

ITRA Announces New Leadership

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PAUDEX, Switzerland – The International Trail Running Association (ITRA) announced today that Bob Crowley (USA) was elected president and José Carlos Santos (PRT) was appointed managing director, signaling the beginning of the rapid growth for this leading organization for trail runners worldwide.

Bob, a resident of California, was unanimously elected president of ITRA by the organization's steering committee. Bob replaces Michel Poletti who resigned as president after co-founding and leading the organization for six-and-one-half years. Bob was elected to ITRA's steering committee in 2019 and subsequently elected to the executive board thereafter.



Bob began trail running in 1990. In the two decades since, he has completed over 100 ultra distance events, including the iconic Western States 100 Mile Endurance Run, Hardrock 100 and Italy's 330 km Tor des Géants. "Trail running is my community, it's essentially my religion," said Bob. "I was raised by its elders to be as mindful of our community's ethos and values as the 'how-tos' of training, technique, nutrition and so on. It's these tenets that differentiate trail running from other sports; it's what makes it extra special."

Bob was an early member of the Trail Animals Running Club (TARC) in New England, USA, in 1996 and has co-lead the organization ever since. During that time the membership has grown to over 6,000, and the organization now hosts 12 trail events that engage thousands of runners per year. Bob's career began as an entrepreneur in cable television and later software. In 2003 Bob co-founded the private equity firm, The Mustang Group, where he remains a managing partner.

José Carlos Santos (PRT) was appointed managing director of ITRA and will lead the staff and day-to-day operations. José is an ITRA founding member, executive board and steering committee member since its inception in 2013.



José began trail running in 1995 and was early to venture into ultra-distance trail running, finishing several internationally-noted events such as the Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc (UTMB®). Santos co-founded ATRP - Trail Running Association of Portugal in 2012. He led the Portuguese trail team in their first Trail World Championships, and was appointed national coach by ATRP and FPA - Portuguese Athletics Federation, a position he still occupies. José earned his master degree in Training Planning in High Performance and Sports Training Medicine from the Faculty of Human Motricity.

"I'm humbled and honored to have earned the confidence of my fellow steering committee members and look forward to guiding our team toward increasing leadership in our burgeoning community of trail running," Commented Bob. "We see trail running continuing to grow rapidly and emerging from the coronavirus disruption more popular as people from across the globe have discovered the joy of their local trails while spending time at home. We will be prepared for the growth and look forward to welcoming newcomers as well as our current members, back to the trails when that day arrives. This is a new era for our sport, and therefore for ITRA, too. ITRA is well positioned to share the 'good news' of trail running and our values across the globe."

José added, "This is an exciting time in our sport. I'm very motivated to help guide ITRA to offer new and more services for our athletes and organizers. In the months and years ahead, we have an opportunity to make ITRA even more relevant to trail runners around the world. We have an exceptional and diverse team of volunteers

and staff from around the world. Just like on the trails, we are one of heart and passion. Trail running's future is bright, and ITRA will be its North Star.”

Both Bob and José begin their roles immediately.

Enrico Pollini
Secretary General
International Trail Running Association

About ITRA: Founded in 2013, ITRA (International Trail Running Association) has approaching 200,000 athletes and 2,000 event organizer members in over 100 countries. ITRA is the leading reference organization for trail running globally, providing services to individual trail runners, trail running organizations, as well as international leadership for the sport. For more information about ITRA please visit our website ITRA.run.

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