

Seton Keough fundraiser honors principal



Seton Keough High School principal Angela Calamari, who is currently undergoing radiation for breast cancer, walks with students at the start of the 7th annual Kathleen Bowen Walk for Hope, a day-long walk-a-thon to benefit the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, March 12. (Tom McCarthy Jr. | CR Staff)

By Elizabeth Lowe

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In October, Seton Keough High School's principal, Angela Calamari, was diagnosed with breast cancer. Later that month, she had a lumpectomy.

"I feel oddly blessed," Calamari said. "God doesn't cause bad things to happen. He just stands with you when they do."

The Baltimore school dedicated its seventh annual Kathleen Bowen Walk for Hope March 12 to Calamari. The day-long walk-a-thon raised more than \$3,000 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, a Memphis-based institution that advances cures and prevention for pediatric catastrophic diseases through research and treatment.

During the event, 28 students and two faculty members donated 248 inches of their hair to Pantene Beautiful Lengths, a partnership between the Pantene hair care company and the American Cancer Society. The hair will be used to make wigs for women with cancer.

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Jennifer Casey, an English teacher and National Honor Society adviser, donated 12 inches of her hair.

"Everyone has been touched by cancer in some way," Casey said.

The walk is named for Kathleen Bowen, a Seton Keough campus minister, who died in June 2007 after a battle with cancer. When the 2007-08 school year commenced, students learned two of their classmates were battling cancer.

To honor Bowen and help their peers, students organized a walk-a-thon.

"It makes me feel so proud to be a part of this community," said Casey, an alumna, who noted the event is almost entirely student run.

National Honor Society students organized the event.

"It's (Seton) Keough's way of fighting back," said Katie Hutcheson, a senior and NHS president.

"It is awesome how it brings our community together, especially with Ms. Calamari," senior Hailee Clampitt said.

Before the walk, Calamari spoke at a prayer service about her experience and the importance of breast self-exams. She discovered her lump during a self-exam.

The walk "is probably my favorite day of the year," Calamari said. "It's when the community comes together out of love."

Calamari completed chemotherapy Feb. 14 and expects to finish radiation treatments this month. She is "very optimistic" about her prognosis.

In addition to Calamari, the Seton Keough community honored others touched by cancer or life-threatening diseases, including Zachary Lederer, a parishioner of Church of the Resurrection in Ellicott City, who died March 11. The 20-year-old's positive attitude in the face of cancer has inspired people from his parish to the college basketball world and beyond.

"Zach was an inspiration," said Calamari, who worships at the Howard County parish. "We also prayed for Zach and his family."

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