

Game Changers and New York Road Runners Announce Second New York City Cohort of Aspiring Running Coaches

March 5, 2026 - New York, NY – Game Changers, a life-changing development program from [VCPM, Inc.](#), has launched its second New York City cohort in partnership with [New York Road Runners](#) (NYRR), the nonprofit that “runs” New York City producing 60 annual adult and youth races, including the [TCS New York City Marathon](#), and providing free year-round youth and community programs.

Through this collaboration, New York Road Runners will expand access to running and coaching across New York City by supporting a new class of aspiring coaches and community leaders who reflect the neighborhoods they serve, with a focus on the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. Each Game Changer will participate in a paid apprenticeship with New York Road Runners, working as coaches in the nonprofit’s [Group Training program](#) that offers coached workout sessions for runners of all levels in parks across the five boroughs.

"New York Road Runners is proud to deepen our partnership with Game Changers and welcome this exceptional new cohort of aspiring coaches," said Rob Simmelkjaer, CEO, New York Road Runners. "Supporting leaders who reflect the heart and diversity of New York City is central to our mission of building healthier lives and stronger communities through the transformative power of running. These Game Changers will play a vital role in bringing high-quality coaching into more neighborhoods and helping more New Yorkers believe in every step."

"This second cohort of Game Changers is a testament to the incredible depth of leadership that exists within New York City's running community," said Vanessa Peralta-Mitchell, Founder of VCPM, Inc. and Creator of the Game Changers program. "With the continued support of New York Road Runners, we are proud to welcome another remarkable group of coaches who are not only passionate about running, but deeply committed to the communities they serve. As our nationwide network of Game Changers continues to grow, we are filled with pride knowing that together we're redefining who the world sees as experts and leaders in this sport — and proving that those voices have been in our communities all along."

New York City's newest Game Changers are bringing inclusive, community-centered coaching to neighborhoods in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan & Queens. Each Game Changer is committed to serving their local community, collectively expanding access to the sport in ways that reflect the full diversity of New York City. Across these neighborhoods, the communities being served share common threads: women, Women of Color, LGBTQ+ runners, first-generation runners, beginners, and runners returning to the sport after time away. Together, they represent a new

vision for running in New York City: one where every neighborhood, every pace, and every background has a coach in its corner.

The 2026 NYC program participants are:

- **D'Shandi Coombs**, Brooklyn, NY
- **Glorimar Rios**, Bronx, NY
- **Karina Jorge**, Bronx, NY
- **Kristina Maria Lopez**, New York, NY
- **Mélida Barbosa**, Jackson Heights, NY
- **Michelle Tu**, New York, NY
- **Morika Tsujimura**, Bronx, NY
- **Nunny Reyes**, Long Island City, NY
- **Samantha Pawlak**, Queens, NY
- **Vitoria Cabrera-Moses**, Brooklyn, NY

“I was inspired to apply to Game Changers because running has transformed my life. It’s given me community, a stronger sense of self, and the confidence to take up space in ways I hadn’t before. I aspire to deepen my technical coaching knowledge so I can responsibly and confidently guide others to take up space in the sport. I’m especially excited to grow within a powerful community of Women of Color who are not only becoming certified coaches but expanding the definition of leadership in running.” said new Game Changer Nunny Reyes.

What’s Next?

Stay tuned for key program milestones, including certification, mentorship, and hands-on coaching experiences. Follow the journey on Instagram @GameChangersRun using the hashtag #GameChangers ⚡ to see how this cohort makes an impact in NYC.

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For more information about the Game Changers program, please visit

<https://vcpm.com/game-changers> and follow us on Instagram @GameChangersRun using the hashtag #GameChangers ⚡

About VCPM, Inc. and Game Changers

VCPM, Inc. is dedicated to advancing equity and opportunity within the running industry through innovative programs, education, and community-focused initiatives. Its Game Changers program specifically supports Women of Color pursuing leadership and coaching pathways in the sport to redefine who is seen as an expert and leader in the run industry.

About New York Road Runners

A New York City-based nonprofit, New York Road Runners' vision is to build healthier lives and stronger communities through the transformative power of running – serving nearly a half a million people annually through its races, free community events, youth running initiatives, and school-based programs across the five boroughs. During its nearly 70 years, New York Road Runners has grown from a local running club to the world's premier community running organization, producing more than 60 adult and youth races each year, including the TCS New York City Marathon. Held the first Sunday each November, the TCS New York City Marathon features more than 50,000 runners—from the world's best professional athletes to a vast range of runners across experience levels, ages, genders, abilities, and backgrounds. To learn more, visit www.nyrr.org.