

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Dale Wolbrink
A.L.S. Family Charitable Foundation, Inc.
(508) 759-9696
curealsnow@aol.com

George Bianco
(212) 382-8655
geobianco@aol.com

Marathoner Raises 20K for Fight Against A.L.S.

Buzzards Bay, MA: This week the A.L.S. Family Charitable Foundation, Inc. of Buzzards Bay, MA, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising money for the fight against Lou Gehrig's Disease, received a contribution in excess of \$20,000 from George Bianco of Bedford, NY. The funds had been pledged in support of Bianco's efforts in the 35th Annual ING New York City Marathon held on November 7, 2004.

His time of 3 hours, 58 minutes and 3 seconds was good enough to place him 10,262 out of a record-setting finishing field of 36,513 runners-an impressive task for a first-time marathoner. But for Bianco it goes beyond the completion of the 26-miles.

"I thought only about the physical aspects of the race and wasn't fully expecting the amazing emotional experience," said a delighted Bianco reflecting on the race. "I wasn't expecting to finish in under 4 hours!"

George Bianco ran the NYC Marathon as a tribute to his friend David Dorfman of Brookline, MA who is suffering from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (A.L.S.), or Lou Gehrig's Disease, as it is commonly known. The money raised by Bianco will benefit the A.L.S. Family Charitable Foundation, Inc. and will go to support much needed-medical research.

Pledges came from Bianco's family, friends, coworkers, and even the general public.

"The attention I got was amazing," said Bianco. "A story ran in the local paper and after that I was getting an e-mail or a letter a day with donations."

Dorfman and Bianco were childhood companions while growing up on Long Island, NY. Their friendship evolved through the years and today it remains a strong bond for both men.

During their 40-year friendship, Bianco admits that Dorfman has served as a role model teaching him by example how to balance the responsibilities of a career with those of family.

“I wanted David to know how much he means to me, before he is not here to understand the depths of the value of his friendship,” said Bianco.

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis is a progressive, fatal neuromuscular disease characterized by a degeneration of motor nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. The disease attacks the part of the nervous system that controls voluntary muscle movement. The nerve cells that control muscle cells are gradually lost. Patients experience a progression from muscle weakness to total paralysis. Even the most fundamental functions of life become impossible with A.L.S. This insidious disease diminishes the body but not the mind, virtually making victims prisoners in their own bodies. Currently, there is no known cause or cure for A.L.S.

“Dave's image came to me many times during the race,” said Bianco. “He and all the people that supported my run were on my mind. That kind of support takes you where you can't go alone.”

That sentiment is reminiscent of the fight against A.L.S. A community that is unified in their fight against the deadly disease has emerged among patients, families, caregivers, medical professionals, etc.

“No victim or family member has to take on this disease alone,” said A.L.S. Family Co-founder, Mary Ann Singersen of Mashpee, MA. “If we have learned anything from the years we have worked in fundraising it is the tremendous devotion of victims and their families to one another and this cause. Mr. Bianco is proof of the strength of character of those that work toward eradicating this disease possess.”

During the race, Bianco had plenty of moral support. He was accompanied to the event by his wife Shirley, children Nina (14), Alison (12) and Andrew (8). His father Vito traveled from Florida to be part of the excitement while dozens of friends lined the course to cheer George on along the way.

“This experience was incredible,” continued Bianco. “It exceeded my expectations in every way. It was a lot more special than I thought it would be with the crowd cheering me on, the amazing spirit of my fellow runners and the sheer magnitude of being a part of this enormous event.”

Bianco began this journey to fulfill a dream of his own and to demonstrate his devotion to a life-long friend. He has accomplished all that and more. He has helped to teach a very important lesson.

He wants people to aspire to greatness, whatever that definition is to them personally.

“Set personal goals - drive them for yourself,” said Bianco. “Whether you intend to or not they will serve as inspiration to other. I know my children got a powerful message, set a higher standard for yourselves. Set goals that will help you achieve things beyond that which is easy.”

Today in the name of David Dorfman and 30,000 plus Americans, the goal is to find a cure for Lou Gehrig’s Disease. It is not an easy task but with men like George Bianco showing the way anything is possible-even a cure for A.L.S.

The A.L.S. Family Charitable Foundation, Inc. is a federally recognized non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for the fight against Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (A.L.S.), more commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. For more information on the A.L.S. Family Charitable Foundation, Inc. call (508) 759-9696 or log on to at www.alsfamily.org.

EDITOR’S NOTE: It is with heavy hearts that we tell of David Dorfman’s passing. We lost David on Thursday, December 23, 2004. He was the beloved husband of Melody (Eisenberg), loving father of Jeremy Dorfman and Shelly Dorfman, friend to George Bianco, the A.L.S. Family Charitable Foundation, Inc. and an inspiration to many!

Our deepest condolences to the Dorfman Family as well as George Bianco.