

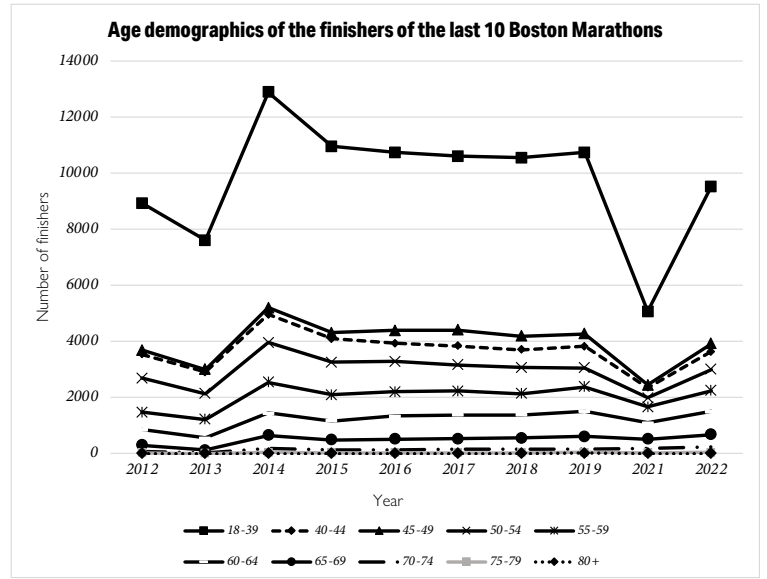
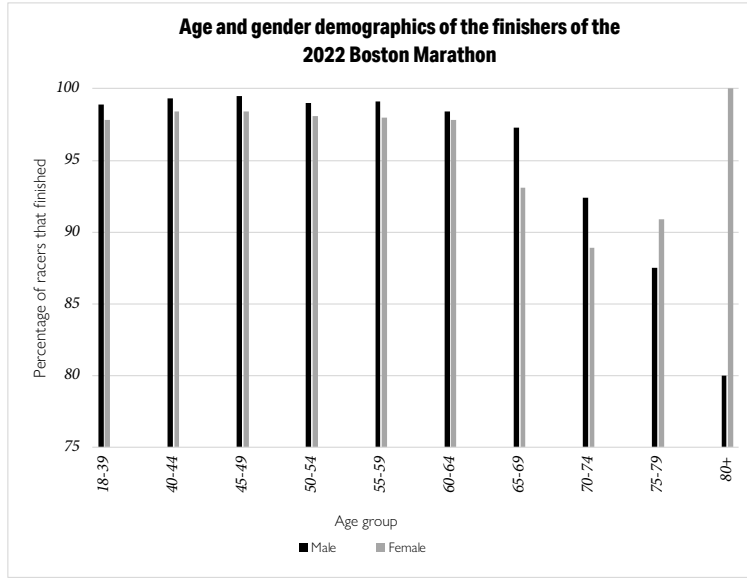
Data: Unpacking past Boston Marathon finishers

By Jethro R. Lee
Data Editor

The streets of Boston will once again be overrun with fans, athletes and volunteers as the 127th Boston Marathon takes place April 17. Nearly 30,000 athletes from more than 100 countries will race their way from Hopkinton to Back Bay.

With wheelchair, handcycle, duo, professional, para athletics and running waves, planned starting times range from 9:02 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

Ahead of this year's race, The News looked at demographic data, collected by the Boston Athletic Association, for past races.



Emerson class offers hands-on nonprofit work, provides books to Boston-area schools

By Ali Caudle & Marta Hill
News Staff

More than half of Boston Public Schools lack their own full-time libraries with staff, a barrier that can make it difficult for students to access books. One class at Emerson College aims to change that by collecting donated books.

"It's hard to imagine kids in elementary school and middle school not having a library," Emerson professor Cathryn Edelstein said. "How do we expect them to rise to the level of education to pursue whatever it is that they want to pursue if you can't physically hold a book?"

Edelstein, a senior executive-in-residence in the communication studies department, teaches a class in nonprofit fundraising. To provide students with hands-on experience, the class works together to run "On the Same Page Boston," an advocacy and equity campaign.

Edelstein started the initiative in 2019, when she was working with an elementary teacher in Roslindale who expressed a need for more diverse books in classrooms.

"He said, 'I have a shelf that only has about 10 books on it. But my student population are all students of color. And there were no books with characters, protagonists, stories, journeys that resemble my students,'" Edelstein said. "So he was my first partner."

The campaign partners with different teachers every year, each referred by the previous participant. This year's campaign benefited teacher Courtney Mulherin at Samuel Adams Elementary in East Boston.

At its inception, the program collected new books from teacher-curated wish lists. Now, however, the efforts have been expanded to include gently-used books and, this year, gently-used board games.

Students place donation bins in 13 Tatte Bakery and Cafés across Boston, as well as in Mamaleh's Delicatessen in Cambridge. Twenty Emerson students in the class are responsible for running the campaign.

Emerson students Liliana Amato and Liv Redding are part of the marketing team and worked to connect with businesses this semester, as well as contacted news outlets to generate press.

Second-year media arts production major Amato said she appreciates the opportunity to work with Edelstein on the project.

"I've always had a strong passion in nonprofit work and advocacy. So for me, this class kind of just made sense in furthering that," Amato said.

The class covers nonprofit communication management and social media communication strategies, while giving students real-life experience.

"I love it. It's very rare that you get to work on a very impactful and just really amazing sort of donation like charity as much as this," said Redding, a third-year marketing communications major. "It really also gives us important insight and like if we really wanted to start our own nonprofit and run a campaign like this, it gives us the step-by-step sort of organization and day-to-day tasks of what you need to do."

Though some students, like Redding and Amato, are minoring in nonprofit communications or organization

management, that is not a requirement to take the class, Edelstein said.

"There are students in every major you can think of in my class, which brings a whole delightful sort of cohesion of different talents and skills, from video making and editing to writing," she said.

While the hands-on experience of running a non-profit is valuable, Redding said, her favorite part is her increased awareness of the challenges Boston Public Schools are facing.

"It's really easy to go to school here, have our own lives and then not really be aware of what's going on in the community around us," Redding said.

Only 52 of 125 campuses in the Boston Public Schools system have their own full-time libraries with staff, according to the Boston Globe.

"I wish we didn't have to do this. Only because I wish there wasn't a need," Edelstein said. "But as long as there's a need, we'll be doing this."

The campaign's efforts have put 5,000 books in the hands of students and teachers in public schools around Boston — and this semester, they aren't done yet. Edelstein recently picked up 700 books from a former Boston University professor, which will be combined with donations from the community.

"It's really beautiful to see the community coming out and supporting it. I think that has been really surprising to me," Amato said. "I would just like to thank everyone. Tatte and Mamaleh's have been really helpful in this, in putting out boxes and we're really grateful for that."

Though the campaign is over for this year, more information can be found online for future drives.

"I think that more people should know that donating is super, super easy and doing a really small thing, like having a book and giving it to someone else, giving it to a child in need is so impactful to their future success and their happiness," Redding said.

She added that the students hope to visit Samuel Adams Elementary School by the end of the semester to celebrate the end of the campaign, meet some of the children and read them books.

"It's hard to imagine not having books to bring home or having books at your house to read," Edelstein said. "And so we're hoping to change that one school at a time."



Photo by Ali Caudle

A flyer from "On the Same Page Boston" is seen taped to the door of the Northeastern Tatte location. Run by an Emerson nonprofit fundraising class and its professor, the campaign partners with different teachers each year to supply diverse books to Boston Public Schools.

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