

1. Introduce yourself and your family. What do you do for work? Hobbies?

My name is Juana Jimenez. I have three children; Selina 21 years old, Esther 16 years old and Jayden 2 ½ years old.

I have worked for Long Beach Unified School District since 2004. I became a high school counselor for Jordan High School this year. My first year as a counselor 😊

Some of my hobbies are reading even when I can hardly find the time and energy to finish a book.

Spending one on one time with any of my three kids, I have to say the bigger the family the harder it gets so when I get to do this it becomes very special for both my child and I.

I love admiring God's creations. The outdoors have always been my favorite; camping, watching the sunsets and sunrises and listening to the waves crashing among other things. Everything that has to do with the outdoors can be very relaxing to my soul.

Running; I believe the reason why I fell in love with running was because it gave me a chance to be outside. I like heading out in the dark and watch the sunrise as I'm running; the Bolsa Chica Wetlands became one of my favorite spots for this reason.

2. How and when did you become a follower of Christ?

I wish I could answer this question with just a date but I find that very hard to do. I was baptized back in 2009 but to be honest becoming a real follower of Christ was a very interesting process. The trials my children and I went through tested my faith numerous times and although I never doubted His grace and power I always questioned His purpose and sometimes even His love for us. Three years ago I had a vision that changed my whole relationship with HIM, sitting in Connected Class listening to our worship singer, Him coming from behind in a white robe and sitting next to me on my right side and then hugging me very tight. He made me feel so loved and protected. I knew then that He was asking me to trust HIM and that He was in control of everything. I know I am still a work in progress but yes I am a follower of Jesus Christ 😊

3. What was it like to be the leader of our church team for the World Vision team in the Long Beach Marathon?

It was a very challenging experience because I have never led a team outside my own home. Don Lee, our Team World Vision leader was always very supportive and the communication was always flowing. My job was to recruit members, relay all TWV communication to the team and to encourage during the fundraising and training process. I was able to meet other captains who were from different backgrounds and different churches around the LA area. Some of these captains have been runners and TWV members since the last running season. We were all very supportive and encouraging with each other from day one.

4. What were your most favorite and least favorite parts of your personal training?

My favorite part of training was the Saturday long runs at El Dorado Park. These were the days when we would all get together and interact with each other. We would share our own experiences with the training, the fundraisings and the impact we were making on our children in Africa/Uganda. We got to know each other on a more personal level. We shared lots of laughter and the growing pains that come with running.

The fundraising part was the most challenging part for me. I don't believe fundraising is one of my gifts. It has always been very hard for me to ask anyone for help more so for money. So obviously, my total fundraising amount was not too good in comparison to some of my fellow team members.



5. Tell us about race day. What was the atmosphere like? How did you feel?

The LB Marathon was on Sunday 11th. We all had to meet at 5:30 a.m. for our TWV group meeting and then start the race at 6:00 a.m. I'm sure none of us runners were able to get a good night sleep due to the excitement and nerves that come with a race.

The starting was awesome, there's really no words that could help me express the emotions I heard and saw on everyone's faces. My team was as happy and excited as could be. I believe most of us would do it all over again but of course, without the knee pains most of us ended up with.

Running up the 710/Queen Mary bridge was the highlight for me. Seeing the sunrise from up there and the colors the sun poured on to the ocean was just incredible. These are the moments when God reminds us of HIS magnificent power and grace.

The finish line was a very well thought out treat for all of us from our TWV leader. The red carpet, the microphone and the photographers made it an extra special day for all of us, not to mention our massage therapist!!

