

Livestrong

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By Bobby Longoria Friday, 23 July 2010

Lance Armstrong's career was promising after victories at the Tour de Pont and the World Championships, but despite his success, the athlete was stopped in his tracks in 1996 when he received a cancer diagnosis.

He was given a 40 percent chance survival rate after surgery, yet Armstrong rode on, fighting through four kinds of cancer.

“As Lance was wrapping up his treatment for cancer in 1997, he was really impressed with something one of his oncologists told him. [It] was about the responsibility of being cured and your obligation to pass on the hope and determination that it requires to really beat cancer,” said Katherine McLane, spokeswoman for the Lance Armstrong Foundation.

Armstrong was inspired, and while dining with four friends at Z'Tejas in downtown Austin he discussed the formation of a bicycle ride to benefit cancer research. From that dinner meeting spawned an organization that would grow to a global level.

The Lance Armstrong Foundation first launched [Livestrong.org](#) in 2003 as an online resource for cancer survivors. The foundation officially began using the Livestrong name last year. Livestrong flourished under its mission to leave no cancer victim alone and isolated. Hundreds have aligned under the roof of the foundation, located in East Austin, sharing a mutual passion to help those who are near losing all hope.

After her mother, father, stepfather and grandmother all died from cancer, foundation volunteer Emily Alvers now bears the of weight of their past struggle and uses it to motivate her so that cancer victims do not walk alone in their fight.

“Anyone that you talk to in this building, whether they work here or are a volunteer, they have been touched in some way, shape or form by cancer,” Alvers said. “It has affected their lives, and most of us have been around long enough to see how big those changes are.”

Alvers spends her Fridays at the foundation responding to e-mails and letters written by cancer victims and family members of victims who seek information and emotional support. She said information such as the foundation's healthcare guidebook, coupled with its support programs, may have helped her family members during their fight with cancer; and she is happy that those now fighting have access to this support.



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and grandmother to cancer. Now she donates time to the organization to help other cancer victims and survivors. Photo by Bobby Longoria

Livestrong backs Austin Marathon

In early June Livestrong President and CEO Doug Ulman announced the organization will serve as the title sponsor of the Austin Marathon & Half Marathon for the next three years.

In its 20-year history, the marathon has had three other title sponsors: Motorola, which was the first, Freescale Semiconductor and AT&T.

Ulman said the partnership with the marathon is consistent with Livestrong's "desire to help people live healthy lives."

Registration is open for the Feb. 20, 2011, marathon. Go to www.youraustinmarathon.com for registration information. —Rebecca Nordquist

Livestrong

“Our efforts are focused on spreading a message of hope and courage from a diagnosis and into survivorship, and propagating the concept that cancer is survivable and you can go on to achieve great things in your life,” McLane said.

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