

# Undaunted by the Marathon

In the spring of 2015, a 39-year-old college professor from Venezuela ran the famous Boston Marathon.

The professor's name is Maickel Melamed. He had run four previous marathons, but this was his first time running the coveted Boston race. It was for Melamed the culmination of six years of training that had begun with his running just 500 yards the very first time.

What makes Melamed's story unique is that he finished the Boston Marathon in last place. And he finished last because Melamed has a form of muscular dystrophy that severely impairs his mobility so that his run is more like a very slow and laborious movement of left and right strides.

The Boston Marathon course is brutal, hilly and difficult. It begins early Monday morning and the average male runner finishes in a little more than four hours. Melamed finished the race in slightly less than 20 hours. He crossed the finish line in the dark in a pelting rain with a flock of supporters cheering him on.



He was interviewed shortly after completing the race, and here is what he said: “It was hard on the body, but in the soul everything is shining.”

That story reminds me of associates who respond to God's call to serve others in Life Care and Century Park.

The work is hard – oftentimes hard on the body – but actions of compassion and service have their own reward: “in the soul everything is shining.”

– Beecher Hunter