



## Director Spotlight

Yvette White knows the iRun4Life running program as well as anyone. Her favorite part?

“Seeing the kids come tearing down the hall at dismissal, eager and ready to exercise and run,” she said. “They can’t wait to get outside.”

In her six years volunteering with iRun4Life, White has helped thousands of kids improve health and discover running. In addition to her involvement directing iRun4Life at Buckingham Elementary School, White serves on the iRun4Life Board of Directors, helping to expand the organization and set it up for future successes.

We had a chance to sit down with Yvette to ask her about her experience with running, kids and the impact iRun4Life has on youth.

**Name:** Yvette White

**Years Involved:** 6

**School:** Buckingham Elementary

### **How did you first get involved with iRun4Life?**

I'm entering my 6th year with iRun4Life. I started as a volunteer with Buckingham Elementary's iRun4Life After-School program when we moved here, partly to be involved with my children at school, and also as a way to make friends. I've been the School Director at Buckingham now for the past three years, with two years to go.

### **What is your favorite aspect of the organization?**

My favorite aspect is how much the kids LOVE the program. If I told my son, "Go outside and run two miles," he'd look at me as if I were crazy. But I tell 150 kids (including my son), "Go outside and run around the school with all your friends," and they're all over it!

Halfway through after-school program, we do a mock 3K. We use skin-safe markers, and every time the kids complete a lap around the school, they get a mark on their arm. I am always amazed at how almost ALL of the kids (including my Kindergartners!) do six laps! And the bigger kids – some are pulling in 10, 12 laps! It's really great to watch.

I love seeing the kids come tearing down the hall at dismissal, eager and ready to exercise and run. They can't wait to get outside. I also love it when I pass the kids in the hallways at school, and I hear them whisper to each other "That's the iRun4Life Lady!"

### **How did you first become involved with running? How often do you run now?**



Gosh, it felt like I was always running as a kid: to/from the bus stop, at recess, playing tag, running outside until it got dark, just playing with other kids in the neighborhood. As I got older, it seemed I became much more sedentary, which was an easy thing to do. One of the neat things about the iRun4Life program is that the children earn "extra mileage" by running with a family member. So, since I had three kids in the program, they actually were the ones who got me back into running. I've found now that the best workout for me is an interval combination of fast walking, jogging, and sprinting: I do 45 minutes, at least five days a week.

**What do you think iRun4Life helps kids with, the most?**

Obviously, one of the biggest points is that kids are moving for 45 minutes at least one time every week. We do warm-up exercises, and then they run or walk with the friends. We also encourage them to run during the week, to build up their endurance. We bring in high school track "stars" to run with and motivate the kids. I also like that that it's a program that's run by volunteers – these are parents who are heavily invested in their schools and in their child's well-being.

One of the other things that I think is so important is our Gives Back Program, where we raise money for a less-fortunate school to purchase much-needed athletic and recess equipment. (Full disclosure -- I'm the Director, so yes, I will brag on the program!) I have a discussion with the kids about how fortunate we are at Buckingham. How we have lots of green space, we can run outside, we have soccer fields, a playground, a gaga pit, etc. And I show them a satellite map of Buckingham Elementary right next to a satellite image of our recipient school. The kids very quickly catch on. When they see a very urban school, with limited space, limited playground areas, and very little grass, they see how fortunate they are. And then we ask them, for one week, to do extra good deeds so they can raise money. I'm always quite overwhelmed when the kids come back the next week with their donations. I am truly thankful to be part of such a generous community.

***Interested in becoming a director, or volunteering with iRun4Life? Contact [information@iRun4Life.com](mailto:information@iRun4Life.com) to learn how to become involved.***