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WORLD HARMONY RUN COMING TO UNIVERSITY CITY MAY 12

UNIVERSITY CITY, Mo., May 7, 2012—When the participants in the World Harmony Run pass through University City on May 12, they will have run through 17 states and had countless adventures since the start of their journey in New York a month earlier.

The World Harmony Run was founded in 1987 by the late visionary Sri Chinmoy as a simple but compelling way to encourage friendship and a feeling of oneness among citizens of “planet earth”. This is the first year that University City has been a destination stop in the race’s route. Newly-branded “The Neighborhood to the World,” University City was a natural fit for the Run’s mission and purpose.

“University City is pleased to be a part of the World Harmony Run,” said University City Mayor Shelley Welsch. “The Run’s mission of friendship and diversity supports our city’s own celebration of diversity. We welcome the runners to the “Neighborhood to the World.”

The St. Louis Race Coordinator, Nayana Hein, is a 1969 graduate of University City High School, and she spent her childhood in the area that is now the Delmar Loop. Hein later worked for the United Nations in New York.

“I have dreamed of bringing the World Harmony Run to University City. There was a wonderful socio-economic mixture in University City: well off/not so well off, different religions, levels of education among parents, etc.,” Hein said. “It was enriching, rather than dividing -- oneness in diversity. When the first black residents began moving into U. City in the late '60s, the city initiated a special seminar for the students, so they would be sure to welcome the newcomers. James Howard, one of the first black students at U. City High, later became class president.”

Activities on May 12 will include a 9:15 a.m. run from the Forest Park Visitors Center to the Tivoli Theater in the Loop; a 10 a.m. walk/run from the Tivoli to the University City City Hall, and a 10:30 a.m. ceremony at the City Hall where runners will share stories and the secret of their inspiration. Everyone who comes to see the runners will have an opportunity to hear their stories and hold the World Harmony torch, a powerful symbol of harmony that has been passed from hand to hand by thousands of people including Mikhail Gorbachev, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela. At the City Hall ceremony, the Harmony Run’s Torch Bearer award will be given to the Regional Arts Commission for their innovative and forward-thinking work for the arts and community development. There also will be a special children’s Harmony Run program at The Magic House at 2 pm, held at the outdoor Pavilion.

To learn more about the World Harmony Run and to follow its daily progress along the road, visit www.worldharmonyrun.org. For more information about the Run’s St. Louis activities, contact Nayana at nayana@worldharmonyrun.org or call the Run at 888-882-4081.

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