

## 2017 Boston Marathon spotlight: Watertown's Steven Farrell

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When Watertown native Steven Farrell runs this year's Boston Marathon, he'll be celebrating a few different milestones. As the Director of Communications, Development and Policy for the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership's (MBHP) Marathon team, Farrell is hoping to raise \$6,000 for the charity and families they serve.

While the 2017 Boston Marathon also marks the second time Farrell is running the world-renowned race, it's the first time he'll be running with his fiancé and fellow Team MBHP member Todd Robinson. The two will be married later this year.

Farrell attended St. Patrick's School between first grade and 11th grade. He was also a member of the first graduating class of Trinity Catholic and lives in Dorchester now.

"This will be my second Boston Marathon, and my fourth marathon overall," he said. "I last ran in 2014, but this year is special because [my fiance] Todd and I are getting married in September, and he wanted to run his first – and only!! – marathon the year he got married."

For the Watertown native who grew up steps from the race course, competing in the Boston Marathon is a bit of a childhood dream come true. Over the past few months, in the wee hours of the morning, Farrell has been trekking up hills, over sandy beaches, and down city streets, training for the race.

This week, the Watertown TAB spoke with Farrell about running in his second Boston Marathon, what kind of training he's been doing and why running this year is important.

### **Tell us about your experience running marathons in years past.**

I ran my first marathon in San Diego in 2011 with the goal of breaking four hours. I missed that goal by four minutes. After the bombing at the Boston Marathon in 2013, I made it my goal to be ready for Boston the following year. I prepared with multiple races, including the Lowell Marathon that October. I was then completely ready for Boston in 2014, again with the goal of breaking four hours. However, Boston is a really difficult course, and I finished in four hours and two minutes. Running Boston with Todd this year, I am running with no goal other than finishing, having fun, and raising money for a worthy cause.

### **What kind of training have you been doing?**

We started our training the week after Christmas, and have not missed any days due to the weather...yet. Our typical training runs include runs along Dorchester Bay and the South Boston beaches, once a week on the hills in Dorchester to prepare for Heartbreak Hill, and also on the Marathon course itself. This past weekend our 18-mile training run--in nine-degree weather--was along the Charles River from downtown Boston to my parents' house in Watertown.

**What makes this year so special, running with your fiancé?**

Todd wanted to run Boston two years ago for his 40th birthday, but getting a bib to run is very competitive - even when running for a charity. We tried again this year in anticipation of our wedding in September, and we were successful! Now as we train together and encourage each other with our fundraising, the weekend of the marathon will be marked with a visit from Todd's parents, who are coming from Chicago. They will also meet my family for the first time, which will make the moment even more special.

**Tell us about the cause you're running for and why you chose it.**

Part of my job is to share the stories of [MBHP's] program participants, stories that inspire people to support the housing nonprofit's life-changing work. Sharing those stories and getting all sorts of people – donors, legislators, family members, friends – excited and impressed about MBHP's impact is one of the greatest benefits of my job. There are thousands of families in Boston who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness. The cost of living is so high here, the parents who receive our services have to work multiple jobs to pay rent. The choices they have to make for themselves and their children are often excruciating, and my colleagues work extremely hard to connect them with the support and resources they need to make a home.