



BREATHE
CALIFORNIA

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9-Year-Old Boy Helps Pace Bay to Breakers Fundraiser

SAN JOSE, CA -- When Benjamin Hoffner-Brodsky completed his first Bay to Breakers with a finishing time of 2 hours and 16 seconds, it was a big deal. Not because this is his first 12 K run, or because Benjamin ran the ING Bay to Breakers race wearing Superman underwear, a cape and pixie dust on his body. Rather, it is such a great accomplishment because Benjamin is only nine years old and finished as Breathe California's 2nd highest fundraiser in the ING Bay to Breaker's pledge runner program!

New to running, Benjamin was inspired by his mother who took up running to stay in shape. After running by his mother's side, Benjamin began participating in his own 5k runs last year. And after successfully completing three races, Benjamin had his sights on something bigger. With the ING Bay to Breaker's entertaining reputation, Benjamin was instantly enthralled with the "groovy vibe" of the race. Scrolling through the ING Bay to Breakers website, Benjamin saw the Breathe California pledge runner program and decided to gear up for his next fundraiser.

"I am one of the few kids in my school who love to fundraisers," Benjamin proudly stated. "I've known people who had cancer and I wanted to do my part to get rid of it. Also I'm very glad my mom stopped smoking before I was born."

As Benjamin prepared to launch his fundraising efforts, his mother Denise raised the ante with a little challenge of her own. An experienced fundraiser in her own right who wanted to instill a sense of community spirit and activism in her son, Denise started a competition between them to see who could reach the initial \$200 Pledge Runner benchmark first.

Fully motivated, Benjamin and his mom set up tables at all the Farmer's markets in the Davis area where Benjamin would make his simple, yet ultimately successful, fundraising pitch: "We're asking for \$25, so that I can run the Bay to Breakers. Which is \$2 per kilometer, plus \$1 for good luck! But donate whatever you're comfortable with. The money goes for a good cause: Breathe California. Because we all need to breathe clean air."

Still reeling from the experience, Benjamin recounts "Being a pledge runner was a great opportunity to help and have a great time. I thought it was really fun. I especially loved running up the hill and seeing all the crazy costumes, seeing people selling lemonade or (locals) spraying runners with water out of their houses. The whole atmosphere was so much fun!"

What's next for the fundraising SUPER boy? As one of the pledge program's top fundraisers, Benjamin

received two FREE tickets on Southwest Airlines from the ING Bay Breakers 12K race. And now Benjamin and his mom are preparing for a trip to Disneyworld in Florida!