

MARTINEZ, Calif. October 8, 2020 -- The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual MRC-MEF Run for Education, held September 27-October 3 raised \$55,000 for the Martinez Education Foundation (MEF). Since the Run's inception in 2003, the annual event has raised \$981,000, for K-12 supplies and educational experiences.

This year's virtual event allowed individuals and families to walk their own route, at their own pace, while raising money for MEF's teachers grant program for classroom and remote learning materials.

"This is the single largest fundraiser for MEF," said Jack Funk, MEF Board Member and Race Director, "The contributions go directly to programs, technology and supplies teachers can't otherwise afford. MRC and MEF had to reinvent the Run because of the pandemic and I appreciate all MRC has done to make this year's Run possible."

The Martinez Refining Company (MRC), formerly Shell Martinez Refinery was acquired February 1, 2020 by PBF Energy. MRC was excited to carry on the Run's proud tradition, underwriting the event and providing a sponsorship match of \$20,000. Martinez Refining Company Community Relations Manager, Ann Notarangelo recognized this is as a true community effort, "A big thank you goes to our contract partners who gave generously this year; Aaron Ford Timing for volunteering to set up the RunSignUp registration page, the Martinez News Gazette for featuring the Run on their website; the Alhambra High School Key Club for its social media support and of course our great partners, the Martinez Education Foundation. This kind of outpouring of support for our teachers and families is one of the many things that makes Martinez special."

Due to COVID-19 concerns, organizers modified the community event, usually held the last weekend in September in downtown Martinez. Participants registered online, printed an event bib and completed a 5K or 10K by walking, running or rolling, and submitted their time online based on the honor system. Participants shared their support for Martinez Education Foundation and the Martinez Unified School district by posting photos on Facebook and Instagram with the hashtag #mrcmefrun.

Alhambra High School Band Teacher, Sara Hughes Stafford said, "It was really fun to participate this year." She socially-distanced a 5K walk with family and friends, through areas of Martinez she hadn't seen before and by students' homes. "Seeing students where they live and discovering new beautiful spots throughout the town was one of the best parts of the new format." She also expressed her thanks to the Martinez Education Foundation for providing tens of thousands of dollars in grants to the Band Program at AHS over the years.

This year, 349 runners and walkers participated, with people signing up from as far away as Louisville, Kentucky and Katy, Texas.

The MRC-MEF Run for Education started in 2003 with the dual purpose of supporting Martinez schools and promoting health and wellness. It has become the refinery's hallmark community event.

"We are so glad to partner with the Martinez Refining Company and the Martinez Education Foundation on this great event that brings the community together for the benefit of our children," said Helen Rossi, Acting Superintendent of Martinez Unified School District.

MRC Community Relations Manager, Ann Notarangelo said Run organizers are already looking forward to the 2021 MRC-MEF Run for Education, when the total raised will break the \$1 million mark. "We are

thrilled the community embraced the virtual run and we look forward to next year, and the hope of being able to share in the energy of an in-person event.”

In addition to the Martinez Refining Company, corporate sponsors included Benicia Fabrication and Machine. Executive Vice President, Carmelo Santiago stated, "In these challenging times, it is vital that we all realize the importance of supporting our youth through programs that support our community. That is why contributing to the MRC-MEF Run for Education is essential to our company."

A list of other corporate sponsors:

**2020 MRC-MEF Run for Education Sponsors:**

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Silver Sponsors – Kleen Industrial Services, Envirogreen, PMI

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