

Four Diamonds forum

THON™ 2005 Raises More Than \$4.1 Million



Photo courtesy, Laurence Kesterson/Philadelphia Inquirer & Daily News

Dancers, You're Hired. Cancer, You're Fired! A powerful phrase from this year's line dance seemed to be the battle cry for the 2005 Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon (THON™) as they raised \$4,122,483.65 for The Four Diamonds Fund! This record-breaking total was more than half a million dollars more than last year. Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and Zeta Tau Alpha sorority took first place for the most money raised by a Greek organization with a total of \$269,428.52. Business fraternity Phi Gamma Nu took first place for the most money raised by an independent organization with a total of \$53,603.22. Additionally, Penn State Hazelton captured top honors among the Commonwealth campuses by raising \$61,176.71.

This year THON 2005 unveiled a dynamic new Web page complete with a live Web cast of the event. For the first time, people across the nation could experience this fund-raising phenomenon by logging on to www.thon.org as two live cameras captured the ongoing activities taking place in Rec Hall. The Internet broadcast was also aired in an auditorium at Penn State College of Medicine in Hershey, PA.

Four Diamonds patient and Penn State student Erik Hosler was extremely proud to be a THON dancer for the first time and described the weekend as "the most amazing experience of his life." During family hour, Carrie Steele-King, mother of seven-year-old Brayden, expressed her gratitude for all that THON does for Four Diamonds families and reminded the dancers of the significance of their participation: "What you are doing is living with a purpose. I hope when you leave here you never forget that—never ever stop doing that." Congratulations THON 2005!

Four-year-old Tucker Haas was just one of the many Four Diamonds children who attended THON to inspire the dancers. The kids and the dancers motivated each other so that they both, temporarily, forgot their personal aches and pains.



**EMBRACING DREAMS
SHARING TOMORROW
PENN STATE IFC/PANHELLENIC
DANCE MARATHON 2005**



Embracing Dreams, Sharing Tomorrow—A Father's Perspective

"You'll want to sign up for The Four Diamonds Fund," the social worker told us as he handed us a packet of information. We barely heard him. Our only child had just been diagnosed with cancer. The world had changed. It didn't take us long to realize, however, that The Four Diamonds Fund was to become a very important part of this new world.

Now, here we were, headed to State College to attend an event called THON™. We had been told it was huge; it was crazy; it was fun. It was, but it was so much more than that. As I watched our eight-year-old son, Eli, running around the gym with his new "college friends," I noticed all the other Penn State students laughing and having a great time with these other children whose worlds had also changed. If these students could only know how much it means to a parent to have someone show their child unconditional love and acceptance. To take their hand and, for a little while, transport them out of their scary world and just share in the joy of being a kid. I wanted to hug all 700 of them.

THON is part of us now. Eli has a long road ahead of him, but he has made some new friends to help him along the way. In the coming years, my wife, Sue, and I will support The Four Diamonds Fund in any way we can. Participating in THON will be a privilege every year.

- Bret Sidler, Four Diamonds parent



Left to right, Melanie A. Comito, M.D., Bret Sidler and Eli Sidler

Thank You to ...

Jennifer Malloy Memorial Golf Tournament—\$7,000 in support of pediatric cancer research

St. Theresa School, New Cumberland, PA—\$2,036

York County Corvette Club—\$1,632

Friends of Four Diamonds—Halloween Dance—\$1,600

Wenger's Feed Mill—\$1,443.18

Pennsylvania Academy of the Arts—Kids-4-Kids Dance Concert—\$1,321

Waynesboro High School All-Star Soccer Tournament—\$1,221

Trinity Lutheran Church—\$1,000

ELANCO Chiropractic, Inc.—\$350 and forty-one assorted children's hats for our Four Diamonds patients

We are unable to recognize everyone who has made a contribution to The Four Diamonds Fund in the newsletter, but we want you to know how much your generosity and efforts on behalf of the Fund are appreciated.



Clayton Wolfe and the ELCO girls' basketball players.

The *Shoot to Swoosh Leukemia* basketball shoot-out, organized by the ELCO (Eastern Lancaster County) girls' varsity, junior varsity, and junior high school basketball teams, was held on January 29. The fund-raiser was held in honor of Four Diamonds patient, Clayton Wolfe, and his grandfather, who are both currently battling leukemia. A heartfelt thanks goes to Clayton's cousin and varsity player, Shara Mulhern, for initiating the shoot-out, and to the thirty-seven players who secured sponsorships totaling \$1,574 to benefit The Four Diamonds Fund.

Making a Difference



Left to right, roof-top crew: Four Diamonds Advisory Board member, Pat Kehew, with Roxane Ziegler, Sam Stoner, Rita Landvater, Bethany Clark, and Jayme Weidman.

