

# BERNIE SANDERS BONANZA



Who is Bernie Sanders? The answer to this question and others pertaining to the *Great Election of 2016* are well on their way to being addressed. America is, and has always been, the *land of the free*. Freedom is the bedrock of our society. We are a Republic led by a government elected by its people, for its people. Who are these people? They are you and I.

I witnessed firsthand the essence of America's unsung heroes this past week, while running the Javelina Jundred endurance race in the Arizona desert. This event offered two distances to tackle: 100 kilometers or 100 miles. There were approximately 500 athletes registered to compete in this event. Running a 100-miler is like running the NY Marathon back-to-back-back-to-back. Ultra-runners collectively run these crazy distances for any number of reasons. Some undertake the challenge as a personal test to see if they can go the distance; others strive to achieve an elapsed time that meets their goal; some seek to win the race. Runners race for their own reasons – some are running toward their personal aspirations, while others are running away from their former selves. Completing a 100-miler is a personal test requiring each participant to dig deep. The cutoff time to finish the JJ100 is 30 hours, meaning the athletes will be awake for well over a day. Ultras embody the essence of what humans are capable of achieving. America is the incarnation of going the extra mile. From the time the pilgrim's first stepped onto Plymouth Rock, to Neil Armstrong's "giant step for mankind," to the information age of today and the digital era of tomorrow, we are a society steadfast on rising against the tide.

Our way of life is founded by our ancestors that spent their lives going against the grain and at times against all odds. Is Bernie's America, America? Do people want more given to them or would they prefer to have less taken away? Will the future of our great country be decided by an elite few, or will its exceptionalism remain a byproduct of its masses? Americans are guided by the goodness and the unquenchable spirit to achieve the unachievable. We are the United States, unified by our solidarity, differences, and unquenchable thirst to succeed. Americans aspire to make our world a better, safer, more prosperous place for all. America is more than a country: it is an ideal. America is Camelot. President John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." In response to JFK's entreat – I pledge to give this great nation my best effort: to work earnestly in all acts large and small as a worker, citizen, friend and taxpayer. I will continue reaching for the stars and dream impossible dreams. I will offer my hand to those willing to go the extra mile along the way. In turn, I will appreciate and accept the kindness of others.

Senator Sanders, it is thoughtful of you to offer gifts and services to Americans at large, but that may not bid well financially for future generations. As I learned firsthand at Javelina Jundred, if you really want to succeed, you have to dig deep, fight your own battle, and accomplish the distance through hard work and effort. Therefore, I respectfully decline these unearned gratuities and choose to create my own path, my own dreams, and carry the torch of pride this country was built on.

[William "Chip" Corley, MBA, RFC](#)

November 9, 2015