

2006 FSU Dance Marathon raised more than \$270,000



Feeding more than 800 dancers, volunteers and committee members is no easy task. Sara Cantwell, 2006 Florida State University Dance Marathon Overall Committee member for catering, secured enough food to feed the dancers and volunteers 12 separate meals throughout the event. Food was donated by various restaurants

throughout the Tallahassee area as well as a meal provided by the House Moms of the FSU campus sororities to kick off the event.

Dance Marathon is a two-day 32-hour event in which over 700 students from FSU pledged to stand to raise money for Children's Miracle Network at Shands Children's Hospital and FSU College of Medicine's pediatric outreach support program. Dance Marathon is FSU's largest student run organization and the largest campus-wide philanthropy.

The conclusion of the 2006 FSU Dance Marathon brought cheers and tears from the dancers, volunteers and committee members who stood without sitting or sleeping for 32 hours when the record setting

amount of \$270,511.25 was announced. FSU dance marathon has raised more than \$1,266,400 for Children's Miracle Network since its first event in 1996.

"It was overwhelming to all of us and helped to put into perspective the amount of work we had actually done, and the amount of work and effort we had put into the event really paid off", said Christi Bick, Internal Director, FSU DM Overall Committee.

The students and volunteers were amazed to realize they had raised almost \$50K more than the year before.



Dance Marathon 2006 at the University of Florida brought nearly 600 students to their feet—literally.

At the 12th annual Dance Marathon, benefiting Children's Miracle Network at Shands Children's Hospital at UF, students packed the Stephen C. O'Connell Center floor on April 1-2 for 32 hours as they danced, ate, stood and raised a record-breaking total of more than \$339,000.

"This year's event was amazing," said Heather Gavan, overall chair of Dance Marathon 2006. "It was a great display of UF coming together to support a great cause."

A record 1,130 students pre-registered to dance in this year's event, the largest number of students registered to date. Dance Marathon 2006 enjoyed more than 45 participating organizations, each representing different areas of interest among University of Florida students.

This year's Dance Marathon featured the ever-popular line dance, lip syncs, singers and the most popular entertainment of the event—the 2006 Final Four game in which the Gators beat George Mason University to earn their place in the National Championship game, aired on a 64 ft x 32 ft screen inside the O'Connell Center.

With the Gators' victory secured, dancers continued to enjoy appearances from local bands and heard stories from Children's Miracle Network miracle families. To the dancers, these stories serve as inspiration to continue standing throughout the 32-hour event.

More than 600 volunteers helped to make this year's event run smoothly, helping with everything from serving food, to keeping dancers energized, to checking in guests. It is because of these individuals that Dance Marathon at the University of Florida is the largest student-run philanthropy in the Southeastern United States.

As the 32 hours came to an end, Ariel Johnson touched everyone in attendance by singing, "Miracle In Me," a song written by Ariel and her family after her stay at Shands Children's Hospital.

The coveted Miracle Cup was awarded this year to Chi Omega Sorority and Kappa Sigma



Photo courtesy of Photography 35

Fraternity. Together the two organizations earned the most spirit points throughout the year and raised a combined total of almost \$48,000.

Finally, 2006 Overall Team members slowly raised white poster boards above their heads to reveal the amount raised for this year's event. The crowd became ecstatic as the total amount on the cards read \$339,372.48—breaking last year's record amount by nearly \$20,000. Dance Marathon at UF 2006 truly was for all the right reasons.