



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 16, 2018

Contact:

Georgia Berkovich

213-624-4588

[gberkovich@midnightmission.org](mailto:gberkovich@midnightmission.org)

### **Celebrate the Skid Row Runners Return from Jerusalem Marathon**

The story about the Superior Court Judge and a group of homeless individuals running together continued as they took the dedication and commitment to running to a whole other level. On March 9, they participated in the 2018 Jerusalem Marathon in Israel and on Sunday, March 18, 2018, they will be participating in the Los Angeles Marathon.

The group including TMM program participants, TMM alumni and community members will be at the post-run(s) celebration on Tuesday, **March 20 at 2:30 pm** at our monthly "All House Celebration of Recovery" held in The Midnight Mission's Dining Room.

We hope you will join us in congratulating and supporting these brave men and women on they return from their intercontinental journey of hope as they return from Jerusalem, Israel.

In 2012, a running club was formed as part of the Healthy Living Program at The Midnight Mission (TMM) through the collaborative efforts of **L.A. Superior Court Judge Craig Mitchell** and **The Midnight Mission**. Despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the first year, this group of committed athletes participated in events including the Firecracker 10k, Los Angeles and Pasadena Rock n' Roll Half marathons and the LA Marathon, among others. It would soon become an annual journey for the runners, competing across the globe in various international marathons.

Since 2013, Judge Mitchell and the top runners have been running in several international marathons. They ran in the Accra International Marathon in Ghana, Africa. The following year, they ran in the 2015 Maratona Di Roma. The Rome group was comprised of alumni of The Midnight's Recovery Program, including the original (3) participants, an alumna of HomeLight Family Living, current Midnight Mission Recovery Program participants and a dozen community members, making the group 25 strong. In 2016, a team made up of (6) program participants, (2) alumni and (15) dedicated runners from our community ran in the DaNang International Marathon in Vietnam. They were shadowed by Mark and Gabriele Hayes, the same film crew that followed them to Ghana and are behind the Skid Row Marathon documentary (<http://skidrowmarathon.com/>), which has been tracking their progress and personal stories since the beginning. [There is a special screening of the documentary **tonight, March 16, 2018 at 7 pm** at the **Regal LA Live Stadium 14.**]

As part of the Health & Wellness department, the running club is offered to each of our participants so that their physical health enhances their sobriety and improves their chances of sustainable recovery and ongoing healthy living. Judge Mitchell and Skid Row Running Club (<http://www.skidrowrunningclub.com/>) can be found each Monday and Thursday at 5:45 am in the lobby at The Midnight Mission. The club is open to the community and all are welcome. For more information about the Running Club or our Health and Wellness program, please contact: [Valerie Mayers](mailto:vmayers@midnightmission.org) via email at [vmayers@midnightmission.org](mailto:vmayers@midnightmission.org) or call 213.624.9258 ext.1661



**About The Midnight Mission's Health and Wellness Program:** Health & Wellness at The Midnight encourages physical health through fitness classes and exercise opportunities designed to improve the physical, social and emotional health of all participants. Participating in the Healthy Living program emphasizes the importance of life-long healthy practices. Homelessness is associated with social isolation and lack of healthy contacts with others. Men entering the program learn to respect and help each other through sports and community activities. Team sports, including basketball, ping pong, volleyball and social games offer additional ways for them to develop social skills.

**About The Midnight Mission:** Founded in 1914, The Midnight Mission offers paths to self-sufficiency to men, women and children who have lost direction. Our emergency services and 12-step recovery, family living, job training, education and workforce development programs offer a compassionate bridge to achieve and maintain healthy, productive lives. We remove obstacles and provide the accountability and structure that people who are experiencing homelessness need to be productive in their communities. Our conviction and commitment to their success define us. For additional information, please visit [www.midnightmission.org](http://www.midnightmission.org).