



Team Supermarrow consists of riders and support team members. (L to R): Michael Sonstein, Jaime Osorio, Joe Brus, Bob Cartin, Lam Do, M.D., Matthew Lux, M.D., Hans Cartin, Patrick Duffy and Deborah Duffy.

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## TEAM SUPERMARROW CYCLES ACROSS AMERICA TO RAISE AWARENESS

WORDS: PROMISE YEE PHOTOS: ZACH CORDNER

From the sidelines, it's an exciting blur of brightly dressed cyclists as international teams take off from Oceanside and head east on a 3,000-mile bike race across the U.S. for the Race Across America (RAAM). Teams and individual riders will set out June 11th and 15th, to finish the grueling cross-country challenge that climbs up mountains and pushes across plains in twelve states. Once it starts, the race is 24/7 nonstop cycling to Annapolis, Maryland. It takes a team of cyclists about nine days to finish. By the second day of the demanding ride, fatigue and temperaments begin to show.

It's these physical and mental challenges that inspired Dr. Lam Do to form a team of fellow medical doctors, surgeons, and patients to take on this year's race. Another reason the team is competing is to raise awareness about the need

for ethnic minority bone marrow donations. Each member of Team SuperMarrow has a personal connection to the cause. Do's infant son was diagnosed with Leukemia at eighteen months and needed a bone marrow transplant to survive. His wife gave birth to a baby girl and siblings are usually a match, but she was not compatible, and donors of a similar ethnicity were few.

So he and his wife, who's also a doctor, waited with trepidation and hope. A match was found before their son's second birthday. It came from a retired police officer that lived in Seattle. "A total stranger saved his life," said Do. "For an ethnic minority or mixed race match, it's like the lottery—that's how tough it can be." Do's son and daughter will be graduating from high school this June.

Do and his wife are forever grateful to the donor, and keep a close connection with the





*Kaiser Permanente Oceanside's Dr. Lam Do will be dressed as Captain America for this year's Race Across America.*

**“Working with the donor program, Do raises awareness about the need for ethic minority bone marrow donations”**

Asian American Donor Program. Working with the donor program, Do raises awareness about the need for ethic minority bone marrow donations. His earlier efforts include fundraising drives, speaking weekly on a Vietnamese radio station's public service campaign, and supporting families. The journey to recovery once a donor is found is not easy. "There are complications up the wazoo," said Do. Speaking to someone who's had a similar experience is priceless.

To prepare for the bike race ahead Do (age 53) and team members (ages 43 to 66) ride regularly, and complete long distance qualifiers of over 100 miles, enduring heat, cold, and wind on the long rides. The team has also gotten advice from cyclists who finished the RAAM course. His team's strategy is for half of the riders to rotate in during an eight-hour shift, and the other half to drive 160 miles ahead with the support crew, rest, and wait for their shift's turn to

ride. "This is the hardest thing I've ever done physically and mentally," explained Do. Completing the race is on his bucket list, and many of his patients will be at the Oceanside Pier starting line to cheer on the team. Team SuperMarrow's ride will be documented on Binge TV, so keep on the lookout.

*For more info on SuperMarrow, please visit the team's website at [teamsupermarrow.org](http://teamsupermarrow.org)*