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Ex-smoker completes Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via

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Douglas B. Brill | The Express-Times



Express-Times Photo

Carmen Campione competed in today's Lehigh Valley Health Network marathon. Carmen Campione smoked cigarettes for 20 years. Now she tries to smoke the competition.

After a scary cough led doctors to tell her she might have lung cancer, the 48-year-old Effort, Pa., woman quit smoking and started running.

And she hasn't stopped. She completed the **Lehigh Valley Health Network** Marathon for **Via** today, crossing the finish line at Centre Square in 5 hours and 50 minutes.

"What happened is about six years ago I developed this lung disease and they thought I had cancer," said Campione, a nurse at Lehigh Valley Hospital. **"And, whew, I'll tell you, I got really, really scared. I've never been more frightened in my life."**

The disease turned out to be actinomycosis, meaning she developed tiny blood-filled nodes in her lungs. It went away after a year of antibiotics. But Campione said it was her wake-up call.

Brandon Risser, of Lebanon, Pa., topped the field, finishing in 2:42:33. Jonathan Basham, of Allentown, was the fastest Lehigh Valley resident at 2:56:44, fourth overall.

Kathryn O'Regan, of Lebanon, was the fastest woman, finishing in 3:10:05. Jenna Papaz, of Bethlehem, finished in 3:14:55 to take second among women.

Via has the full marathon results.

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