

January 2018 - Jennifer Grunbaum

Congratulations to our January Volunteer of the Month, Jennifer Grunbaum! Jen has been volunteering with Atlanta Track Club for the past three years. She began her involvement with the Club running the AJC Peachtree Road Race. She now helps others prepare for that event as well as 5Ks and half marathons with our In-Training Programs. In addition to encouraging people on the race course, Jen volunteers before our events at registration, greeting fellow participants and making sure they get their number. In 2017, Jen increased her volunteer leadership by becoming a crew chief.

1. What was your first event?



The very first time I volunteered was at the annual Grand Prix Finale & Volunteer Awards Banquet in December 2014. I signed up as an Atlanta Track Club member at the Peachtree Health & Fitness Expo that year and I was so excited for all that the organization had to offer that I jumped at the first chance to volunteer. I don't remember much except that I knew no one at all; it was raining and the participants had to run a mile in the rain outside of Park Tavern. All the fear I had of talking to "real athletes" disappeared when I realized they are (relatively) normal people. After more participation in the running community, today, I would call

that rain a light drizzle.

2. What is your favorite Atlanta Track Club event? Why?

I love all the Grand Prix races for a few different reasons. With a couple of exceptions, I am stationed at the number pick up and with the Grand Prix I see the same people show up. It's fun to see who is keeping up with it and realizing that all of these participants, regardless of ability, are showing up with the same goal. It's a huge goal (34.75 miles plus putting the shot) to commit to and complete running/walking/moving that many miles in one year. It's fantastic!

3. What is one of your best memories from volunteering at any race?

The 2017 Atlanta's Finest 5K was so much fun! I practiced being a crew chief with the pre and post event water set up. I also was in charge of the "Got Questions?" volunteer

position. Everyone was so happy to be there and I got some really funny questions from participants that were fun to answer.

4. What is your favorite thing about volunteering with Atlanta Track Club?

The people I've met through both run leading and race volunteering always bring me back. Everyone leads such busy lives and it is hard to get together in person when Facebook is so easy. Run leading gives me the opportunity to see all of my very favorite people every week. Race volunteering gives me a little longer opportunity to catch up with everyone and see running buddies who maybe don't do In-Training (but should).

5. What is your favorite volunteer assignment?



At the PNC Atlanta 10 Miler and 5K, I was on the "Got Questions?" team. My assignment was to answer questions and give directions from the top of a lifeguard chair. I'm rarely the tallest person anywhere I go and I've never been trusted with a bullhorn! It was cold up there and so much fun! I hope to be up in the lifeguard chair again at other events.

6. Do you do any volunteering in the community beyond Atlanta Track Club? With what organizations?

My work has its own volunteering program and I am fairly active with them. It gives me an opportunity to help various groups of people from elementary school kids, hospitals around the country, Atlanta Food Bank, United Way, and Habitat for Humanity.

7. How many Atlanta Track Club events do you typically volunteer at during the year?

In 2017 I volunteered for almost 20 events. In addition to that, I was a Run Lead each week helping people train for a 5K in the spring, the AJC Peachtree Road Race in July, and a half marathon in the fall. I try to volunteer for everything I can.

8. What do you do for a living?

I am an in-house legal administrative assistant for a well-known international company. I appreciate the running community since it gets me from behind a desk and active in the community.

9. Tell us something interesting about yourself. Share an interesting fact or story to help us get to know you better.

My super powers include finding good sales (particularly at DSW and Kohls) and remembering birthdates (without the help of Facebook).

I love unicorns, a lot; probably more than an adult should. Thanks to the people I have met through volunteering with Atlanta Track Club, my collection of unicorn paraphernalia has grown beyond what I could ever have imagined. It is just further proof to me that the Club and its volunteers are kind of a weird magic bunch.

My love for unicorns has inspired my personal philosophy: **Understanding Needs Improves Caring, Openness & Radiates Niceness.**