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Lending a hand towards improving the lives of poor

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

New York

FORTY young women and men, who together formed a 'Run for a Dream' team of Lend-A-Hand India, started their marathon training practice last week at Central Park in Manhattan.

Vik Atal, CEO of Citi Cards and Nandita Atal kicked off the training program with a welcome speech addressed to the runners who braved the freezing cold weather.

The program will include professional and customized coaching, fundraising support, cross training etc. apart from the team members getting an opportunity to socialize among themselves throughout the process.

Participants make friends along the way and help towards Lend-A-Hand India's mission of making difference in the lives of the poor by raising funds through sponsorships for the marathon run.

Each runner has pledged support to Lend-A-Hand India and will raise funds for its flagship project 'Plan100'. The project aims at launching basic rural technology centers in 100 high schools in India to provide various job and life skills to 20,000 young girls and boys by 2008.



Volunteers of the 'Run for a Dream' team

John Trifoi, a master runner and RRCA certified trainer will be their coach for the next four months and the group will do its weekly practice runs under his guidance. Charu Chaturvedi, a Lend-A-Hand India volunteer is a director of the Run for a Dream initiative and Ivy Tseng, John Kerner, Leslie Hueter-Kerner, Minkyung Kim

Veronica Torrens among others will act as running mentors for the runners.

Lend-A-Hand India is a non-profit venture launched in 2003 by young professionals. It is based in New York City and focuses on issues related to youth. The current focus of its programs is to provide vocational training, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities to young boys and girls in urban and rural communities.