



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Runners Gathered to Honor the Fallen at MCM Medal of Honor 8K

*More than 300 runners close out the Marine Corps Marathon event calendar*

**QUANTICO, VA (December 7, 2019)** – It was a festive conclusion to the 2019 MCM Event Series as more than 300 runners from 16 states participated in the second annual Medal of Honor 8K presented by Marines Plumbing and departed with a special holiday ornament. The 4.97-mile scenic #RunWithTheMarines took place at the Medal of Honor Golf Course aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico on the 78<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

Leading the finishers was U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Alexis Espinoza, 22, of Alexandria, VA. “I didn’t expect the hills and elevations, but overall, I really enjoyed the course.”

Espinoza broke the tape in 29 minutes and 43 seconds, followed by Lt. Col. Alexander Hetherington, 52, USMC (Ret.) of Vienna, VA with a time of 30:01 and Jonathan Ladson, 28, of Woodbridge, VA with a time of 30:05.

Catherine Miller, 53, from Spotsylvania, VA finished first among women with a time of 36:42. It was a close finish for the second and third place women as Hassetou Wandaogo of Silver Spring, MD finished with a time of 37:11, one second ahead of Dana Mills of Stafford, VA with a time of 37:12.

Michelle Curry, U.S. Coast Guard Reserves, 45, defended her master’s title with a time of 37:15, nearly three minutes faster than her 2018 time at this event. “I had a great time this morning. One of my favorite things to do is register for all the Marine Corps series event. They’re so organized and everyone is so nice that it just kept me motivated.”

### The day’s highlights included:

- U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. James Niemeier, 25, and Cpl. Orlando Pacheco, 23, completed the course with rucksacks weighing 30lbs and 45lbs respectively to honor their fallen comrades and commemorate the anniversary of Pearl Harbor. “Over 3,000 Americans died in Pearl Harbor and that’s something I’ll be thinking about when this starts to get a little heavier or I start feeling tired,” said Niemeier.
- The youngest runner 7-year-old Gabriel Wallace from Fairfax, VA powered through his Medal of Honor 8K with a time of 1:23:46.
- Senior female runner Paula Golladay, 70, from Falls Church, VA finished with a time of 1:07:16. Today marks her 69<sup>th</sup> race for 2019, a total of 240 miles and still counting.
- Almost half of the field of runners were members of the military, including 74 Marines.

All participants received a special Medal of Honor 8K scarf and free greens fee at the Medal of Honor Golf Course for future use. Top finishers and age-award winners were given gift baskets provided by Marine Corps Community Services.





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Unofficial results are available at <https://www.marinemarathon.com/>. Runners may continue their commitment to #RunWithTheMarines by registering for the 2020 Historic Half Weekend in Fredericksburg next May. Events include the Half (13.1 miles), the Semper Five (five miles) and the Devil Dog Double, which combines both distances (18.1 miles). Registration is now open.

*For media information please contact Jheanel Walters, Marine Corps Marathon Public Relations Coordinator at 703-987-3191 or [Jheanel.Walters@usmc-mccs.org](mailto:Jheanel.Walters@usmc-mccs.org).*

*Medal of Honor 8K is part of the MCM Event Series hosted by the Marine Corps Marathon Organization. The MCM Event Series feature a variety of distances and fun challenges on or near Marine Corps Base Quantico. No federal or Marine Corps endorsement is implied. Connect with the Marine Corps Marathon on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [Elickr](#). #RunWithTheMarines*