



PRESS RELEASE

Hally Joseph
Integrated Content Creator

E: Hally.Joseph@LIFE.edu
P: (678) 331-4587
F: (678) 331-4392

1269 Barclay Circle
Marietta, GA 30060
www.LIFE.edu

LIFE UNIVERSITY'S SPORT SCIENCE INSTITUTE PREPARING BONNIE VONA FOR TENNIS MARATHON GUINNESS WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT —Army Mom Vona To Raise Funds for Military Scholarships in a 72-Hour Tennis Marathon Challenge Over July 4th Weekend

Marietta, Georgia, June 15, 2016 – The LIFE Sport Science Institute (LSSI) at Life University is designed to optimize sport performance, reduce injuries and maximize lifelong wellness through a combination of applied and clinical research, athletic performance and care, as well as give back through extensive community engagement. So when LSSI Director Mark Kovacs, PhD, FACSM, CSCS*D, CTPS, MTPS, was approached by Bonnie Vona, competitive tennis manager and USTA official, about a Guinness World Record attempt for a worthy cause, he and the LSSI signed on to support her mission.

“I couldn't have done it without [Life University]. First, it was Dr. Kovacs' belief in me. When I approached him with this idea, he didn't think I was totally crazy,” says Vona, who pitched her idea to Dr. Kovacs, a leading performance physiologist and sport scientist with a decade of experience working with elite athletes, while attending a tennis meeting.

The Guinness World Record attempt she proposed is not for the faint of heart. At 61 years old, Vona will take on an exhausting 72-Hour Tennis Marathon Challenge over July 4th weekend at the Montgomery TennisPlex in Maryland. She plays in support of ThanksUSA, a national charity that provides need-based scholarships for children and spouses of the U.S. Armed Forces. All proceeds from the event will go to the ThanksUSA Scholarship Program for military dependents. A mother of two women, one of whom is a First Lieutenant in the Army, Vona says, “Military families serve too, and ask for so little.”

The LSSI is assisting Vona as she prepares for her Guinness World Record attempt, including an in-depth physiological and biomechanical assessment to evaluate her current performance level. This includes body composition metrics, bone density, power production, aerobic and cardiovascular conditioning, as well as general strength and muscular endurance measurements. “The purpose of the assessment is to better understand the current level of the athlete and specific areas to focus on in preparation of the 72-hour challenge,” says Dr. Kovacs. “Working with elite athletes is a significant component of the Institute, and Ms. Vona is attempting to set a World Record while also raising substantial funds for a great Military charity. The combination of these two components fits perfectly within the Mission of the LIFE Sport Science Institute, and we are happy to be able to utilize our unique resources



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and expertise to make a major difference.”

Vona was pleasantly surprised when her query for assistance became thorough and leading-edge support. “I thought Dr. Kovacs would just give me some exercises and tell me good luck,” she says. “It was unbelievable to be invited to the Life University campus and to the Sport Health Science Department. The testing was eye-opening. I can tell I’m stronger, more flexible and have greater endurance.”

With 72 straight hours of play, Vona will need that endurance, subsisting on 5-minute breaks per hour to eat, use the restroom, hydrate and rest. Her biggest physical concerns are blisters and exhaustion. She expects to reach 44 matches at the Montgomery TennisPlex, surpassing the Guinness World Record number of 36 for most consecutive opponents in tennis singles.

What constitutes a “win” for Vona? “Kind of the Rocky syndrome - just making it through the 72 hours is my first goal,” she says. “But the real ‘win’ will be if this event raises national awareness for ThanksUSA.org and their scholarship fund. It would be very gratifying to generate funds for 25 scholarships (\$3,000 each) for military families.”

To learn more about Life University, visit LIFE.edu.

Follow Bonnie Vona’s journey on Twitter at @10sBon. Register to attend or support her Guinness World Record attempt at: thanksusa.org/72-hour-salute.html.

About Life University

Founded in Marietta, Georgia in 1974, Life University is a health sciences institution most known for its chiropractic program, the largest single campus chiropractic program in the world. Life University is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, master’s and Doctor of Chiropractic degrees, and also has programmatic accreditation through the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE), the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The mission of Life University is to empower students with the education, skills and values necessary for career success and life fulfillment, based on a vitalistic philosophy.

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