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Walk for The Works hits stride in Newark

BY ANNA SUDAR
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NEWARK -- Brittany Boribong woke up Saturday morning nervous but excited.

The Licking Heights senior was one of the 14 Licking County high school students who helped plan Walk for The Works, a fundraising walk to benefit The Works Scholarship Fund.

The walk began early Saturday in downtown Newark.

"It was really weird waking up this morning and coming here. I never thought we'd get to this point," Boribong said as she walked around the Licking County Courthouse Square. "I think this turned out pretty well."

Planning for the walk began in September, shortly after The Works' Development Council decided to have a walk to raise money for the downtown museum's scholarship fund.

The scholarship fund provides financial assistance to schools so students can take field trips to The Works. It also funds museum memberships for families that can't afford them.

The board decided to assemble a group of high school students to plan the walk. Students from Newark, Granville, Heath, Newark Catholic, Northridge, Licking Heights, Licking Valley and Utica high schools were nominated by their superintendents and principals to serve on the board.

The students met once a month with former Works Director of Development Ashley Wade and current Director of Development Susan Leithauser. The students were responsible for planning the route, ordering T-shirts, getting donations and promoting the walk.

"We are so proud of the students' efforts to execute this walk; they really united as a team," Leithauser said.

The students worked hard all year, but the past few weeks before the walk were when everything came together, Leithauser said.

"We saw the students blossom," she said. "(Friday) night was when I figured this was going to be a success. They set up quickly and professionally and went to pass out fliers."

The route for Saturday's walk took participants around the Square and The Works. Students were stationed around the Square handing out fruit and water.

Halfway through the event, about 45 people had registered. Registration fees ranged from \$20 for individuals to \$55 for a group of five. Walkers also were asked to collect pledges.

The original goal of the event was \$20,000.

"We have to re-evaluate the financial goal," Leithauser said. "But we met a lot of our other goals like teaching the students about philanthropy and events to support philanthropy."

The Works likely will make the walk an annual event and will invite new groups of students to get involved with the planning, Leithauser said.

"It will help them do this in the future when they go off to college," she said. "They can plan events in other communities."

Abbi Morrow, a senior at Newark Catholic, said she was proud of how the event turned out.

"We didn't have the turnout we expected, but we have to start somewhere," she said. "Hopefully this will lay a foundation for years to come."

Morrow said she was surprised how much work went into planning the walk.

"We all put a lot of work into this," she said. "But we are all happy we could help. It was a lot of fun."

Karin and Dave Kratoville, of Granville, came to the walk to support their daughter, Kiera, who was one of the walk planners.

Planning the event gave Kiera the opportunity to learn about leadership and responsibility, Dave said.

"They are giving back to their community," he said. "The Works is an important part of downtown Newark. We want to see it be successful."



From left, Kelli Morrow, Carolyn Headman, Mary Green, Jenny Grower and Alli Morrow head from The Works to the Licking County Courthouse Square on Saturday morning as they take part in Walk for The Works to raise money for The Works Scholarship Fund. All of the women are from Newark, except Headman, who is from Worthington. (Matthew Berry, The Advocate)