



DanceBlue 2018 University of Kentucky Dance Marathon Press Kit

Pediatric Cancer

With approximately 16,000 kids (ages 0 to 19) being diagnosed every year, pediatric cancer is the leading cause of death by disease for children in the United States. Of these 16,000 kids, around 1,600 children will pass away from the disease. The most commonly diagnosed pediatric cancers include acute lymphocytic leukemia, brain and other central nervous system tumors and neuroblastomas. The 12.25 percent of children dying from pediatric cancer is a heart-breaking statistic.

Each type of cancer has its own unique characteristics and survival rates, but approximately 1 in 5 children diagnosed will lose the battle against pediatric cancer every year. Currently, the cause and prevention of most childhood cancers is unknown. Despite the efforts of research, the battle against pediatric cancer persists.

About DanceBlue

DanceBlue is a year-long fundraising effort that spreads awareness of pediatric cancer through mini marathons, restaurant fundraising events, an annual 5K run and much more! The ultimate goal? To end the fight against pediatric cancer. The efforts of the DanceBlue community culminate in a 24-hour, no sleeping, no sitting dance marathon in February. All of the money raised goes directly to the Golden Matrix Fund. Since DanceBlue's first marathon in the spring of 2006, DanceBlue has raised more than \$11.6 million dollars. In 2017, DanceBlue was able to raise \$1,785,286.96, all "For The Kids." DanceBlue is empowering the college students at the University of Kentucky to get involved and take action against pediatric cancer.

In a regular DanceBlue season, more than 900 students at the University of Kentucky dedicate countless hours For The Kids. The 2017 marathon included 800 dancers plus 150 committee members. DanceBlue is the one of largest philanthropic events in the Southeastern Conference, and it is currently one of the fastest growing student-run philanthropy events in the United States. In 2018, DanceBlue is determined to spread its mission even further, hoping to reach more students, families and children. From generous donors to passionate student volunteers, DanceBlue truly unites the students at the University of Kentucky to dance their way to a cure.

DanceBlue Numbers

Since 2006, DanceBlue has been a positive influence in the community. Students have raised more than \$11.6 million solely For The Kids, and they donate thousands of hours planning, perfecting and raising money for every marathon. Highlights of DanceBlue's impact in 2017 alone include:

- \$1,785,286.96 was raised For The Kids
- More than 5,000 online donations
- More than 100 teams participated in the marathon
- Approximately 150 committee members and 800 dancers participated in the 24-hour marathon, equating to 22,800 hours of dancing For the Kids
- More than 20 mini marathons at high schools, middle schools and elementary schools throughout the state of Kentucky raised over \$200,000 cumulatively
- 24 local businesses and franchises supported DanceBlue as corporate sponsors
- More than 150 volunteers assisted with bag check, serving food and event operations at the marathon
- 40 families were involved in the Adopt-A-Family Program, which pairs a family from the DanceBlue Clinic with a team participating in the event

DanceBlue's History

DanceBlue has grown astronomically in the past 11 years. More history of DanceBlue can be found below:

- 2006—first ever DanceBlue marathon raised \$123,323.16 all For The Kids!
- 2008—the first mini marathon was established at Lexington Catholic High School
- 2013—DanceBlue introduced the first Silent Auction at the marathon
- 2013—DanceBlue was named the 8th largest collegiate fundraising event in the nation
- 2013—DanceBlue announced the first million dollars raised in a year at the marathon
- 2016—DanceBlue held their first Silent Auction outside of the marathon
- 2016—University of Kentucky faculty and staff held their first mini marathon to support DanceBlue
- 2017—DanceBlue fulfilled a pledge of \$1 million to open the new DanceBlue Kentucky Children's Hematology/Oncology Clinic
- 2017—DanceBlue raised \$1,785,286.96 For The Kids!

