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# LAKWOOD RANCH

SECTION B

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BRAD

## Hundreds to run for Take Stock in Children

By JAMES A. JONES JR.  
jajones1@bradenton.com

**LAKWOOD RANCH** — Hundreds of feet will pound the street Sunday at Lakewood Ranch for a 10-kilometer run to benefit Take Stock in Children. Among the participants will be some of the mentors and the students they help.

River Club resident Michael Corley, the 42-year-old president of Progressive Employers

Services, mentors eight-grader Raul Gutierrez.

Raul always had the smarts — he's in the International Baccalaureate program at Johnson Middle, Corley said, but needed help making right choices in the difficult middle school years.

"He will be facing some challenges in what's right and wrong,"

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Corley said, mentioning peer pressure and setting goals.

When Corley first met Raul, the mentor did most of the talking. But now that a relationship has blossomed, it's Raul who takes the lead in the discussion.

"He's a very nice, polite kid. I couldn't be prouder than when I get a copy of his report card," Corley said.

Starloe Galletta, drama teacher at Rowlett Elementary School, is a former dropout from Manatee High School who got on track with three strong women in her life who served as mentors: Ginny Nunn and Pat Love-day at King Middle, and Sara Pappas at Manatee Community College.

For the past six years, she has been passing along the favor, helping a teen blessed with many gifts achieve her potential.

Jennifer Cheng, an International Baccalaureate student at Southeast High School, was always a straight-A student.

Galletta helped Jennifer get out of her shell, and interact with her teachers and make friends with her classmates.

When she graduates second in her class in a scant few weeks, Jennifer will go on to the University of Florida with a full

scholarship.

"She surpassed my goals beyond my wildest expectation," Galletta said.

It's a bittersweet realization that a student who also became a friend is moving on to a new phase of her life.

Many mentors are quick to say that the job is not all one-way.

The mentor benefits in many ways, too.

"She has helped me through bad days. You celebrate the joys and the hardships," Galletta said. "I would like to encourage more adults to become mentors. We need strong mentors from all walks of life."

Diana Dill, director of the Take Stock in Children program, said as many as 400 runners and walkers could take part in the run and walk on Sunday.

Those who want to register can still do so 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. today at the farmers market at Lakewood Ranch Main Street, or 6-7 a.m. Sunday at the starting point near the Polo Grill.

The races starts at 7:30 a.m. and will take runners north on Lakewood Ranch Boulevard and then through the Lakewood Ranch Country Club, exiting on University Parkway and returning to Main Street.

For more information, about Take Stock in Children, call 751-7012, ext. 2047.