

UNI News Briefs

A service of the University of Northern Iowa Office of University Marketing & Public Relations. Following is a story lead and the University of Northern Iowa sources who can best address it. Feel free to contact sources directly.

Runner to face the unknown during Relay for Life of UNI

Approximately 1,437,180 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in 2008 and 16,150 of those cases will be diagnosed in Iowa, according to the American Cancer Society.

Dave Martin has never had cancer, and he doesn't pretend to know what hearing "you have cancer" would be like. However, he knows cancer does not discriminate. It affects the old, the young, all colors and creeds. He knows friends and family who have faced the disease. He understands people he knows will hear those words some day. That is why Martin is willing to walk the walk -- or more accurately, run the run -- during the American Cancer Society Relay for Life of the University of Northern Iowa to inspire others to join in the fight against cancer.

During the Relay for Life of UNI, Martin, a veteran of 43 marathons, will attempt to run 50 miles -- 250 laps around the UNI-Dome floor.

"I know what to expect in a marathon, and I know I'll feel all right in a day or two after the event," Martin said. "I have no idea what to expect with my 50-miler, but I do expect the recovery to be considerably longer than marathon recovery. That's what I wanted, something where my recovery will take longer than just the weekend. In some small way I hope this can help me appreciate what those with cancer face. Yet any aches and pains I have will pale by comparison to the challenges cancer survivors fight all the time. I will be sore for a while, but I soon will be fine. Many fighting cancer are not that lucky. Many can't say, 'Well, in a few days I will be over this and will feel fine.' "

Martin is the Relay for Life of Linn County co-chair and father of UNI student and Relay for Life of UNI Committee member Samantha Martin. Last year, Dave Martin ran a marathon distance, 26.2 miles, at each of four Relays for Life in a seven-week period, inspiring his daughter's team, Marathon Man.

The Relay for Life of UNI starts at 6 p.m. Friday, April 11, and ends at 6 a.m. Saturday, April 12, in the UNI-Dome on UNI's campus. Volunteers will keep track of Martin's laps as well as take turns helping him pass the miles by running alongside him.

Martin also has challenged Relay for Life of UNI teams to become part of the "50 for 50 Club" by getting 50 pledges or donations of \$50 or more.

"There is a bit of the anxiety of 'how will I get through this?' but it's nothing compared to what those with cancer face," Martin said. "I feel those of us who have been dealt a fair hand have an obligation and responsibility to help those who have not been as fortunate."

The Relay for Life of UNI Committee has set a goal of raising \$100,000 for the American Cancer Society in 2008. The money raised helps support American Cancer Society programs such as research, education, advocacy and service on the local, state and national levels.

For more information, visit www.uni.edu/studentorgs/relayforlife and read the related news release at <http://www.umpr.uni.edu/NewsReleases.asp?NewsID=3492>.

Contacts:

Dave Martin, co-chair, American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Linn County, (319) 362-8062 ext. 202 or (319) 573-8155

Megan Kirschbaum, team recruitment chair, Relay for Life of UNI Committee & Colleges Against Cancer, megkir01@uni.edu

Alissa Jewell, co-chair, Relay for Life of UNI Committee & Colleges Against Cancer, ajewell@uni.edu

Rebecca Schultze, University Marketing & Public Relations, (319) 273-6728

Rebecca Schultze
University of Northern Iowa
University Marketing & Public Relations
103 E. Bartlett
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0392
319-273-6728
rebecca.schultze@uni.edu

The University of Northern Iowa offers a world-class university education,
providing personalized experiences and creating a lifetime of opportunities.