

RELAY FOR LIFE WILL COMMENCE TONIGHT AT VIRGINIA TECH, APRIL 20

Student volunteer committee has decided to continue with the event as planned

BLACKSBURG 2007/04/20 -Editorial Note: In reverence of the tragedy at Virginia Tech, limited media will be permitted into the Relay For Life event on April 20. A media check-in station will be facilitated at the main gate to Virginia Tech's Johnson Track and Field starting at 5:00 p.m.

The Relay For Life event at Virginia Tech will commence this evening as scheduled this Friday, April 20 at the request of the students from Virginia Tech. The event will be held in a modified fashion for those who are on campus and wish to attend, and another ceremony to celebrate cancer survivors will be held later this year to accommodate the students who have gone home. Virginia Tech's event has been among the top five fundraising events on college campuses for the past several years and this year's event has raised over \$200,000 and over 2300 participants are registered.

The event chairperson Mary Vaughn Smith, who is a senior at Virginia Tech said, "We've decided to move forward with the Relay For Life because this is a time when we just want to make sure that this event, with a focus on celebration of life and hope, is available to all those who need it in our community. We don't want to take this event away from those who need it most."

The event will commence at Virginia Tech's Johnson Track and Field at 6:00 p.m. with opening ceremonies. The event will continue in a modified fashion, going as long as possible into the night. Typically, Relay For Life events continue overnight through the following afternoon.

"We realize that the Virginia Tech students need this time to be together and to remember those fellow students we lost this week as well as to remember our loved ones lost to cancer. The Virginia Tech administration not only supports the student volunteers affiliated with Relay For Life, but we commend them for their dedication to help the campus begin the healing process," said Virginia Tech President, Dr. Charles W. Steger.

Caitlin Hammeran, one of the 32 victims of the Virginia Tech shootings this week, was the top fundraiser of her sorority's Relay For Life team, "Kappa Kappa Gamma Team 2." Donations are being made on her website in celebration of her life. Relay For Life events across the world are planning special efforts over the weekend to show their support of the Virginia Tech event, including raising money for the event and observing moments of silence.

Stephen Milleson, a recent graduate and American Cancer Society staff person for the local event said, "We, as a Virginia Tech community, will celebrate the lives of those that are fortunate to be with us today and remember those we lost to cancer and to this tragic event on Virginia Tech's campus, and celebrate the millions that have survived their struggle through cancer."

Relayers all over the world are showing their support by posting comments at RelayForLife.org on the Virginia Tech Forum, or by visiting the Relay For Life of Virginia Tech's fundraising page at www.acsevents.org/relay/vt

Relay For Life is the American Cancer Society's signature activity. It is a unique event that offers communities an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer. Relays are 12 to 24 hours in length and go overnight. Teams of 8 to 15 people camp out at and take turns walking, jogging or running around a track or path. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event.

Because Relay For Life is a community gathering rather than an athletic event, anyone and everyone can participate. Relay For Life teams share a common purpose - supporting the American Cancer Society's mission.

Relay For Life represents the hope that those lost to cancer will never be forgotten, that those who face cancer will be supported, and that one day, cancer will be eliminated.

The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. For information about cancer, call 24 hours day, seven days a week 1.800.ACS.2345 or log onto www.cancer.org.

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