The Golden Matrix Fund

One hundred percent of the money raised through DanceBlue is donated to the University of Kentucky's Golden Matrix Fund, which works to support the kids of the DanceBlue Kentucky Children's Hospital Hematology/Oncology Clinic. The Golden Matrix Fund serves three purposes:

1. To support the patients and families of the DanceBlue Clinic in the form of gas cards, food, and housing
2. To provide the child-life and school-intervention specialists in the DanceBlue Clinic
3. To fund cancer research at the Markey Cancer Center

Childhood cancer not only affects the child physically, but it also creates many emotional and financial difficulties for the entire family. The ultimate goal of the Golden Matrix Fund is to provide care and support for the kids and their families.

The DanceBlue Clinic

The DanceBlue Kentucky Children's Hospital Hematology/Oncology Clinic, also known as the DanceBlue Clinic, provides outpatient diagnosis of and treatment for childhood hematologic and immunology disorders and malignancies. In 2013, DanceBlue made a \$1 million pledge to fund a brand new clinic. The dream became a reality in January 2017 when the ribbon was cut to unveil a \$1.6 million clinic. Located on the fourth floor of the University of Kentucky Albert B. Chandler Hospital, the new clinic is more than 6,000 square feet, doubling the space of the former clinic, which was located in the UK Healthcare Kentucky Clinic.

The state-of-the-art facility contains an interactive waiting room with a sailboat full of toys, beach-themed murals, a 3000-gallon saltwater aquarium and three computer stations for patient entertainment. The waiting area was renamed the Jarrett Mynear Patient and Family Area in honor of the Jarrett Mynear, the boy whose dreams inspired the establishment of DanceBlue.

Through the waiting room doors, the rest of the clinic includes highly developed and spacious examination rooms, four private infusion rooms for chemotherapy and three semi-private infusion rooms. Each room is furnished with a gaming system, a flat screen television and access to toys/entertainment for all ages. There are separate stations for phlebotomy and port access, a pharmacy and an office for the child-life specialist.

The new DanceBlue Clinic has transformed cancer care at the Kentucky Children's Hospital and provides a safe and spacious area for all patients and families.

DanceBlue's Beginning

Jarrett Mynear was born on April 16, 1989. He was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma, a rare bone cancer, at the age of two. His leg was amputated by age three, and he was diagnosed with various forms of cancer six times by age thirteen. However, what made Jarrett special was his undying spirit, his ability to cope with difficult, life-threatening situations, and his devotion to helping others. He was smart, quick-witted, energetic and enthusiastic. He made friends whenever and wherever he went. He became a renowned humanitarian, a successful public speaker, and a local celebrity. He made appearances on the Rosie O'Donnell show, walked President Clinton's dog, started his own philanthropic organization (Jarrett's Joy Cart), and witnessed the creation of his biography, *The Joy Cart* by Marvin Bartlett.

During the last week of his life in 2002, Jarrett created a list of requests. One of which was to raise funds for improving the Pediatric Oncology Outpatient Clinic at

Kentucky Children's Hospital. The first of these fundraising efforts was the Jarrett Mynear Fund (JMF). The JMF started collecting donations for the renovation of the Pediatric Oncology Clinic at Kentucky Children's Hospital and eventually raised \$448,000.

The driving forces behind the JMF, Jennifer Mynear (Jarrett's mother) and Susannah Denomme from the University of Kentucky Office of Development, brainstormed ways for the University of Kentucky student body to participate in supporting the pediatric hematology/oncology clinic. Susannah's daughter, Carolyn, introduced them to Penn State University's THON, the largest student run philanthropy in the nation, which benefits the Pediatric Oncology Program at Hershey Medical Center. Jennifer and Susannah believed that a dance marathon at the University of Kentucky would be an ideal fit and a powerful tradition. After finding support from the Office of Student Involvement and presenting the idea to several campus organizations, the dream of DanceBlue came to fruition.

DanceBlue Boilerplate

DanceBlue is the University of Kentucky's 24-hour, no sitting, no sleeping dance marathon that benefits the Golden Matrix Fund. The DanceBlue Kentucky Children's Hospital Hematology/Oncology Clinic opened its brand new facility in 2017 after a complete renovation funded solely from DanceBlue. For more information about DanceBlue, registration information or to support its efforts, please visit www.danceblue.org. Connect with DanceBlue on Facebook at www.facebook.com/danceblue and Twitter at <http://twitter.com/UKDanceBlue>.