

Dance Marathon hosts Miracle Week at FSU

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Students register to dance during the Child Health Day event Dance Marathon held last Monday on Landis Green. (Photo: Kayla Gallagher/FSView)

For the past 25 years, Dance Marathon at Florida State University has been raising money for children with pediatric illness and injury. This past week, they hosted their annual Miracle Week, a week of events working to create awareness of the organization's cause and fundraise on behalf of their Miracle Families, who Dance Marathon raises money in honor of. These families have children suffering from illnesses ranging from mitochondrial disease to leukemia, so the organization pledges to dance for these Miracle Children in hopes that there will one day be a cure.

"Miracle week is important to Dance Marathon at FSU because it is the first week that kicks off our incredible year," Dance Marathon Executive Director Taylor William said. "Throughout the week we celebrate Dance Marathon in different ways whether it's through events, fundraising pushes or awareness campaigns. We make sure to spread our organization across the entire FSU campus in order for anyone and everyone to get involved if they choose to."

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They kicked off Miracle Week with a Monday event on Landis honoring Child Health Day, which is a nationally observed holiday to celebrate the progress and improvements being made in the medical world for the health and well-being of America's children. Students were able to come out to Landis Green, play games, buy merchandise, and get a free t-shirt when registering to dance.

On Tuesday, they hosted a Share-It and Karaoke night at Chuy's and on Wednesday they had trivia at Coosh's. The week concluded on Thursday with So You Think You Can Line Dance in Moore Auditorium where student teams perform dances and the winner is decided by Miracle Families. This year's judges were the Pattersons and the Buths. These events, planned by their External Events team, provide a fun way for students to learn about the organization and how they can contribute.

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“Planning Miracle Week is a task that the External Events team focuses on from the time our team is formed all the way to the week itself,” External Events Coordinator Jamison Lake said. “We come together and bounce ideas off each other. We dream big about what we want our events to look like. We then make sure to fully iron out the plans and follow through on every small detail needed to bring our ideas to life, we could never do it without each other.”

At the start of Miracle Week, Dancer Registration opened. Dancer Registration is how students can sign up to participate in the 20-hour marathon at the end of the year. Throughout the course of Miracle Week, they had students register as dancers to join in their fight for the kids.

“Throughout Miracle Week we were able to encourage dancers to not only join our movement and fundraise but to register to dance for our marathon,” Dance Marathon Finance Director Lucy Kohlstedt said. “In the coming months, our dancers will be able to attend family events, receive fundraising tips and tricks, and join us for more events similar to those hosted this past week. Dancer Registration closes this Friday the 18th, register to join us by visiting dmfsu.org.”

The week also included a two-day fundraising push, “NOle Limits,” where the organization encouraged their members to raise \$50 to showcase the impact they have on the lives of their Miracle Families. Over 400 students were able to hit the goal of \$50.

“This year we did a 48-hour fundraising push entitled NOle Limits. This push encompasses the fact that our campus and organization has no limits to what we can accomplish and the reach that we can have not only on campus, but within the community,” Kohlstedt said. “For the past 25 years we have had a driving force of students who dedicate their time and efforts to benefit the FSU College of Medicine and Shands Children’s Hospital, and NOle

Limits is a statement to the fact that we have the possibilities to do so much more throughout this year when we come together as one student body.”

Overall, Miracle Week gave students the opportunity to learn more about Dance Marathon as an organization through social media, events, fundraising, and more. Dance Marathon’s goal with Miracle Week was to make their presence on campus known and to encourage students to join their movement.

“Miracle Week has always been a time where DM at FSU dancers, internal members and fundraisers gets to showcase the reason why they choose to fight year after year for this cause,” Dance Marathon External Director Rachel Hernandez said. “The biggest takeaway I hope individuals within our cause and outside our cause are able to witness how important our movement is to our local community. Miracle Week gives us the opportunity to celebrate the many miracles we have made so far in the year and lets us remember how many more miracles we can continue to make in the next several months leading up to the main event March 6-8, 2020.”

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