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TitanThon Raises Over \$22,000 “For the Kids”

Feb. 14, 2020

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — A record-setting grand total of \$22,284.49 was raised for the OSF HealthCare Children’s Hospital of Illinois during Illinois Wesleyan University’s annual [TitanThon](#). The year-long fundraising effort culminated with TitanThon’s main event on Saturday, Feb. 1 in the Young Main Lounge.

TitanThon, whose slogan is “For The Kids,” is a registered student organization (RSO) with a mission to provide monetary and emotional support to the children and families of the OSF Children’s Hospital of Illinois.

“In a lot of ways, raising money for the Children’s Hospital feels impactful, especially since the Children’s Hospital gives us a lot of control where the money goes,” said Evan White ’20, the president and event coordinator of TitanThon. White said this year, the organization decided to donate the funds to OSF’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.



Illinois Wesleyan’s TitanThon RSO raised \$22,284.49 for the OSF HealthCare Children’s Hospital of Illinois.

TitanThon, which partnered with Greek Life organizations and other RSOs across campus, spent hours each week during the summer and first semester planning the Feb. 1 main event. During the event, which lasted from 4-10 p.m., participants pledged to stand on their feet for the entirety of the evening in honor of Children’s Hospital patients and families.

The event, which is a celebration of the year’s fundraising efforts, also included many activities that encouraged people to donate to the Children’s Hospital. One of the events included painting rocks to donate to the Children’s Hospital garden. Other events included Zumba, choreographed dances, as well as activities that encouraged students to fundraise.

“At the 7 p.m. hour, we did a fundraising push where if students raise up to \$1,200 within one hour, participants could throw paint at an executive board member,” said White, who is an elementary education major.

When the fundraising campaign concluded with a grand total of \$22,284.49 raised, White and all other members involved felt a sense of “relief.”

“It felt like all the hard work went to something great and is something to be proud of,” he said. “No matter what, we are happy when we raise money for the hospital, but when we raised the most this year, it was exciting to feel like we are making an even bigger contribution.”

Along with fundraising a record amount of money, White said the organization achieved many other goals, such as having over 50 returners — people who participated in the past — attend the event for a second time. Other achieved goals included moving the event from the Hansen Student Center to the Young Main Lounge, hiring a professional DJ, and creating an alumni program that encourages alumni to attend.

“By revamping our event, we think it gave it a new breath of originality,” White said.

In addition to revamping the main event, White said another goal was to expand the efforts of the organization beyond the big event. He said the organization hosted several events earlier in the year to encourage fundraising efforts. These events included blacklight zumba, tours of the Children’s Hospital, as well as an event, "Kookies with Kaden," where students could decorate cookies with Kaden, a “miracle kid.”

Kaden, along with three other “miracle kids”— supported by TitanThon — attended the main event. Participants had the opportunity to interact with the children through games, reading, and dancing, and meet the children and families whose lives are being impacted by TitanThon.

“All of them are incredibly supportive and love helping and coming to the event,” White said.

He added that one of the kids rescheduled her surgery to attend the event because her family “loves the event so much.”

“The best feeling is when the miracle kid families thank us and show support. It is always a wonderful feeling when we receive the support from the families to do what we do,” he said.

TitanThon is nationally affiliated with the Miracle Network Dance Marathon, a national organization on over 300 U.S. college campuses that fundraises for their local Children’s Miracle Network Children’s Hospital.

Most programs conclude with a big event ranging from four to 46 hours in which the participants hear stories from Miracle Families, participate in activities, and fundraise for their local children’s hospital.

By Vi Kakares ’20