

PRESS RELEASE

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Students Raise Funds for Local Cancer Patients

Oneida, NY – In October, the Oneida High School’s (OHS) girls’ varsity soccer team hosted a game against the girls’ team of Holy Cross Academy as part of Oneida’s senior night activities. While the game played out on the field, the impact of the game was designed to go well beyond the final score.

“We wanted our senior night to be extra special and to do something for the community,” said Averí Flynn, OHS Varsity team co-captain. Over the course of a month, the OHS’s varsity soccer team led by seniors Nancy Chambers, Rachel DeRuby, Averí Flynn, Jamison Jones, and Kelsey Milana, planned, organized, and promoted the friendly match with the goal to raise funds for those impacted locally by breast cancer. “A family member of mine had breast cancer and has worked with Laurie’s Legacy multiple times before. Also, almost everyone knows someone who has been affected by breast cancer and we wanted to keep it local.”

In December, the team presented a check for \$750 to the Laurie’s Legacy Breast Cancer Fund, which was established in 2011 by the Oneida Health Foundation through a grant from the Saint Agatha Foundation of Syracuse. The team raised the money through the game’s ticket sales, donation bins, 50/50 raffle, and raffle baskets with items donated from local businesses and parents. “To put this together we had a lot of challenges including finding a team to play, recruiting refs, coordinating a time slot, and promoting the game so people came,” said Rachel DeRuby, co-captain, OHS Varsity. “We are very thankful to have received so much support from Holy Cross Academy, local businesses, the referees, and parents who helped us setup and contribute to our cause.”

Laurie’s Legacy Breast Cancer Fund’s purpose is to provide financial support to those who have breast cancer so that they do not have to choose between getting treatment and paying bills, including breast cancer patients at the new Oneida Health Roswell Park affiliated medical and radiation oncology centers in Oneida. “The combined efforts of these students to plan and host an event of this magnitude for the benefit of breast cancer patients is admirable,” said President and CEO of Oneida Health, Gene Morreale. “The positive impact of their efforts for patients who choose to get their care locally will be unmeasurable. We sincerely thank them for their contributions in supporting patients in the fight against cancer.”

For more information on Laurie’s Legacy Breast Cancer Fund or to learn how to contribute to cancer care support programs locally, please contact Kate Trombley, Foundation Director at Oneida Health, at ktrombley@oneidahealth.org or 315-361-2169.

About Laurie's Legacy Breast Cancer Fund

The Laurie's Legacy Breast Cancer Fund was established in 2011 by the Oneida Health Foundation through grants from the Saint Agatha Foundation of Syracuse - in honor of Laurie Mezzalingua, a breast cancer patient, entrepreneur, and advocate for those diagnosed with breast cancer. For the 8 years prior to her death, Laurie used her family endowment to help patients, like herself, lead lives free from the financial and emotional stress of breast cancer. Oneida Health and the Oneida Health Foundation are one of the many hospitals to receive funding and fundraise in order to carry on the work Laurie began.

About the Saint Agatha Foundation

Saint Agatha Foundation, through its grant making activities, is dedicated to providing support, comfort and care for those afflicted with breast cancer. The foundation supports 501(c)(3) public charities serving breast cancer patients primarily located in Central New York within the counties of Onondaga, Cortland, Cayuga, Madison, Oneida, and Oswego. Saint Agatha Foundation grant funding may not be used for endowments, capital campaigns for buildings or equipment, for research, for general operating support, to support fundraising activities, or to cover services which are covered by other means.

About Oneida Health

Oneida Health serves an area comprised of approximately 29 communities in Madison and western Oneida counties with a population of approximately 100,000. Operated by Oneida Health Systems, Inc, a New York State not-for-profit corporation, the organization includes a 101-bed acute care hospital, emergency department, state of the art surgery center, 160-bed extended-care and short-term rehab facility, primary care offices, internal medicine, comprehensive lab services, home medical equipment, comprehensive imaging services, outpatient therapy, and care specialties in: oncology, neurology, podiatry, vascular, sleep, OB/GYN, orthopedics, wound care, GI, and ENT. To learn more about Oneida Health, visit www.oneidahealth.org.