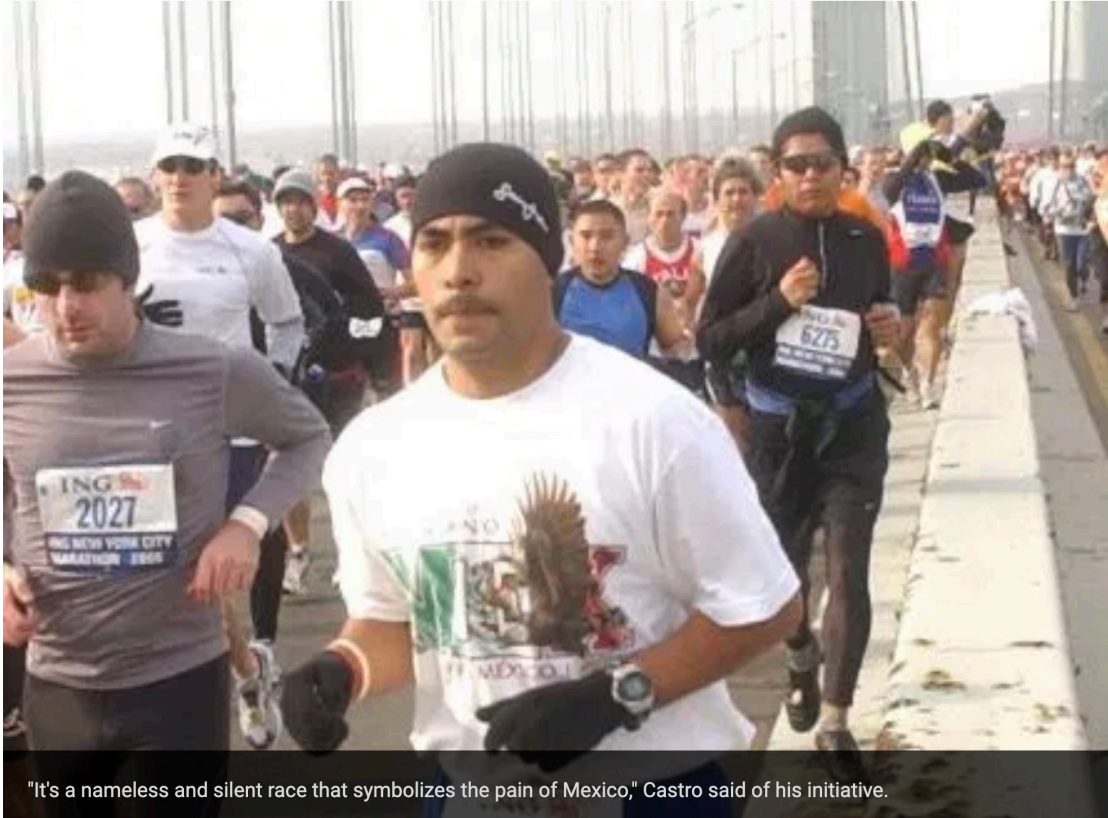


## Mexican will run 43 miles to NYC for missing in Ayotzinapa

In solidarity with the parents of the students of the normalistas, the athlete Miguel Castro will run, this Sunday, from New Jersey to New York City



**By: Zaira Cortez** | March 13, 2015

NEW YORK - Mexico's Miguel Castro turns 43 today, and to commemorate his birthday, tomorrow he will run 43 miles in honor of the 43 missing teachers in Iguala, Guerrero.

In solidarity with the tireless search of the parents for the students of the Raúl Isidro Burgos Normal School in Ayotzinapa, the athlete from Passaic, New Jersey, will undertake a race to New York by dedicating a mile to each student, of whom he retains the hope that they will appear alive.

"There are no medals or trophies at the finish line," said Castro, with 21 years of experience as a marathoner. "It's a nameless and silent race that symbolizes the pain of Mexico."

On the night of September 26, students from the rural school attempted to take three buses in Iguala to demonstrate, when local police and suspected armed

criminal groups opened fire. Six young people died, 17 were injured and 43 students are missing.

“No father would bear the pain of these seven months of uncertainty, of not knowing what happened to your son, of anger and helplessness because Mexico is a country of injustice,” Castro said. “I am aware of the social crisis in my homeland, despite emigrating decades ago.”

Although his birthday is today, he chose Sunday to undertake the crusade for the 43 normalistas, because it is a day in which there is less vehicular traffic.

The athlete, originally from the Mexican city Netzahualcóyotl, will run alone for most of the distance, but several other athletes are expected to join him at some point in New York City. Castro explained that it is a distance he decided to do alone, but the news of his initiative soon spread in the community and the interest of a handful of runners arose.

“I am encouraging runners of all nationalities to join this crusade. It’s about sport against violence,” he said.

The titanic race will begin at 5 a.m. in Passaic, an enclave of the Poblana community in the “Garden State.” The route will take him across the George Washington Bridge and he hopes to conclude at about noon in front of the Mexican consulate in Manhattan.

Because it is an unofficial race, no diplomat will receive Castro; However, a group of activists will welcome him. This is the group Ayotzinapa Nueva York, which in recent months maintains a strong campaign of protest and awareness about violence in Mexico and the 43 disappeared.

Castro, father of two boys who follow in his athletic footsteps, said friends and family will locate him every five miles with photographs of the missing students. At these points, the athlete will take a break to report the details of his journey on social networks.

The runner, who works for a carpet company affiliated with The Home Depot, is an active citizen in Passaic. He dedicates his afternoons to train young people and children with the goal of leading Latinos to a healthy life. He is also captain of the Guadalupana Torch and organizes community events that seek to strengthen the bond between fathers and children.

Castro has run five marathons in New York City and owns a hundred medals and trophies.

“I started running because I had heart problems. The doctor said that my condition would be aggravated by not participating in physical activity,” he said. “Thus I discovered my passion in life.”