

North Carolina man runs 750 miles across the Carolinas to raise awareness for autism

Ultra-marathoner completed a marathon a day for 30 days while carrying a 25-pound slam ball on his back

SURFSIDE BEACH, SC, UNITED STATES, May 27, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Nearly one month ago, one North Carolina man began a unique, month-long journey across the Carolinas to raise money and awareness for autism that concluded today in Surfside Beach. The 750-mile journey began in western North Carolina, along the border of the state with Tennessee, when Charlotte resident Richard Sexton kicked off this incredible feat in an effort to raise funds for the South Carolina-based autism awareness organization, [Champion Autism Network \(CAN\)](#). Sexton ran the equivalent of a marathon a day for 30 days while carrying a 25-pound slam ball fondly nicknamed "Slappy" in his rucksack.

Sexton crossed the finish line in Surfside Beach on Wednesday, surrounded by friends, family and those involved in the autism community in the area. On Thursday, he attended a luncheon in his honor where the Mayor of Surfside Beach, Bob Hellyer, gave him a key to the city and proclaimed May 26, 2021 as "Richard Sexton Day."

The ultra-marathon was dubbed [Carolinas CAN Ruck for Autism](#), and moved from Hothouse, N.C., through the mountains of Asheville, across the state to Wilmington and down the coast, ending in Surfside Beach, S.C. near CAN's headquarters. "Slappy" the 25-pound slam ball represented the weight carried every day by individuals and families affected by autism. To date, funds raised have exceeded \$40,000.

Sexton is an experienced ultra-marathoner and endurance athlete who has completed six Iron Man-distance triathlons and run nearly 100 marathons. Inspired by his personal experiences adopting his son from China, as well as his work as an early childhood education substitute teacher, and community volunteer, Sexton, along with his friend and founder of CAN, Becky Large, created the fundraiser to help support individuals and families living with autism in the Carolinas.

"I'm so inspired by these children and families and the daily challenges they face - and overcome. There were days when I wanted to give up, when the physical and mental toll on my body was so great that it was hard for me to see the light at the end of the tunnel," said Sexton. "But I was able to persist and reminded myself that these individuals and families affected by autism can't

give up. They can't have a day they just throw in the proverbial towel, so I pushed myself to the limit to honor them and hopefully, ultimately make a difference for them and their communities."

CAN was founded in 2012 by Myrtle Beach businesswoman Becky Large. Large is the mother of two sons, one of whom is on the autism spectrum. CAN's mission is to create and expand a network of autism champions, including businesses, local non-profit organizations and individuals with autism, to provide families and individuals with necessary resources for daily life, including a strong community support system.

"We at Champion Autism Network are beyond grateful for Richard and his enthusiasm and willingness to put his body and mind to a seemingly impossible feat for the sake of building awareness and support for those families and individuals affected by autism," said Becky Large. "The money raised from this extraordinary effort will help to create inclusive communities for them by connecting people with each other and the valuable resources they need. Specifically, it will go toward launching a job-matching program, hosting recreational activities for the families and connecting them to more than 200 CAN-certified businesses."

For more information about the fundraiser, visit <https://www.carolinascanruckforautism.com>. Thank you to all of the run sponsors, including Broadstep, Rowan Rock and Timber, South State Bank, Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce, and 4 Circle Coaching.

Editor's Note: [Click here for the Carolinas CAN Ruck for Autism digital media kit.](#)

##

About Champion Autism Network

CAN is a 501(c)(3) organization that aims to increase autism awareness and provide support to families affected by autism. Its vision is to create and ensure inclusive communities where all people CAN happily live, work and play, by building a worldwide network of autism champions including businesses, local nonprofits and individuals with autism, thereby expanding its network and connecting people with each other and the resources they need. #ComePlayWithUs®
#YesYouCAN®

Laura Blank

Keylight Communications

+1 646-245-2496

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/542283934>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2021 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.