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Dance Marathon at Florida State University raises \$1.47M during first-ever hybrid event

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Dance Marathon at FSU raised more than \$1.47 million during its first-ever hybrid event March 5-7. (Photo courtesy of DM at FSU)

Amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dance Marathon at Florida State University raised more than \$1.47 million during its first-ever hybrid event March 5-7.

“Over the last 12 months, we have seen this organization and student body adapt and overcome any and all challenges For the Kids — our first ever hybrid marathon was no exception,” the organization posted on **Instagram** (https://www.instagram.com/p/CMI6n_sFL1k/)> on March 7. “During the last three days, Dance Marathon at FSU has transformed our marathon to continue making miracles and giving hope during a time when our community needed it the most.”

In its 26th year, Dance Marathon at FSU is the largest student-run organization on campus and hosts an annual fundraiser that helps provide medical care, treatment and research for Miracle Families.

More than 1,800 students stay on their feet to fundraise for UF Health Shands Children’s Hospital, which is Tallahassee’s local Children’s Miracle Network Hospital, and the FSU College of Medicine’s Pediatric Outreach Programs. These funds help provide the medical care, treatment, and research needed at Shands Children’s Hospital and the FSU College of Medicine.

This year, in accordance with the CDC and Florida State University’s guidelines, the marathon consisted of virtual and in-person events, allowing participants to practice social distancing while wearing face masks.

Sticking with traditional aspects of the marathon from 25 years past, DM at FSU redefined its annual event by providing a safe marathon experience for each participant and its miracle families. DM at FSU hosted a DM Experience on FSU’s Intramural Fields in addition to all programming and entertainment on Zoom.

“This is my third year participating in Dance Marathon, and a lot has changed due to COVID-19,” said Sydney Fauss, merchandise logistics coordinator for DM at FSU. “There was no feasible way to house our marathon in the exhibition hall of the Civic Center this year, but as an organization, DM at FSU adapted. The common thread that connects us is our drive to raise money for the kids in order to better their lives and search for a cure!”

During the 30-hour event, dancers were split into two shifts — the “garnet” shift and the “gold” shift. Throughout each shift, the Miracle Families participated virtually, sharing their stories while keeping everyone motivated.

Participants were invited to participate during virtual performances from Dueling Pianos, local DJ’s and the Bubble Guy, as well as virtual exercise classes and games.

For more information about Dance Marathon at Florida State University, please visit <https://www.dmfsu.org/> (<https://www.dmfsu.org/>)>.