Eat'n Park Restaurant's Caring For Kids campaign had another record-breaking year, raising \$30,588 for The Four Diamonds Fund. Pat Kehew, Eat'n Park marketing manager and Four Diamonds advisory board member, spearheaded the project, overseeing the events of the six Harrisburg area restaurants as well as the State College restaurant. For the eighth year, Pat and the five brave employees from the Swatara restaurant hosted their annual rooftop event, braving the cold for an entire weekend in November and raising \$9,400. Other successful campaign events included Tips for Tots, bowl-a-thons, a rock-a-thon, and an arts and crafts sale.



Katie and Debra Barber

The **Omicron** chapter of **Phi Sigma Pi**, a co-educational National Honor Fraternity at Shippensburg University, held a JELL-O™ wrestling fund-raiser on February 26 to benefit The Four Diamonds Fund and raised nearly \$3,500! The first matches were exciting and entertaining, but the ninth match was the most memorable of the evening. Sixteen-year-old Craig Cline, a Four Diamonds patient and cancer survivor, teamed up with a Phi Sigma Pi brother to wrestle against two other college students. Craig's team successfully won the match, as well as the hearts of the crowd after they learned that Craig has been cancer-free for thirteen years. Our thanks to Phi Sigma Pi for helping *kids wrestle cancer!*

This past Christmas, seven-year-old **Katie Barber** wanted to do something to help others in need. Her mother, Debra Fisher Barber (PSU '91, MBA '02), recalled her involvement with THON™ as an undergraduate and suggested a bake sale to benefit The Four Diamonds Fund. After a week of nonstop baking, Katie held a successful bake sale at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Mechanicsburg, PA, and raised \$455 to benefit children being treated for cancer at Penn State Children's Hospital. Four Diamonds appreciates Katie's grasp of the true spirit of the holidays.

Fund-raising Proceeds Doubled

Four Diamonds parents Scott and Lara Hammaker organized a fund-raiser that raised \$360. Scott's employer, Tyco Electronics, then matched the amount raised with a gift of \$350.

Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage employees to contribute to charitable

organizations. Most of these programs match contributions dollar for dollar, and some will even double or triple the amount of your gift. By participating in a matching gift program, you can increase the impact of your next Four Diamonds fund-raiser!





Please visit our Web page at www.fourdiamonds.org for information about Four Diamonds or call the Four Diamonds office at (717) 531-6086.

Information provided to Penn State Hershey Medical Center and Penn State College of Medicine is kept in the strictest of confidence. Please write to us if you wish to have your name removed from future publications. Upon notification, all reasonable efforts will be taken to adhere to your wishes.

Social Workers Serve Vital Role on Pediatric Oncology Team

When parents first receive the news that their child has cancer, it's natural for them to experience feelings of helplessness, dependency, and isolation. Their first concern is for the health of their child, but they are often overwhelmed by new information and decisions to make.



Four Diamonds social workers Greg Baiocchi and Amy Shearer seated with one-year-old Four Diamonds patient, Samantha Stone, and her mother, Amy.

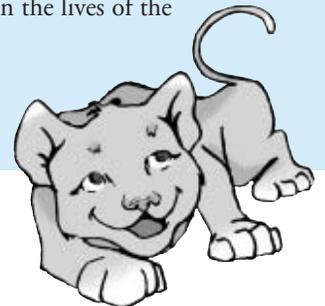
At Penn State Children's Hospital, social workers Greg Baiocchi and Amy Shearer, with the help of the Fund, provide a safety net for pediatric oncology patients and their families

by offering the needed social, emotional, and financial support to help them through the stress of having a child with cancer.

From the time of diagnosis through the treatment process and follow-up care, Greg and Amy focus on the entire family by anticipating possible needs and addressing them as they arise. They act as liaisons between the patient and the medical team, direct families to available community resources, and assist them in mobilizing those resources.

They facilitate several different support groups, as well as plan and oversee special family programs such as Siblings Unique Day and Parents' Night Out.

Greg and Amy feel fortunate to be part of the pediatric oncology team and appreciate the opportunity to be able to make a difference in the lives of the Four Diamonds families.



Save the Date

May 4, 2005, 6:30 p.m.
Friends of Four Diamonds Meeting
 Academic Support Building, Room 1101
 Hershey, PA

May 13, 2005, Noon
Scramble for Four Diamonds
 Royal Oaks Golf Club, Lebanon, PA

May 19, 2005, 4:00 p.m.
Kuppy's Cruise-in
 Brown & Poplar Sts., Middletown, PA

For additional events log onto: www.fourdiamonds.org, or contact the Four Diamonds office at (717) 531-6086.