year.

Countries represented included: Australia, Canada, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, South Africa and the United States.

Achilles Charity Programs

Our Charity Programs empower runners to participate in the most popular athletic competitions with a guaranteed bib in exchange for raising funds and awareness for Achilles. Currently, we have charity programs for the TCS NYC Marathon, the United Airlines NYC Half, the NYC Triathlon, the Berlin Marathon and the Bank of America Chicago Marathon.

We’ve partnered with the New York Road Runners NYC Marathon Charity Program since 2008. Our Charity Team for the 2019 TCS New York City Marathon raised over $270,000, and the Achilles Charity Team for the United NYC Half, which began in 2016, has had 15 Charity Runners raise over $22,000.

The Achilles Charity Programs help support our members and programs including Achilles Kids, Achilles Hope & Possibility® 4-Miler, Chapter Development in the United States and abroad, and Achilles Freedom Team.
EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Achilles 2019 Gala

On November 20th, 2019, our 29th Achilles Gala Presented by Cigna was held at Cipriani South Street in Manhattan. It was a star-studded historic evening honoring Cigna’s President and CEO, David Cordani as Volunteer of the Year and our Achilles Kid of the Year, Diego "FLASH" Lacayo. Meghan McCain, Co-Host of The View, Achilles Board Member and Celebrity Ambassador, and Deborah Roberts, ABC News Correspondent and mother of Achilles Athlete Nick Roker, were our dynamic co-hosts for the evening.

Basketball legend Magic Johnson delivered a powerful keynote speech and invited the audience to join him in a candid Q & A. Yankees Baseball great, Alex Rodriguez, asked Magic about the key qualities needed to be successful. Academy Award Nominee, Gary Sinise, made a special appearance to introduce David Cordani and acknowledged our Freedom Team athletes, Cedric King, Stefan LeRoy and Matias Ferreira. They each have competed in races with David, and together presented him with the Volunteer of the Year award.

Sotheby’s auctioneer, Kevin Doyle, generated much excitement during the live auction. To close the night, Broadway’s Leading Baritone, Norm Lewis, performed his powerful rendition of “Go the Distance” from Disney’s Hercules. Local Achilles Athletes were hosted at each table and enjoyed a great evening of delicious food and a robust program celebrating Achilles.

Other notable attendees included our Board Chair and Former Governor of New York, David Paterson, football great, Joe Theismann, and former NY Giants running back, Tiki Barber. A special thank you to Cigna for producing our most successful gala to date raising $1.7 million. Also, we thank our Diamond Sponsor - Accenture and Platinum Sponsors - Galaxe Solutions and Salesforce.
OUR IMPACT

357,547 PROGRAMMING HOURS DELIVERED

15,740 ATHLETES SERVED

481 RACES AROUND THE WORLD
Achilles International is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization based in New York, NY. We are governed by a 29-member Board of Directors and are supported by individual contributions, foundation grants, corporate sponsorship, events, and other income. Our most recent audited financial statements and IRS 990 forms can be found on our website. For additional tax and financial information, please contact our Controller Michael Skluth at mskluth@achillesinternational.org.

The numbers above are preliminary and are subject to change upon audit completion. The final audited numbers will be available later in 2020 at Achillesinternational.org.

One-time expenses associated with transition in management are excluded.
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