

Nov. 12, 2012  
For Immediate Release

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## **UK College of Public Health Faculty Member Lends a Hand in Sandy Recovery Efforts**

### *Trip to Run NYC Marathon Becomes Unforgettable Service Opportunity*

LEXINGTON, KY – UK College of Public Health faculty member Dr. Glen Mays is an elite runner who's run more marathons than most runners dream of – even winning some of them – and logs dozens of miles each week, so he undoubtedly would have done well in the 2012 ING New York City Marathon. But, when Superstorm Sandy prompted the last-minute cancellation of the race, Mays did *good* instead.

Mays, the F. Douglas Scutchfield Endowed Professor in the UK College of Public Health and director of the Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks, was one of around 40,000 runners who showed up in New York City for the Nov. 4 race, only to learn it was canceled. On Saturday, Nov. 3, Mays ran from his hotel to the pre-race expo, picked up his race packet and headed back to his hotel. When he checked his messages, he learned that the race had been canceled, around 36 hours before the annual event was set to run.

Running the NYC Marathon has been on Mays' bucket list of races for many years – he earned a qualifying time to enter and, along with some friends, signed up last October. When it was canceled, he turned disappointment into an opportunity for service, stepping in to help load and unload supplies. On race day, he and other runners organized donation stations at Columbus Circle in Central Park, at what would have been the race's finish line, to solicit monetary donations from runners and other visitors to help storm victims.

"I quickly saw that what people needed more than anything was money – money for repairs, for putting their homes and lives back together," Mays said. "So we asked all runners to give at least a dollar for each mile of the race – so \$26.20 per runner – to help out. I'm very glad we went out and were a part of the recovery effort."

Opting to collect money rather than miles, the runners collected donations for the American Red Cross and two local relief organizations in an effort organized by the New York Road Runners, a local running organization.

Runners like Mays also helped just by being in the city during those initial recovery days, as the city dealt with the destruction. "Most of the estimated \$30 billion cost of the storm is economic – lost wages, etc. But those of us who came helped by just being there, staying in hotels and eating in restaurants," Mays said.

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Although the NYC Marathon remains on his running bucket list, he knows there will be other years and other opportunities. “I felt particularly bad for the groups of runners you would see from other countries – people who had to go to such efforts to be there for the race,” he said.

Even though he didn’t cross a finish line in NYC, Mays said he feels even more gratified by a more important goal that he and the other runners accomplished – helping a city get back on its feet for the long road ahead.

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