

Twenty-Six Two Member Profile

October 2011

In this edition of the monthly TST member profiles, we spotlight former First-Timer **Stephanie Swanzy**. Stephanie was part of the 2007-08 first-time women's group that trained for the Austin Marathon on February 17, 2008. She is now training for her sixth marathon in April of 2012.



I started running in 2000 to help cope with an emotional tragedy. As I grew stronger, I found I could run longer. One of my friends invited me to run a leg of the Beach to Bay Relay Marathon. Although apprehensive, I ran the leg and had a fabulous time, deciding that I wanted to run farther and more competitively! As I tried to increase my mileage for a half marathon, I repeatedly injured myself. Massage therapist, and TST member, Lucy Rojas gave me Paul Carmona's name as a coach who could help me with my goals.

When I first met Paul in March of 2007 and told him my half marathon goals, he suggested I run with Twenty-Six Two on Tuesdays and Saturdays and consider the 3M Half Marathon in January. The group was inviting, supportive, and fun to run with as I slowly increased my aerobic base. In the summer I asked Paul when I should start to train for the half. He suggested I apply for 2007-2008 first timers marathon training group with Twenty-Six Two. After I submitted my application I anxiously awaited the reply and was overjoyed to receive my acceptance!

During the next twenty-four weeks, I discovered I loved the marathon training! I enjoyed running with my fellow trainees and other TST members, and looked forward to every group Saturday run when I could listen to all the advice the veteran TST members would give about their marathon experiences. My boyfriend, Kirk, was also incredibly supportive of my running and occasionally supervised my solo nighttime hill workouts from his Miata. When I crossed the finish line at the Austin Marathon on February 17, 2008, I was overcome with emotion -- that I finished this monumental race and beat my goal time of 4 hours!

Since this incredible journey began, I have continued to run and I strive to improve my running and marathon times. My job as a veterinarian keeps me extremely busy some weeks and I cherish my running time. After my 2008 Austin Marathon finish, I have run two Dallas Marathons, the 2009 Austin Marathon, and the 2010 Boston Marathon. In a few weeks I will begin training for the 2012 Boston Marathon.