



I began my quest to become "fit" when I started to train for my 1st marathon in 2002 - it was the Honolulu Marathon. This came to a surprise to many of my friends and family since I was the epitome of a non-athlete, even more so, a non-runner. I was 140lbs and barely 5'2". What started off as "one of those things to check off your things to do list" - became a newfound love and passion for a healthier lifestyle. To say the least, when I crossed that finish line (7hours 19 minutes and 22 seconds later) Almost immediately, I viewed the world and my capabilities in a totally different light.

It was then that I decided instead of *wishing* to look, be and feel a certain way, I would just *make it happen*. I have continued to run 1/2 & Full marathons, as well as local 5 & 10ks. Although I'm not the fastest, it's all about "completion" for me. In 2003, shortly after completing my 2nd marathon, that July that I entered my first figure competition. Again, it was "one of those things" to check of my list so I didn't anticipate that I would be hooked! I did 5 shows in 2003, 4 shows in 2004 and 4 shows in 2005. Each year, my physique and stage presence have improved and I've placed higher every show. Without even realizing it, I was becoming an inspiration to other women (and men) around me - at work, at the gym and at random places like the grocery store.

I wanted to take all this positive energy from my newfound love & passion for fitness and share it with other women, but spring 2004- I was given the opportunity to share it with elementary school girls. I became a volunteer coach for *Girls on the Run*, ([www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org)) while training 8 -11 year old girls to run/walk their first 5k (3.1 miles). The 3 month program isn't only geared to train these young girls to run and be active, but to also teach them "life skills". We discuss many topics that face these young girls today, to name a few such as: peer pressure, self-acceptance, negative effects of gossiping, how to communicate effectively and expressing our emotions. It's amazing how much I've learned from coaching these girls and how much they've taken a liking to muscles as being "cool". I continue to coach every spring season; to date I've just concluded my 3<sup>rd</sup> season. It's definitely a challenge to juggle coaching between a full-time job as a catering/events manager and preparing for a Figure competition. However, the rewards of being able to make a positive difference in the lives of these young girls mean so much more than any paycheck or trophy can bring.

Every year I that I compete, has always been a rewarding one. However, 2006 marks my best Figure Competition results and season EVER! This the year I placed 1<sup>st</sup> and OVERALL at the California State Bodybuilding/Figure/Fitness Championships. Winning the OVERALL title, amongst over 100 competitors, by far has been my greatest accomplishment to date.

Hard work, discipline, focus, patience and a whole lot of heart, has been my foundation to getting me to where I am today. With the love & dedication that I have to compete, I have been able to inspire both men and women along the way. Despite the rumors that bodybuilding is a "selfish sport" it may be to some degree, but when you make the time to share your love and experiences with others who are willing to learn, it becomes a "giving sport" as I am a true believer that what comes around goes around.

2 quotes to live by: "Nothing worth having comes easy" and "Never under estimate the heart of a champion." I personally believe that I am truly a testament to both.