

AAUW of Alabama Participates in Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure

As part of an effort to encourage AAUW of Alabama members to get fit, and to get involved with important social causes, I have set up a State Team to participate in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure event on Saturday, October 9th, 2010 in Birmingham. AAUW members can join in the 5K (3.1 mile) or 1 mile run or walk, be a stay-a-home "Sleep-In" participant, or just donate on behalf of an AAUW team or team member.

We have many breast cancer survivors among our members and this celebrates and recognizes their struggle. You may have other friends or family members who also faced this disease. What better reason can you think of to inspire your personal fitness program than to train for this event? You will be taking the first step to improving your own health while commemorating those who face much tougher challenges.



About Race for the Cure:

Susan G. Komen for the Cure was established in 1982 by Nancy Brinker to honor the memory of her sister, Susan Komen, who died from breast cancer at the age of 36. 28 years later, Susan G. Komen for the Cure is the global leader in the fight against breast cancer and is the world's largest private funder of breast cancer research and community outreach programs.

The North Central Alabama Affiliate serves 38 counties throughout north central Alabama and strives to fulfill the Komen promise to save lives and end breast cancer forever by empowering people, ensuring quality of care for all and energizing science to find the cures. This is the only Komen Race scheduled in 2010 for Alabama.

Where the money goes:

Susan G. Komen for the Cure works to eliminate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease by funding both breast cancer research and local screening, treatment, and education programs within our community.

75% of the money we raise stays in north central Alabama to provide life-saving screening, treatment, and education programs.

25% of the money raised is contributed to the Susan G. Komen Research Program. The Komen Research Program has funded nearly \$14 Million in breast cancer research at UAB to date.





AAUW Members can help:

This is a great opportunity for branches to take this up as a local event, either by raising funds, honoring breast cancer survivor branch members, or participating in something at a statewide level. Those who don't go to the race can support those who do. You could even set up your own branch team of 10 or more members. This is also a way to draw in members-at-large and students who are affiliates or Student Advisory Council members.

By having more AAUW teams, we can draw recognition to our cause and our concern about health as a women's issue, even though it is not raising funds for AAUW per se. Every time someone registers for a team, the AAUW name will be at the top of the list, providing great visibility. This also increases awareness among members and their friends about the Susan B. Komen cancer fundraising efforts.

So what do you do next?

I hope that you will participate, either as a registered runner/walker, a registered "Sleep in for the Cure" participant or a donor to support an AAUW of Alabama team or one of its members.

Only 10 people are needed to start a team. If you have a large AAUW branch, there might be enough people interested to start your own branch team. You could also invite friends and family members to join the branch team. Your team could even design your own T-shirt.

If you participate as a Breast Cancer Survivor, you get special honors at the event, and survivors are the only ones who can wear pink shirts.

If you wish to run or walk, there is a 5K (3.1 miles) or 1 mile event on October 9th at Linn Park in Birmingham. You can raise funds by asking friends, family and branch members to donate for your efforts.

If you wish to register, but cannot be there, due to time or travel constraints or physical limitations, you can register as a "Sleep in for the Cure" participant. You will still be able to raise funds in your own name. Conceivably, you could have an entire branch team made up of "Sleep-In" participants.



If you don't want to register, but wish to donate as an AAUW member, select an AAUW State or Branch Team, and then donate on behalf of a team member or the whole team.

To find out more about the race itself, go to the event website <http://2010komenalabamaracefortheure.kintera.org> and select "Event Information".

Here is how to participate:

- Link for Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure: <http://2010komenalabamaracefortheure.kintera.org>
- Select "Search for a Team", then select "AAUW of Alabama" (or Branch Team). If you wish to start a team, begin registration, then select "Start a Team".

- If you wish to join a Team as runner/walker or “Sleep-In” participant, select “Join our Team”, then fill out the registration.
- If you wish to donate for an individual team member, then click on their name, and enter your donation.
- If you wish to donate to the overall team effort, then click on the team name and enter your donation.
- If you wish to honor a breast cancer survivor with a special tribute, you can purchase a “Pink Ribbon Tribute” for \$75 in their name. A big pink ribbon, and a card with her name and your name, will be placed in Pink Ribbon Lane in honor or memory of your friend or loved one.

The latest date to join a team online is September 27th, but the earlier that you join, the longer you have to train and raise funds. The team captains will be responsible for picking up the team T-shirts and packets between October 4-8, so between now and then, we will have to develop a plan for that and a way to get the stuff to team members.

As of now, here is a list of the AAUW teams that you can join:

- AAUW of Alabama Angels (State Team)
- AAUW Montevallo Branch
- AAUW Huntsville Branch

Breast Cancer Facts:

http://ww5.komen.org/uploadedFiles/Content_Binaries/BreastCancerFacts2009.pdf

Race Course Map (2009): http://www.komenncalabama.org/race/Komen_5K_and_1M.pdf

Training for the Race:

Many AAUW members might feel daunted about ever being able to run or walk 3.1 miles or even 1 mile. Yet being fit and getting regular exercise is the best way to improve and maintain your health and reduce the risk of many potential health problems.



There are lots of reasons to exercise. The most important is that it is fun. There are also health benefits, some better documented than others. Those benefits supported by substantial or overwhelming evidence include the following:

- helps in weight control
- can relieve tension and feelings of stress
- reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke
- can lower blood cholesterol levels (mostly through weight loss)
- can lower blood pressure to a modest degree

- helps to build strong bones
- reduces the risk of adult onset diabetes
- may improve cognitive functions
- can raise blood concentrations of high density lipoprotein cholesterol - so-called good cholesterol that reduces the risk of arteriosclerosis and heart attack

The evidence also suggests that exercise lowers the risk of bowel cancer and it may lessen the extent of osteoporosis.

There is lots of information on fitness programs available on the internet. You can search for a program that you like – here are a few examples:

For fitness: <http://www.womenfitness.net/>
http://seniorhealth.about.com/od/stayingfit/a/best_fitness.htm
<http://seniorjournal.com/Fitness.htm>

For walkers: <http://walking.about.com/cs/beginners/a/blhowprepare.htm>
<http://walking.about.com/cs/walkoflife/a/walkoflife.htm>
<http://walking.about.com/od/beginners/a/onceayearwalker.htm>
<http://seniorjournal.com/NEWS/Fitness/6-05-01-FiveTipsToHelp.htm>

For runners: <http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/guide/fitness-basics-running-for-your-life>
 Last summer, I started running using Couch Potato to 5K (C25K) and it worked:
http://www.coolrunning.com/engine/2/2_3/181.s/html



I hope that you seriously consider taking part in a fitness program this summer and becoming a member of an AAUW of Alabama Race for the Cure team!! Just be sure to check with your doctor first to ensure that you are healthy enough to participate in a fitness program such as this.

Jo Ann Cummings
 AAUW of Alabama
 State President

← That's me at the Iron Girl Atlanta Sprint Triathlon, June 2010