



## **Medtronic Celebrates 10th Year of Global Heroes Program**

*Twin Cities Marathon Welcomes Past and Present Honorees*

ST. PAUL, Minn. – Tens of thousands of runners and spectators descended on Minneapolis/St. Paul Sunday, October 4, 2015 for the [2015 Medtronic Twin Cities Marathon](#) and [Medtronic Twin Cities 10-Mile](#) race.

While an important day for the community, it also served as an historic day for a particular team of runners from all around the world. Sunday marked the 10th anniversary of the [Medtronic Global Heroes](#) program, which honors long-distance runners living with chronic diseases who benefit from medical technology.

"It was great to see the support from the fans and the other Global Heroes," said Dr. Michael Shaughnessy, a Global Hero from Solon, Ohio.

Shaughnessy lives with an artificial heart valve.

"This weekend has been inspiring and overwhelming," he said. "For the first time, I have support from other patients."

Twenty-five runners from six continents and 16 countries participated as this year's Global Heroes. Each runner has a medical device to treat conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, spinal disorders, chronic pain or neurological disorders. Together, they run with a special purpose.



Dr. Michael Shaughnessy, a Global Hero from Solon, Ohio celebrates during the final stretch.

It's fantastic to be together with like-minded people," said Katie Bartel after finishing the Medtronic Twin Cities 10-mile race. The 37-year old from British Columbia, Canada lives with Type 1 Diabetes and relies on an insulin pump.

"Nobody is talking about our medical condition, because we are taking a different approach and accomplishing great things," she said.

Launched in 2006, the Global Heroes program honors people who have overcome the adversity of chronic disease conditions and demonstrate a passion for running, serving as a powerful metaphor for "full life."

"Over the years we have been so inspired by all these athletes," said Dr. Jacob Gayle, vice president of Medtronic Philanthropy. "Medtronic Global Heroes represents passionate and empowered individuals who, despite managing their own health needs, have become examples of how to overcome challenges and live life to its fullest."



Global Hero Sianga Akende, 51 from Lusaka, Zambia poses after completing the Medtronic Twin Cities 10-Mile race.

Throughout the program's 10-year history, 233 runners have participated as Global Heroes. Nearly 50 former heroes returned Sunday to run alongside this year's class.

"It was great to be back," said Warren Williams, a Global Hero from 2013. "It's a special weekend."

Global Hero honorees receive complimentary race entry, air transportation, meals and lodging through Medtronic. Participants are selected by Twin Cities In Motion, the non-profit organization that directs the Medtronic Twin Cities Marathon.

"It was a beautiful race," said Luciana Alves, from Brazil. "I live with a pacemaker, but we are all showing that, even with an implanted medical device, you can still achieve your goals."

More than 20,000 runners participated in the Medtronic Twin Cities Marathon and the Medtronic Twin Cities 10-Mile event. The event also marked the 10th year Medtronic has sponsored the race.