



Press Release

ASPIRE Puts on Running Shoes for Second *Woman Today* Mini-Marathon

More than 1,000 women sign up for unique sports event in Qatar

Saturday 20 February 2010, Doha, Qatar: A large number of female professionals working at the ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence in Doha have signed-up for Qatar's mini-marathon for women, organized by *Woman Today* magazine and sponsored by ASPIRE. The organizers are expecting more than 1,000 runners to take part in the race, which starts from the foot of the Aspire Tower Hotel in ASPIRE Zone at 10:00 am on Saturday, 20 February 2010.

This is the second edition of mini-marathon for women being held in Qatar, and the 'Run for Fun, Run for Health' event has attracted a strong response throughout the community. The female staff of the ASPIRE community program, ASPIRE ACTIVE, have contributed greatly to the success of this sports and leisure event in a number of ways - by providing advice, organizing, and encouraging the ASPIRE ACTIVE female members to participate.

With several former professional athletes taking part, and great interest in sport across the Academy, ASPIRE professionals will be among the most enthusiastic competitors in the race. A major part of ASPIRE's educational philosophy is to encourage student-athletes to enjoy their training and development, so the mini-marathon provides the staff with a great opportunity to practice what they teach.

The 4.2-kms race, which is sponsored by ASPIRE and organised by *Woman Today*, is aimed at promoting exercise, with a message about the importance of building sporting activity into a healthy lifestyle.

Laurent Joliat, Communications Manager at ASPIRE, said: "ASPIRE is proud to be the lead sponsor for *Woman Today* Mini-marathon for women, and our employees have also provided their own support by taking the time to train and participate in the race. We are very pleased to see such a strong response from within ASPIRE and across Qatar,

as more and more people recognize the importance – and fun – of leading a healthy, active lifestyle.”

The vice-president of *Woman Today*, Ravi Raman, highlighting the event, said: “We, at *Woman Today*, have designed the marathon to provide an enjoyable experience for seasoned runners and newcomers alike, and encourage women’s sports practice in the country. We are confident that the all-female environment will encourage participants to interact with fellow runners and to make new friends and adopt good and healthy sporting habits.”

Staff members from around 60 different nations work at ASPIRE, making it one of the most diverse organizations in Qatar - and many participants are looking forward to running with people from their home countries, while possibly even meeting some new jogging partners.

Reflecting the inclusive nature of the event, ASPIRE specialists are helping to organize a sports event for people with special needs that will take place alongside the mini-marathon, while other coaches will provide hints and training tips for women taking part in the run.

The 4.2-kms course starts at the ASPIRE Tower and then takes the participants across the different garden areas of the ASPIRE Zone, before looping back to the Tower. All participants must be registered in order to take part, and should be in good health and physically prepared to undertake the challenges of a mini-marathon.

Qatar has seen a rise in the number of sporting events open to the public in recent years, as the range of facilities has expanded and available activities increased. Given its strong roots in the local community, ASPIRE continues to work actively to increase the number of opportunities for sports development for people from all walks of life.

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Notes to Editors:

Created in 2004, the ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence in Doha has the dual aims of identifying and transforming promising student athletes into world-renowned champions across a wide range of sports and to act as a beacon to draw sporting culture into the centre of life in Qatar and the surrounding region.

The Academy is distinguished by a philosophy which aims to develop the student as a whole, providing them with full academic, social and sporting development.

Unrivalled facilities, housed in and around the world’s largest purpose built indoor sports dome, ensure the Academy’s reputation as one of the foremost sporting and educational institutions in the

entire international community, enticing an ever-increasing number of visitors and users, from sporting legends to global political leaders.

Every aspect of the development of elite athletes is catered for by one indoor and seven outdoor football pitches, athletics tracks, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, diving pool, combat arenas, gymnastics arena, specially fitness weight rooms, lecture halls, dormitories to accommodate what will eventually become 1,000 students, a medical centre and many more facilities.

Launched in 2007, the ASPIRE Football Dreams project has annually tests over 600.000 young footballers from all over the world including Asia, South America and Africa as part of the largest ever talent search within the sport.

The ASPIRE ACTIVE initiative is a community engagement program spread across the country ensuring that thousands of the nation's residents have accessible and advanced health and fitness activities as routine aspects of their lives. Each social group is catered for by tailor-made classes and programs.