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Miracle families, miracle students



TIFFANY WARNER | Photographer

Elonthon dancers perform part of the event's morale dance. More than 1,000 people registered to participate in this year's Elonthon.

Jacqui Seidel
Reporter

A quick countdown from three and a flick of a switch was all it took for the glow of hope to be seen in Alumni Gym. The room silenced as young Lizzy Lindley turned on the ever-famous Elonthon sign, adorned with glowing Christmas lights.

For many, this small sign is a constant reminder of the hope and inspiration behind the 24-hour dance marathon for Duke Children's Hospital.

Cheers quickly quieted as Tracey Lindley crossed the stage to once

again share her family's story. But this year, her message was different.

Since her son Mason's passing, Tracey has been searching for a way to fill the vast hole in her heart. For her, the answer is Elonthon.

Coming out and seeing the kids and students who have dedicated themselves to her son's memory is a type of therapy no doctor can offer. Now Tracey wants to give back to the students that have given her so much hope.

"What you all are doing today and tomorrow, is not just about today and tomorrow," Tracey said. "It's much

bigger than that."

A quick glance around the dark gymnasium showed students faces sprinkled with tears of love for this "miracle family."

Miracle families are the motivation behind Elonthon and dance marathons across the nation. By sharing their experiences and troubling pasts, they offer motivation to the students as they strive to stand for 24 straight hours.

According to these families, though, it is the students who are the true heroes.

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Blackout Elon revealed: buzz campaign seeks to change perspectives



Flyers displaying only two fingerprints were posted across campus as part of Live Oak Communications' Black Out Elon campaign.

Kaitlin Ugolik
Futures Editor

The mysterious fingerprint flyers that created a buzz during the past two weeks were finally explained at College Coffee on April 8 when members of Students Promoting Awareness, Responsibility, Knowledge and Success (SPARKS) peer education and Live Oak Communications passed out free T-shirts explaining their Blackout Elon campaign.

It is a "social norms" campaign thought up by Lee Bush's corporate campaigns class and executed by Live Oak Communications and SPARKS to change Elon students' perception of drinking on campus.

Students in the corporate campaigns class looked at the 2007 Core Alcohol and Drug Survey, a survey given out every two years to freshmen, and found what they described as surprising results: Of students who choose to drink, most only do so once a week and only 8.6 percent of students reported drinking five times per week. But the survey showed that many students think their peers drink five times per week.

"Students think their peers drink a lot more than they do," junior Andrea Griskey said. "If we put the facts out, maybe those who drink more will change to fit in."

Griskey said that the goal was to use a peer-to-peer method of getting the facts out, first by getting students' attention and generating a buzz — that's where the fingerprints came in.

Sophomore Chrissie Cordeira, peer educator for SPARKS, explained the name of the campaign.

"Blackout' on this campus means getting drunk to the point that you don't know what you're doing," she said. "We're trying to change the definition of the word and make it positive, to blackout misconceptions."

Cordeira said that although Elon students do drink more than students on other campuses, according to the survey, a lot of them drink responsibly.

She said that the campaigners want to show students that not everyone at Elon lives the same lifestyle: There is a population of responsible drinkers and students who don't drink at all.

Honors convocation highlights performers



Megan Schneider
Reporter

As convocation unfolded last Thursday, Elon students shared their perspectives through performances, speeches and video confessionals.

Different from last year—when Elon focused on the ELR requirements—the convocation was dedicated to appreciating Elon's performing arts department.

Elon has been nationally recognized for its commitment to students and as the community continues to enrich every student's experience, students take guest speaker Hal Prince's words of wisdom and hope to keep growing wherever they may go.

"Elon faculty and staff literally took me by the hand and helped me," alumna Nancy Snow said. "They wanted me to succeed; they challenged me so I could face tomorrow. Elon is a place to explore and take risks, we don't get better if we don't fall; they gave me a place to fall."

Aside from recognizing the students that have received honors this past academic year, Elon's performing arts department helped in welcoming Prince to the stage.

Considered a "giant" of the music theater world, Prince has won 22 Tony Awards and is known as one of the most influential individuals in American musicals today.

Considering Prince's identity, many students were hooked on every word he said; Alumni Gym was silent one moment and full of laughter after every joke.

"I think it went well and I was honored to perform in front of Elon and Hal Prince," said sophomore Rachael Fine. "It was a great way to show the community what the performing arts department is all about."

Prince's final remarks included a closing message that was well

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DAVID WELLS | Assistant Photo Editor
Performing arts students sang the world premiere of "A Little More Homework," composed by Jason Robert Brown for his upcoming Broadway musical "13."