

Boston strong

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By **Erica Breunlin**

Sally Hartman completed the 2014 Boston Marathon to redeem her 2013 race.



In running the Boston Marathon last month, Sally Hartman set out to finish what she started last year, when she missed the race finish line by about a half mile.

Hartman, an Employee Assistance Program counselor at Milwaukee-based FEI Behavioral Health, had reached 25.7 miles when two explosives detonated near the finish line, where a handful of her family members were awaiting her arrival.

While no one in Hartman's family suffered injuries, they were rattled by the tragic incident and spent the following day navigating the city among scores of police, SWAT teams, National Guard troops and FBI investigators.

"It was really very clearly a city under siege," said Hartman, whose employer activated a call center to update bombing victims with basic information and resources.



About a week after their return home to Brookfield in April 2013, Hartman attended fundraising events held by area running stores in support of bombing victims. There, she was able to talk to others who had been at the race and could empathize with her emotion.

“That’s what made the difference,” Hartman said. “It kind of started my healing.”

While this year’s marathon was more somber than celebratory, it reaffirmed the resilience of Boston and the running community, said Hartman, who has now run three Boston Marathons and a total of 12 marathons and 14 half marathons.

The 2014 marathon also reinforced Hartman’s personal resilience, as she ran while still recovering from a car accident last fall.

“I felt like I had unfinished business,” Hartman said. “I wanted to cross the finish line, and I felt like that would provide some closure. It was an opportunity to start over and make some new memories and go away with some different images than the ones that I left with last year.”

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