

University of Texas Runner Wins Emotional Disney Princess Half Marathon

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (Feb. 26, 2017) – After her cousin Gabrielle Arcangeli of Harmony, Fla., was tragically killed in a car crash last summer, Kaitlyn Johnson was determined to honor her cousin's memory by running Sunday in the Disney Princess Half Marathon. Suffice to say, she did that and a lot more, outpacing the field of more than 24,000 runners to win her first-ever half marathon.

Johnson, a biomechanical engineering PhD candidate at the University of Texas at Austin, ran along with more than 35 of Arcangeli's family and friends who also participated in the race weekend in honor of Arcanegli, who ran the race last year.

"Our whole family is here, so it's great fun because we are all here in honor of my cousin," Johnson said. "And I think that's helpful in the healing process."

Johnson, originally from Westfield, New Jersey, had little trouble getting to the finish line ahead of everyone else, flying around the 13.1-mile course at Walt Disney World Resort in 1:22:16 – nearly three minutes ahead of second-place finisher Heather Schulz of Orlando (1:24:53). Jennifer Berry of Denver was third (1:25:49).

"I felt good from the beginning," Johnson said. "It was so fun running by the Grand Floridian (Resort), where I used to stay (when we visited Walt Disney World Resort) when I was growing up, and Splash Mountain, which is my favorite ride. It was a fun time."

The half marathon was the finishing touch on the multi-race weekend which included Kids Races, the Disney Princess 5K and the Disney Princess Enchanted 10K, plus a Health & Fitness Expo. In all, more than 52,000 runners participated in the race weekend, making it the largest women-focused race weekend in the nation.

The Disney Princess Half Marathon Weekend presented by Children's Miracle Network Hospitals is the third race in *runDisney's* nine-race series that encompasses Walt Disney World Resort, Disneyland Resort and Disneyland Paris. Next up is the *Star Wars* Half Marathon – The Dark Side (April 20-23) at Walt Disney World Resort and the Tinker Bell Half Marathon Weekend presented by PANDORA Jewelry (May 11-14) at Disneyland Resort. For more information about *runDisney*, visit www.runDisney.com.

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