

# MC's social contributions

## DREAM AS ONE.

- Joining Together to Make Dreams Come True -

DREAM AS ONE. was launched by MC in 2014 as a project to support parasports. This report introduces the guide runners who help support the "Kasumigaura Marathon and International Blind Marathon" (held in Tsuchiura, Ibaraki) which is just one of the many programs MC supports through the DREAM AS ONE. project.



Since 2015, MC has been an official partner of this international blind marathon event which is authorized by the IPC\*. During the marathon in 2017, four MC employees volunteered as guide runners for the marathoners with visual impairments. One joined the full marathon, while three

others joined the 5K run, and all successfully ran the entire distance step in step with their partners. In addition, about 30 MC employees volunteered in other ways to help with the successful running of this annual event. Other volunteer roles included serving as relief runners

to step in if a guide runner fell ill or couldn't complete the race, as well as operating water stations at key locations along the marathon route.

\* IPC: International Paralympic Committee

## Running for the Finish Line, Together as One

A runner with impaired vision and a volunteer guide runner set their sights on the finish line together, with a rope called a "kizuna" in their hands. Feeling uneasy when running on an unfamiliar course, runners with impaired vision are unable to run the entire distance without a trusting relationship with their guide runners. On the other hand, volunteer guide runners are expected to have not only enough physical strength to complete the full distance, but also fine-tuned considerations so that they can run as one together. In an effort to raise awareness about volunteer guide runners and to actually develop them, MC holds an annual event called the "Volunteer Guide

Runner Seminar & Trial Session" for our employees. During the event, Mr. Yuichi Takahashi, a blind marathon runner who works for MC, provides lectures on blind marathons and advice to guide runners. Participants are able to have a true hands-on experience by using eye masks and practicing guide running together.

Currently there is a lack of guides available which prevents many blind marathon runners from competing. With this in mind, MC plans to continue supporting parasports in various ways in order to increase the number of opportunities for all to experience the pleasure and excitement of sports.



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### Interview with volunteer guide runner

Guide runners are expected to have the ability to provide blind runners with information about the road surface and other surrounding conditions and to constantly monitor their mental and physical conditions. To that end, prior to a race I try to communicate as much as possible with my pair runner during exercise runs and meals together. When running with a pair runner, I have the opportunity to experience twice the thrill of a marathon because I can share with him/her the pleasure of crossing the finish line together with a sense of unity. As a volunteer guide runner, I want as many people as possible to experience the pleasure of playing sports and the amazing sensation of successfully completing a marathon.