

## The Octopus Ultra Journey is 100 Miles

The third annual **Vero Beach Octopus Ultra** is happening on July 14 through July 16<sup>th</sup> and race proceeds will benefit **The Villages of Armenia** addiction recovery. The 2023 event has several distance options for new and experienced ultra-runners. With a central home base at the Environmental Learning Center, runners will go out and back two, three, four, five, or eight times to complete their chosen distance from a Marathon (26.2 Miles) to 100 Miles. The course will take runners through parks, and trails and onto the beaches of Indian River County. The cut-off to earn the **Octopus Buckle** is to complete all eight arms in 32 hours.

The top finisher in 2022, Louis Cocco, completed the 100-mile distance in 23 hours and 32 minutes. Twelve people earned the Octopus Ultra buckles by completing the course in less than 32 hours.

Runners can sign-up for The Vero Beach Octopus Ultra [Vero Beach Octopus Ultra - July 15 - 16, 2023 \(ultrasignup.com\)](https://ultrasignup.com) Spectators are encouraged to come out to the Environmental Learning Center to watch and cheer on the participants as they set out on the course and return to the home base during the event. The Octopus Ultra corporate and individual sponsorships to benefit the Villages of Armenia begin at \$500 and are available by contacting Race Director Michael Strezinski at (772) 766-6510.

### **About The Villages of Armenia**

The journey through addiction is difficult. Studies show, in the current rehabilitation models, a majority of young men seeking answers through rehabilitation will cycle through the doors of six rehab programs and facilities before achieving long-term success. Statistics show that a percentage of these addicts will not live to see that seventh attempt to recover. The Villages of Armenia wilderness experience gives young men in recovery and their families support and encouragement provides resources and a plan of action to save their lives. Intervention and education are the first important steps on the path to recovery. Once the recovery journey is underway, the rehabilitation village in Belize offers wilderness programs, volunteer and mission work, exercise, and mindfulness training. Villages of Armenia's experiences also include integrated adventure, arts, and music programs as a part of the recovery curriculum. Find out more about The Villages of Armenia Rescue Services on their website [VillagesofArmenia.com](http://VillagesofArmenia.com). Pedro Bernabe is available to have a conversation with interested families at (772) 494-3226.

### **About the Environmental Learning Center**

The Environmental Learning Center is a 64-acre island nature park surrounded by the Indian River Lagoon in Vero Beach, Florida. The ELC is open seven days a week and located at the western foot of the Wabasso Bridge Indian River County at 255 Live Oak Drive. The nonprofit nature center is a destination for water activities, walking trails, and wellness programs. Summer Camp is available for ages 6-13 years old and there are nature volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. The ELC's Pontoon Boat Tour is award-winning and advance reservations are required. Admission is \$10 for Ages 12 and up and \$5 for children 2-11 years old. With a mission to educate, inspire and empower all people to be active stewards of the environment and their own well-being, the ELC is committed to sharing the importance of protecting and restoring our natural resources. The ELC's phone number is (772) 589-5050 and the website is [DiscoverELC.org](http://DiscoverELC.org)