



# Drumbeat to a Lupus Cure 5K Run & Walk

## Meet Marielle Vea, 2017 Honoree

**Sunday, June 11, 2017**

Check-in: 7:00 am. Start time: 8:00 am | West Valley College, Saratoga.  
Register online at [lfnc.org/drumbeat-2017.html](http://lfnc.org/drumbeat-2017.html) or call (408) 954-8600.



The Lupus Foundation of Northern California is proud to announce our 2017 Drumbeat honoree: **Marielle Vea**.

Marielle has set an example for what is the essence of the Drumbeat 5K: Community involvement. Each year, Marielle's Team is one of the largest (it took home the prize for the largest team in 2016) at the 5K. Her team - composed of family members and friends - is inspired by Marielle's story, and so are we.

Marielle was diagnosed with lupus at the young age of 6, and she began to inspire her peers almost instantly. She remembers a "get well" mural her first grade classmates made before she would be discharged from the hospital in December of 1991, the same month she was diagnosed.

Like so many of the lupus warriors you will meet at the 5K, lupus was a poor match for little Marielle's spirit, fight, and determination. She was home-schooled after her diagnosis and became part of the G.A.T.E. program for advanced students, even as she fought through high doses of prednisone and the health and social implications of a

disease that kept her under constant medical supervision. In middle school, her fatigue once held her to a 16-minute mile, but she roared back with ribbons for touch football and basketball. Her art piece was featured at the Discovery Museum. In the late 1990s, Marielle would also be introduced to the then-Bay Area Lupus Foundation and take part in our 5K for the first time.

High school years were particularly difficult for Marielle as she suffered from lupus of the central nervous system and CNS vasculitis. But she persevered by making up her time through an adult education program, learning on her own from books. She returned to Santa Clara High her senior year and graduated. She went on to graduate from De Anza College with an AA in Liberal Arts with emphasis in Social and Behavioral Sciences. The intervening years between her high school and De Anza graduations would also see her lupus affect her lungs, stress, and depression. In the mid-2000s, Marielle went through chemotherapy.

In 2007, her family began to return to the Drumbeat 5K, and in 2008, the first "Team Marielle" was formed (and also won largest team that year). Mom Lolly Vea gathered family, friends, and coworkers having seen Marielle's struggles close by because she wanted to make a difference. To hear Marielle tell it, it has.

Come hear Marielle's incredible story and meet her in person at the Drumbeat 5K!