

Columbia Daily Spectator, Volume CXXV, Number 133, 27 November 2001 — Marathon Event Seeks Student Support  
[ARTICLE+ILLUSTRATION]

# Marathon Event Seeks Student Support

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■ Former Miss America on hand to generate support for pediatric AIDS research.

With two months to go before the 2002 Dance Marathon, the 28-hour long event to raise funds for AIDS research, members of the event's planning committee continue to look for creative ways to attract students.

At an information and registration session held in Roone Arledge Cinema last night, Broadway actress and former Miss America Kate Shindle made an appearance to encourage students to register or contribute to the upcoming event.

Shindle has served as a representative for the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, the beneficiary of Columbia's Dance Marathon, for several years. She spoke enthusiastically about the foundation and the importance of fundraising. While some found it

difficult to see past the New York area in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, she said, "we have to keep reminding people that a lot of people need help." At a time like this, fundraising for AIDS research "might be an uphill climb, but it's definitely worth it," she added.

"I'll never forget my first dance marathon," she said, recalling her participation in several dance marathons for AIDS research during her days at Northwestern University.

Shindle said the challenge is often getting students to forego work or sleep for the sake of the community at large. She visits colleges to remind students that they can make a difference and enjoy themselves at the same time.

"It's your party," Shindle said, "and you're inviting the whole campus to participate."

Kate Thursby, CC '02, who manages public relations for the marathon, said that because Shindle's visit to campus last year convinced many dancers to register, the committee wanted Shindle to return this year.

"We worked with our adviser through Glaser to get her to speak with us again this year," said Thursby.

Dance Marathon Committee Chair Will Hunter, CC '02, concurred, saying that having Shindle there increased the event's public exposure.

"Having her here adds a level of notoriety and legitimacy to our organization," he said. The marathon began last year, he said,



and Shindle's appearance "established us as a worthwhile event." Shindle helped students realize that the dance marathon is a way to make an immediate impact on other people's lives, Hunter said.

"The most exciting thing about the Glaser Foundation is the very, very fantastic amount of money they're able to give directly to kids and families who need it," Shindle said.

The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation was founded in 1988 to study and treat HIV-affected children. The money raised will go directly to the foundation, which uses all but its six-percent overhead cost to further pediatric AIDS research and awareness.

As it did last year, funds raised from the dance marathon will specifically benefit pediatric AIDS research. Last year, Columbia's dancers raised a total of \$105,000, a record for a dance marathon in its first year. This year the committee hopes to break the previous record. Ideally, said Shindle, the goal this year is to raise \$250,000 or more.

So far 47 dancers have registered for the 2002 marathon, many of them sponsored by student groups. Thursby said registration is capped at 150 "because that's all the dancers Lerner will be able to hold in addition to spectators and supporters." Hunter added that of these 150 only 20 can be individual dancers; all others must be sponsored by student groups or other organizations. Each dancer, he said, must raise a minimum of \$500, but one person last year managed to raise \$8500 simply by sending out letters requesting support.

Individual dancers have also fundraised at Giants and Jets games throughout the fall. The marathon is



throughout the day. The marathon is also sponsored by corporations, among them Coca-Cola, Snapple, Citibank, Polo Jeans, and Aramark as well as Columbia Dining Services.

According to Thursby, last night was the third and final planned registration event. However, she said, "people can register at any time in the Greek Affairs office. We've also got several dancers' meetings planned that will give the dancers tips on fundraising."

"This year we're really trying to create a community among the dancers," said Liz Matory, CC '02 in a speech last night. "You're going to be in a room with each other for 28 hours straight, so it should help to know each other somewhat beforehand." To further this end, the committee intends to hold movie nights and other small social events to familiarize the dancers with each other.

The marathon's 28 hours of continuous dancing will take place on Feb. 9 and 10. "Just remember," Matory said, "it's for the kids. That's our slogan: it's for the kids."

**'Having her here adds a level of notoriety and legitimacy to our organization.'**

—Will Hunter, CC '02, Dance Marathon Committee Chair





PAT HOLDER—SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Former Miss America Kate Shindle will work with students again to organize the 2002 Dance Marathon benefiting AIDS research.





PAT HOLDER—SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kate Shindle, Miss America in 1998, offers her help and connections to organizers of the dance marathon for the second year.