

RUNNING WITH PURPOSE



Devan Jones

Running a marathon had long been a bucket-list item for Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 member **Devan Jones**, specifically the Los Angeles Marathon held every year in early March.

“I would always see the marathon finish, and I would see [it] on social media, and I would say, ‘I can do that,’” Jones said. “After the second year of missing out, I was like, ‘You know what? I’m not going to miss out again.’”

In spring 2025, he registered for the Los Angeles Marathon held on March 8 this year. That gave him a year to train and complete shorter races.

From the start, training to run was a community-driven activity for Jones. Shortly after signing up for the 2026 Los Angeles Marathon, Jones discovered the Compton Run Club on Instagram and went on his first run on April 13, 2025. “The first day I was like, ‘I got to show them I can hang

with them,’” so he ran 5 miles at an 8:35 pace without stopping.

To balance his running and work schedules, he has joined several other run clubs based out of Los Angeles County, including Keep It Run 100, Run 562 and Movement Runners. He almost never runs by himself, preferring to go on group runs two to three times a week, totaling about 10 to 15 miles.

During his first race, the Griffith Park race held in February this year, there was a lot of high elevation that tested his endurance. After he got to the third hill of the race, he thought, “I’m about to start walking,” but he didn’t.

His unwillingness to give up earned him a top-10 finish.

“It felt amazing because my team was right there at the finish line, saying my name,” he said.

Letter carriers are physically active during work, often walking 10 to 15 miles a day and carrying heavy packages, and Jones had played basketball and golf and lifted weights prior to running.

“I was always in shape, but I learned that it’s a different type of shape as far as endurance, as far as running once I joined the run club,” he said.

To support his training, Jones incorporates strength training and stretching into his routine. His run clubs host push-up challenges, where members post videos of themselves on Instagram completing a set number of reps.

Jones has set ambitious goals for himself. Among them is being invited to take a spot in The Speed Project, a 350-mile team



relay during which each member of each team runs about 50 miles from Santa Monica, CA, to Las Vegas, NV, over the course of two days. In the meantime, he has several races coming up, including the Venice Beach 5K, the LBS Financial 5K, the Griffith Park Relay, the Long Beach Marathon and the Santa Monica 10K all happening in 2026, along with the Pasadena Half Marathon, which he will run in 2027.

While he has competed in a variety of race distances—from 5Ks to marathons and relays—the half-marathon is his preference. “It’s pretty cool to do a whole 26 marathon, but I would prefer 13 and under,” he said. “I think my body frame is more built for that.”

As for his favorite of the races he’s participated in, he noted the Compton Relay, which he participated in last February in a team of four.

“Not only did we come in first, my mom... was at the finish line, just happy,” he said.

While Jones has found success in his sport, not every part of training has come easily. Waking up early to run before work, he admits, sometimes is a challenge.

Still, the experience has been just as much about overcoming challenges as it has been about enjoyment. During one run that coincided with a 49ers playoff game, Jones, an avid fan, ran 13 miles on the beach wearing his 49ers helmet. Around Easter he ran around Compton with an Easter bunny head on.

Despite achieving his personal goals, Jones says his biggest mo-

ivation comes from the impact he has on others.

“My goal is to inspire, uplift and motivate others,” he said. “I don’t listen to music [when he’s running], because I’m either talking to people or motivating like, ‘Hey, you got this. Keep it up.’”

Although Jones is quite fast, he will stay until the end of practice, encouraging other runners and making sure everyone finishes.

One of his favorite moments came when he helped a fellow runner train for the Nike After Dark event that took place on June 7 last year. Members of the run club encouraged her to run with Jones to train, saying he was fast and they wanted her to do her personal best at the event.

“She ran the event and when she was done, she was like, ‘Thank you. I had a good time running, and it was because of the workouts we did.’ So, that was very inspirational, and I knew I liked where I was at,” he said.

In the run clubs, there are people at varying levels of their running journeys. No matter what level they’re at, Jones likes to remind them, “Don’t worry about being fast or whatever, just get out there and move, and you’re always going to get better. We can all get a medal at the end of the day.”

Jones encourages everyone he knows to start running and has gotten a couple of co-workers to start running 5Ks. “The hardest step is just getting out there. It ain’t about your speed,” he said. “Once you finish, you feel accomplished.” **PR**



Jones shows off medals he’s earned from running races.